

THE GODHEAD

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Acknowledgment

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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There Is A God In Heaven

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Bible make the following statements about God.

1. Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
2. Daniel 2:28: "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these."
3. 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."
4. Acts 17:22-31 affirms God's identity, power, knowledge, wisdom, closeness, goodness, and justice: "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. 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."

B. Through the years many people and some organizations have sought to dethrone God.

1. The list includes some organizations and individuals as The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, secular humanists, Voltaire, Huxley, Matson, Flew, and scores of others.
2. Although only 1 % of Americans deny God's existence, that amounts to 2.5 million [this estimate is several years old].

C. Many years ago a prominent man in Kansas City defied God before a large audience.

1. "I will give God fifteen minutes to strike me dead; if he doesn't, there is no God!"
 - a. He placed his watch on the podium; the audience waited in breathless silence.
 - b. When nothing happened, he proclaimed that God does not exist.
 - c. The audience applauded; national newspapers gave the story wide circulation.
2. To use a parallel case, we may show the foolishness of the Kansas City atheist's challenge to God.
 - a. Suppose there was a mound of fire ants in Florida which had an intelligent but arrogant member. Further, let us suppose that this beastly little ant should mount a stump and declare to his fellow ants that he could prove that there is no such being as President George W. Bush.
 - b. Let us imagine that this haughty little fellow should assert that he could prove that George Bush does not exist. Suppose that he challenged Mr. Bush, if he truly existed, to come down to Florida and squash him. If he did not do so within a prescribed period of time, that would prove that Bush did not exist!
 - c. How foolish and arrogant to think that the President would take time out from his busy schedule to travel to Florida to step on a big-mouthed, contemptuous little insect, just to prove that he did exist!

- d. To deny the existence of God is to be like the unbelieving ant in the fable.
3. Humanists and atheists are like the colony of doodlebugs which denied the existence of the human race.
 - a. These bugs called a conference, discussed the issue, and adopted a Manifesto denying the existence of a large animal called the human being.
 - b. Secular Humanists gathered some years ago, discussed the issue, and voted God out of existence!
- D. Is there a God in Heaven? Is there a supernatural God? Are we able to know?
 1. If God exists, then it is supremely imperative that men believe in him; if he does not exist, then nothing matters: there is no right or wrong, no life beyond this world.
 - a. An atheist builds his life on a material foundation; when death comes, he thinks all is over; but if God exists, he must face Him unprepared.
 - b. The Bible says:
 - 1) Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
 - 2) Psalms 10:4: "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek *after* God: God *is* not in all his thoughts."
 - 3) Psalms 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good."
 - 4) 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."
 2. Men and nations have lived as if there is no God in heaven.
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar boasted that he had built his empire, but his kingdom perished.
 - b. Alexander conquered the world and built his empire on culture, knowledge and philosophy; it perished because it left out the Living God.
 - c. Rome was founded on the science of law, might, and jurisprudence; because it denied and defied God, it perished.
 - d. Webster: "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on prospering..."
 3. Since God is not today presenting himself to man as he did to the patriarchs and inspired prophets, then the question must be decided on other evidence.
 - a. We can prove the existence of God by proving that the Bible is inspired of God.
 - b. We can prove his existence if we can show evidence of him in the universe.
 - c. His existence is proved by logical arguments which demand a supernatural God.
 4. God's existence is not provable by physical senses: we cannot see, touch, smell, taste, or hear him.
 - a. An infidel confused a group of young men by demanding that if God existed, they must show God to him; he would not believe unless he could see, hear, taste, smell and touch God; if they could not thus produce God, there was no God!
 - 1) An old preacher spoke up and said, "I perceive you are an idiot." This shocked the unbeliever. He asked the man what an idiot was and was given this reply: "A man without a mind."
 - 2) The preacher demanded that the man show him his mind: "I will not believe you have a mind unless I can see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, feel it!"
 - b. Later, the infidel became a believer in God as a result of this exchange.
 5. There are many things we cannot measure by the senses which we know exist because of strong evidence, including love, sorrow, hatred, air, and electricity.

II. THE GENERAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. In all ages, in all civilizations, man has always had a belief in a supernatural God and has conducted some kind of religious activity.
 1. Why has man maintained a belief in a Divine Being (s)? From where did the worship instinct originate?

2. Atheism cannot explain why mankind, in every place, in every age, has had religious beliefs and practices.
 3. It is more reasonable to say that God revealed himself to man in the beginning, and that man has retained an innate desire to know his Creator ever since.
- B. How then may we account for the myriads of gods and religions? Simply because where the genuine item is, sooner or later counterfeits appear.
1. Counterfeits are never made of something that does not already exist: no one has ever made a counterfeit nine-dollar bill since no genuine nine-dollar bill exists.
 2. Atheists say that man invented many gods at the first and since then has become more and more monotheistic. But historical facts are at variance with the theory: Egyptian history shows that as the centuries passed the number of gods increased. One 3000 B.C. inscription reads: "He has made all that is; thou alone art, the millions owe their being to thee; he is Lord of all which is, and of that which is not" (RJH, Knight-Arnold Church Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 47).
 3. American Indians believed in The Great Spirit; the Aborigines of Australia had their Supreme Being; ancient Greece, Babylon, China, India, Arabia, Persia and every other very ancient civilization were monotheistic.
- C. The evidence points to belief in one Supreme Being in the most ancient of history.
1. But with the passing of time, man began, in his ignorance and rebellion, to invent gods of his own choosing until many gods and religions were developed.
 2. This fits the historical facts as presented in the Bible.

III. THE ESTHETICS ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. Esthetics: "Pertaining to a sense of the beautiful. Having a sense of the beautiful or characterized by a love of beauty."
- B. Man has a built-in appreciation of things that look or sound beautiful. Where did he obtain this ability? Did it just evolve? Or was it placed in him by his Creator?
1. Does a goat appreciate the beauty of flowers? No, he simply eats them!
 2. Have you ever seen a cow stand in awe, gazing at a beautiful sunset?
 3. Have you seen a chimpanzee gather a bouquet of roses to decorate her nest?
 4. A bear does not hang a beautiful painting in his den.
- C. Man does not operate by instinct alone as does the lower creation; but he has an ability to feel emotion and to enjoy beauty.
- D. It is reasonable to say that this ability originated with the Creator.

IV. OUR SENSE OF MORAL RIGHT OR WRONG ARGUES FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. If the atheistic concept of things is correct, then there is nothing that is essentially right or wrong.
1. To kill a man would be no more wrong than to kill a poisonous snake.
 2. For a man to have many wives would be as right as a stallion's herd of mares.
 3. To steal from another man is no more wrong than when a larger animal takes food from a smaller animal.
 4. The only reason for restrictions would be for the good of society in general; there would be no absolutes; there would be no eternal punishment of evil or reward for good.
- B. In every man's heart there is a sense of right and wrong.
1. This sense of rightness is not apparent in the lower creation. Why is it that man alone has this capability? And where did it originate if not with God?
 2. The word "ought" in any language carries with it the idea of moral duty.
 3. Every society, even primitive ones, has a sense of right and wrong, and is repulsed by that which violates that sense.
 4. The sense of right and wrong followed by individuals and societies often vary one from the other, but though the standards differ, there are standards.
- C. Man is the only creature with this moral law impressed on his being.
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1. No animal has it. If a man gets his head in the way of a kicking mule and dies from the blow, we don't arrest the mule, put him on trial, find him guilty, go through an appeals process, and then execute him. The story is different if a man delivers a death blow to another human being! Why the difference? Man is governed by this sense of right and wrong; beasts do not have it.
 2. We may find it necessary from time to time to put vicious dogs and other such beasts to death when they become a menace; but beasts have no moral guilt; we put them down for the safety of the public.
- D. Again, where did this originate if it was not implanted into man's being by his moral Creator? If both man and beast came from the same original cell-stock, why did not this Moral Law attach itself to one or more of the other earthly beings?
- E. In his debate with Charles Smith, W.L. Oliphant said Smith reminded him of the story of a dog in an express car. Someone asked the man in charge of the express, "Where does this dog go?" The expressman answered, "I don't know, he don't know, nobody don't know, because he's gone and chewed up his tag." According to atheism, nobody knows where we came from, why we are here, or where we are going. Do not let atheism "chew up your tag!"

V. THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. The cosmos is the universe with its galaxies, stars, planets and moons.
1. The argument states that the cosmos is an effect produced by a Primal Cause.
 2. The cosmos is here; how did it originate? For every effect there must be a cause. What caused the universe?
- B. The world is here; it is an orderly world; such a world could not have began by chance. Who or what caused it?
1. When Benjamin Franklin served as our ambassador to France, he was a member of an elite literary, social and scientific club. At some of the meetings of this club atheistic sentiments were expressed, leaving the impression that only the superstitious and ignorant still believed in God. At the next meeting, Franklin brought with him a beautiful, accurate and detailed model of our solar system. One of the members asked who had constructed this masterpiece. Franklin answered dryly, "No one; it just happened" (BBB, *I Believe Because*, p.54).
 2. If you were shipwrecked on an uncharted island and saw human footprints there, you would conclude that there were other people on the island. If you found a building there but found no people, the effect would declare that a builder had been present.
 3. Albert Einstein said: "I see at the beginning of the cosmic road—not eternal energy or matter—but Lord God Almighty." (RJH, V.11, No.50).
 - a. Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."
 - b. Hebrews 3:4: "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God."

VI. THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. Teleological simply means purpose, design, and adaption of the universe.
1. Evidence is abundant that the wonders we behold could not have come by chance or accident, but as purposed and planned by a designer.
 2. All of nature indicates an intelligent design; intelligence denotes Personality; and design demands a Designer.
- B. That the universe was brought about by Divine intelligence can be demonstrated by mathematical law.
1. Number 10 coins 1 through 10, put them in a container and shake them. The chances of removing them in sequence (1-10) is one chance in ten billion.
 2. If this simple experiment is almost beyond possibility, think how impossible it would be for life, the earth, and the universe to happen by chance!
- C. The many complex demands for life to exist on earth could not occur by chance.
1. The earth rotates on its axis at the rate of 1,000 mph. If this speed were reduced to 200 mph, the daylight periods would be so long that the heat from the sun would burn up all vegetable and animal life. And the night would be so cold that all would freeze. There would be 5 times as much heating

and cooling as now.

2. The earth is just the right distance from the sun. If it were one million miles closer, too much heat; a million miles farther, too little heat.
 3. If the land masses of the northern hemisphere were to exchange places with the great areas of water in the southern hemisphere, even with the present distance from the sun, the same effects (too much heat or too little heat) would exist and life would perish. Even the land and water masses are perfectly located—by design!
 4. If the temperature of the sun were cut in half, the earth would freeze; if it increased by fifty percent, the earth would be roasted.
 5. The moon is located 248,000 miles from earth. The moon's gravitational pull causes our tides. If the moon were 50,000 miles away, the tides would be so great that the entire earth would be covered by water twice daily.
 6. If the diameter of the earth were greater, the crust of the earth much thicker, oxygen could not exist—life would not be possible.
 7. If the atmosphere were much thinner, meteors which are now burned up before reaching the earth, would strike the earth, causing fires all over the globe.
 8. The slant of the earth is perfect; if it were perpendicular instead of at an angle of 23½ degrees, life could not exist.
- D. These complex demands rule out the possibility of the earth coming about by blind chance. Clearly, design is in evidence; and the Grand Designer could be none other than the God of heaven! Psalm 8.
1. Psalms 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God*. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is none that doeth good*."
 2. Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."
 3. Daniel 2:28: "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these."

VII. LIFE IN LIVING BODIES FORM AN ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. The human body: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works" (Ps. 139:14).
1. As the space shuttle, having highly complex communication, propulsion, and guidance systems controlled by highly sophisticated computers, are creations of designers, so also the human body.
 2. Your body has a nervous system greater and more complex than the telephone system of a very large city, and a brain that outshines all human computers. A brain can design and build a computer, but no computer can build a brain!
- B. A watermelon seed weighs one four-thousandth of a pound, but in this seed is the germ of life which can be reproduced in no laboratory. When this seed is planted in the soil, which of itself has no life and can give none, the seed sprouts and produces a vine and more melons thereby reproducing the seed hundreds of times, and its weight 500,000 times!
- C. An elephant weighs several tons. It is powerful enough to pull its own weight. One small bullet in its brain turns the beast into inanimate matter. It still has the same weight, its chemical analysis is the same, the muscles have the same strength, but the power that animated the beast is gone: LIFE.
- D. Life is something that scientists cannot explain; they certainly cannot create it, not even in its simplest forms. Mathematically, it is virtually impossible for it to have begun accidentally. Logically, where could it have come from if not from God?

VIII. OTHER DESIGN ARGUMENTS WHICH FORM EVIDENCE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

A. Ice.

1. "Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen" (Job 38:29-30).
2. What is the cause for the unusual conduct of ice? When objects are heated they normally expand, and

when cooled they contract. This is the law governing all objects except water.

3. When heated, water expands; but when chilled it contracts to a certain point. When it nears the freezing point contraction suddenly ceases; when it nears the freezing point again, it begins to expand and soon will gain back all its previous bulk, plus about a third more.
4. Suppose that ice did not have these characteristics. The streams and lakes would freeze, the ice would descend to the bottom, the whole body of water would become solid ice; no fish would survive. But ice floats on the top and leaves space beneath for the fish and other water creatures to have oxygen to live.
5. Why does water have these strange attributes? Simple. God made it that way! It is certain that inanimate water did not figure all this out by itself.

B. A spider's engineering feat.

1. In the Northwest Pacific there is a certain type of spider, no larger than the nail on your little finger. It builds its nest in the crotch of a bush's limb. It finds a small shell on the ground, attaches a strand of web from the limb to each end of the shell, the other ends are attached to the limb. He gradually raises the shell, one end at a time, until it can be swung into and bound to the crotch of the limb where it has decided to build its nest. It weaves the nest inside the shell, leaving an opening at one end.
2. How did it learn to do this? By instinct. But where did it get the instinct? From its parents. Where did the first such spider get it? From its Creator!

C. The salmon.

1. This fish spends years at sea, but finally it returns to the stream, and perhaps even to the very place, where it had been hatched. If it is removed from its native stream and placed in another, it will go downstream, and will find the same tributary where it came into being. There it will spawn and die.
2. How can a mere fish do what most humans could not do: find a particular place in a particular stream after having been away from it for years? Its Creator placed in it this ability.

D. A peculiar bird.

1. All of God's creations are designed and equipped for their particular niche in the world.
2. The ouzel is a strange bird which lives in the Pacific regions. It is the most buoyant of all fowls. Part of the body of a duck or goose sinks below the surface of the water, but the ouzel floats like a cork on the surface; it seems impossible for it to sink. But it can be floating one moment and suddenly disappear beneath the water, sinking to the bottom like a chunk of lead. It is able to walk around on the bottom where it gathers food, then walks to the bank and climbs ashore. It eats, then inflates its body and repeats the process.
3. How is this possible? Only by special design. It was made with a muscular construction that enables it to expel all air from its body in order to have the necessary weight to sink in swift current and stay on the bottom.
4. This ability to float like a cork and sink like a rock requires design. Truly, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14:1).

E. A certain type of wasp.

1. This wasp will catch a grasshopper, sting it in just the right place to cause it to be paralyzed, but not dead, so it can live on as a form of food.
2. Then the wasp will put the grasshopper in the proper place, lay her eggs beside it, so that her offspring will hatch and feast on the hopper without killing the insect upon which they feed. The mother never sees her offspring.
3. The first wasp must have done it right the first time or else there would be none of them around today! Only through God's design could this wasp have lived.

F. There are eels with travel instincts superior to the salmon.

1. They travel from Europe thousands of miles to the ocean depths near Bermuda; there they breed and die. But their offspring make their way back to the very places, the very rivers, lakes and ponds from which their parents came; and the process is repeated.
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2. No European eel has ever been caught in American waters. This instinct was planted in the first of the species by the Creator!

G. In the pine forests of south Georgia is found a type of "prison flower" called the jack-in-the-pulpit.

1. It has male and female clusters inside the pulpit which has a very narrow constriction about half-way down the stem. In order to be pollinated, a very little fly must find its way through the constriction where it is trapped. As it flies around inside, it dusts itself with pollen; shortly the sides get rough enough for it to climb out. It then contacts the female cluster where pollination occurs. The male cluster allows the fly to escape; the female may or may not.
2. This is clear evidence of design—and a Divine Designer!

IX. FURTHER EXAMPLES FROM NATURE WHICH SHOW PURPOSE AND DESIGN.

A. The delicate balance of nature argues for the existence of a Divine Designer.

1. Man breathes in oxygen and exhales carbon dioxide; plants consume carbon dioxide and give off oxygen; with the aid of sunlight plants are able to produce carbohydrates and chlorophyll which furnish food for man and animal. Without the plant kingdom man could not long survive.
2. Water evaporates from the seas and other sources; the vapors rise into the atmosphere where clouds form; the moisture in clouds condenses at a certain temperature and falls as precipitation.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 1:7: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."
 - b. Jeremiah 10:13: "When he uttereth his voice, *there is* a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures."
3. In the animal kingdom there is a balance so that one species does not over run the earth; most have natural enemies; those who do not, are slow about reproducing.
4. About 1859 a man, thinking he was helping nature, introduced about two dozen rabbits to Australia. There was no natural enemy for them and soon they had nearly overrun the continent, destroying crops. Foxes were introduced to control the rabbits, but these wreak havoc on other native species.
5. Someone else planted a certain species of cactus in Australia to serve as a protective fence. There was no natural enemy to control its spread, so soon the cacti had covered an area the size of England, crowding out some villages and destroying crops. An insect was found elsewhere which would eat nothing but the cacti. The insect controlled the spread of the cactus. As its food supply diminished, the insect population was likewise limited.
6. The Japanese Beetle raised havoc with California fruit growers until its natural enemy was imported from Japan. The fruit trees flourished again.
7. The fox population in the Arctic regions increases and decreases with the increase or decrease of the snowshoe rabbit.
8. There is about the same number of men and women on the earth. Following a major war in which a very large number of men are killed, for several years more boy babies are born than female until the equivalency is restored.
9. It is clear that there must be a guiding hand behind the balance of nature that keeps things as they ought to be until man, in his stupidity and selfishness, steps in and upsets that balance.

B. For every effect there must of necessity be a cause. A human footprint is an effect; the human foot is the cause. A ripple on the water surface is an effect; the stone thrown into the water is the cause. The fact that life exists argues very eloquently that there had to be an original Giver of life. There is in nature a close relationship between various animal species which are dependent on each other; without one, the other could not exist, and vice-versa.

1. The Yucca Moth and the Yucca Plant. The plant blooms only at night and the moth flies only at night. The flower of the yucca plant hangs downward, with the female part higher than the male part, hence, the pollen from the male part cannot fall so as to pollinate the female part. In order for pollination, the moth is essential. The moth lights on an open flower, and with her odd-shaped feelers scrapes

pollen from the male part of the blossom, flies to another plant and pierces the ovary of the plant and deposits her eggs in the place that will develop more seeds. She rubs the pollen on the female part of the flower. The offspring of the moth feed on some of the seeds produced by the plant and leave the rest to perpetuate the plant. The young moths make their way to the ground, bury themselves, and wait until it is time for the yucca plant to bloom a year later. This is strong evidence of design in our world; since there is design, there must be a Grand Designer—God!

2. The migration of birds. About one third of all birds are migratory. Ducks and geese have followed certain specific routes annually. They have certain places they stop each time. A species of tern nests in the extreme northern parts of North America. They migrate a distance of 11,000 miles to the tip of South America. The bobolinks travel 9,000 miles from the Great Lakes to the pampas of Argentina. Hummingbirds have been known to travel about 5,000 miles and stop within thirty feet of where their forbears wintered the year before. Each type of bird has its own timetable and place to which it migrates. This information was imprinted on them by the Creator.

C. Genesis 1:20-26: "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. 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."

1. A female mackerel lays about one-half million eggs at one time. If all the eggs from one pair of mackerel lived, and in turn each pair from these produced accordingly, and none died, within ten years the oceans would be so full of mackerel one could walk across the deepest parts on them.
2. If one pair of herring and those that descend from them were to live unchecked for twenty years they would equal the volume of the whole earth. The same kind of statistics can be said about codfish, sunfish and oysters.
3. Insects multiply faster than fish. One housefly can lay 500 eggs, and each will mature in a week. If all the posterity survive that would mean 200 million, million flies in one summer. The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture has been quoted as saying that if all the flies from a single pair lived six months, the whole earth would be covered with a layer many feet deep.
4. Rats, mice and rabbits are also prolific. If left unchecked for a few years, there would be no room for anything else. Suppose mosquitoes were unchecked?

D. God has wisely provided checks and balances to keep such over-crowding from taking place. In those cases where natural enemies are needed, God has provided them.

1. Fish and other creatures eat fish; insects and other creatures eat insects. A blue martin is said to eat its own weight in insects in one day.
2. Owls, hawks, eagles, etc., keep the rabbit and mice population under control.
3. The balance of nature affirms the existence of a Grand Designer!

X. THE AMAZING HONEYBEE IS AN OUTSTANDING EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

A. Each hive can number from 10,000 to 70,000 or more individuals; there are three types in each hive: the queen, drones (males), and underdeveloped females which are the worker bees. The purpose of the queen is not to rule but to produce offspring. She is the only fully developed female in the hive. In her lifetime, she may lay as many as one million eggs, perhaps 1500 in a single day. The eggs hatch within three days; she is able to determine which will be male and which will be female by laying unfertilized eggs in certain cells and fertilized eggs in other cells. If more females are needed, she produces them; and likewise for

males.

- B. The wings of a honeybee are amazingly efficient and powerful; they move at 75 beats per second, and can propel the bee forward, up, down, sideways, or hover. A bee can carry its own weight. The wings are the right size to allow entrance into the small places they go.
- C. A bee must visit about a thousand blossoms to gather a stomach full of material; it is estimated that fifty stomachs-full would only fill a thimble: 50,000 blossoms must be visited to get a thimble-full of honey. They go to the same type of plant for the nectar; they don't mix it.
- D. From the materials gathered from blossoms the bees manufacture a variety of products, including material for the comb, food, royal jelly, wax, bee glue, and honey. Some say the honey is the most perfect food. It cannot be copied by man.
- E. In order to produce a worker bee the feeding is stopped at a certain time, exactly, and a different mixture of food is given. If queens are needed, royal jelly is fed to a certain number of larva for a certain period of time. If God did not endow the bee with this information, from where could it have come?
- F. The bee collects nectar from only one type of blossom at a time; this enables it to pollinate the same plant species. They do not take pollen from a peach tree and distribute it to an apple tree. This cannot be a simple coincidence. Without the service of bees we would have little or no fruit. The specially constructed body of the bee is able to pick up pollen which is deposited on the next blossom she visits. Eighty percent of pollination is credited to the bees.
- G. The cells are constructed in a six-sided configuration. The temperature must be over 140 degrees to melt it. The shape of the cells makes them much stronger than if they were round, and requires less material to construct. Man has imitated this design in developing strong bridges. The bee learned from the Master Designer and was using it thousands of years before man copied it.
- H. If the bee evolved then there was a time when it was not a bee; but what was it? It could not be a drone for he cannot reproduce himself without a queen; it could not be a worker bee for they are infertile; it could not be a queen for she cannot reproduce herself without a drone. Evolution cannot explain the existence of the honeybee. Only God could have designed and created such an amazing creature!

XI. EVIDENCE OF DESIGN IN SMALL THINGS ARGUE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

- A. Luke 12:6-7: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."
 - B. The Hummingbird.
 - 1. This is the smallest bird on earth; some species weigh no more than a dime. It has the highest rate of metabolism (when resting, it is about 50 times faster than man's). This means that it must consume great amounts of nectar to avoid starvation. Since it is not equipped for night eating, it must stretch its food stores from dusk to dawn. To accomplish this, it has been given the ability to hibernate overnight: a unique energy-saving design.
 - 2. During the night, its metabolic rate is only one-fifteenth as rapid as in the daytime, and its body temperature drops to that of the surrounding air. It is hardly able to move; when it stirs, it moves as though congealed. By daybreak, the hummingbird's body spontaneously resumes its normal temperature and high metabolic rate, ready to dart off in search of food.
 - 3. If evolution occurred over millions of years, how did the hummingbird survive while its essential little metabolic regulator was gradually evolving? The most logical conclusion is that God designed and created this little bird.
 - C. The Bombardier Beetle.
 - 1. This type of beetle has a means of self-protection that is amazing in its design. It is able to eject a reddish fluid that explodes when it comes into contact with the air. It forms a cloud of smoke, bluish in color, and acid in effect, which usually puts to flight its enemy.
 - 2. This bug has two sets of glands which are connected to storage tanks and combustion chambers. The glands produce two liquids that are stored in the tanks. When the two chemicals are brought together,
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an explosion occurs, but there is a built-in neutralizing inhibitor which keeps this from happening until the mixture is needed to repel a predator. When the chemicals are expelled, a "pop" is heard as the acid smoke is blown into the face of the attacker.

3. If it took millions of years for this beetle to develop as he is today, there would be no such beetle today. He would have been devoured or would have destroyed himself as his "laboratory" was evolving! And since it has no intelligence, how could it have known the type of chemicals to develop?

D. The Stenodus Beetle.

1. This creature lives on water; it is only about one quarter inch long; its chief enemy is the water strider, a long-legged insect that moves with ease across the surface of the water.
2. The beetle is able to elude the strider by a type of jet propulsion which gives it the ability to move with remarkable speed up to 45 feet. This is accomplished by squirting a liquid detergent from its body from two glands. At the same time, this causes a wave which blocks the strider and cause it to sink if it skids into the detergent-produced wave.
3. It is unthinkable that these features could have accidentally developed. Only by the hand of a master craftsman could this bug have been designed and made.

E. The Ant:

1. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest" (Prov. 6:6-8).
 2. Ants are found in all parts of the world: cities, country, woods, deserts and jungles; about 2,500 different species have been identified; they come in many different colors and sizes. There is a queen in the colony but all she does is lay eggs: she does not rule (just as Solomon wrote). All the individuals in the colony work together automatically for the good of the colony. They are directed by the unseen hand of the Creator. Even evolutionists say that they have been able to find no evidence of changes in the ants.
 3. Only the queens and males have wings. After mating in flight, the male dies and the queen comes to earth, and breaks off her wings. After she lays her eggs, worker ants carry them to nurseries, and even out into the sunlight and than back to the nest. When the larva is hatched, worker ants care for it, even to feeding it semi-digested food.
 4. The larva spins a cocoon and remains therein for a specified period of time. Worker ants know when that time comes, so they transport it the proper place in the nest. They cannot free themselves from the cocoons—the worker ants cut open the cocoon and release the now fully developed ant. Evolution cannot explain how these little creatures, without guidance, or leaders, know how to do the right thing at the right time, which must be done for their survival.
 5. The driver ants, found in Kenya, Africa, have three queens in each colony. These queens can produce eleven million eggs each year. The workers are able to kill a wounded elephant and consume the flesh to the bones. These worker ants have two stomachs; one is for their own use, and the other one is to provide food for the non-workers that occupy the nest and do their duty there. How could any non-intelligent ant know to develop two stomachs and be caused to have enough charity about him to provide for other ants? Every creature on earth follows the laws that God impressed upon them, which in every case argues for the Divine Creator and refutes evolution of every kind.
 6. The ant furnishes a great lesson for humanity, and members of the church. 1 Corinthians 12 draws a parallel between the church and the human body. In the physical body all the members work together for the common good of all, for the good of the whole body. When the head aches, the other members suffer with it, and the brain directs the feet to the medicine cabinet, and the eyes to locate the aspirin, and the hands to insert the proper number of pills along with the necessary liquid into the mouth, and the mouth and throat to dispatch the same to the stomach. As the ants all work in unison for the common good of the whole colony, and as the body members operate in conjunction with each other for the good of the entire body, so are the members of the church to act harmoniously in behalf of the whole church.
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- a. 1 Corinthians 13 will solve most of our social problems today, and prevent church problems from developing.
 - b. Matthew 5:45: "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."
 - c. 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."
 - d. Romans 12:10: "*Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."
 - e. 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."
7. But not all ants are noble and generous. Some make slaves of other ants, as some humans mistreat other humans. But all of the same species in the same colony take care of each other.
- F. Neptune's Cup.
1. In the Indian Ocean there are small creatures that live in the water, and are almost unseen by the human eye. Myriads of them work to form an object known as Neptune's Cup. These little creatures that multiply and form such a large cup, sometimes three feet in diameter and six feet high, have no consultation with each other. Each one, it is said, works separately, cut off from the other, like prisoners in a maximum security penitentiary. They build the stem to the proper height, then begin to widen out to form the cup part at the top. Everything is formed according to a perfect plan.
 2. From whence came the blueprint? Which is more reasonable? That they developed the plans on their own, or they operate by the plan God impressed on them when he made them?
- G. The Atom.
1. As the telescope reveals many secrets of the universe, so the microscope has uncovered many marvels of the microscopic world. The word atom is from the Greek word "atomus" which means "that which cannot be cut or divided." Thus, we say that the atom is the ultimate or the basis of all matter. The atom itself is divided into many subatomic particles. Just as the telescope cannot penetrate to the farthest reaches of the universe, neither can the microscope see the end of the subatomic universe.
 2. There are more than 100 elements which have been identified, and each of these elements is made up of atoms. The atom which comprises hydrogen is said to be the smallest of all atoms. One atom of hydrogen plus two atoms of oxygen form one molecule of water. One drop of water contains 33 billion billion molecules, or 100 billion billion atoms.
 3. An atom is similar to our solar system. Our solar system consists of the sun and various planets which revolve around it. The earth makes a complete trip around the sun in 365 1/4 days; Pluto requires about 248 years to complete its greater orbit (it is 3,700,000,000 miles from the sun). The electrons of an atom move around the nucleus as the planets move around the sun. An electron circles its nucleus billions of times in a millionth of a second.
 4. The hydrogen atom is said to be the smallest. If a million of them were lined up side by side, their combined length would only be equal to the thickness of a sheet of paper. But when hydrogen atoms are split, a tremendous atomic explosion occurs!
 5. How could such tiny, complex particles exist? Certainly no man could have made them because of their size and the fact that even he is comprised of atoms! And how could such force exist in such tiny particles? Only God could have made it so! "The worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3). Atoms do not "appear."
 6. All of the material in the world is made from only 103-107 basic elements. Who but God could take these fundamental elements and construct such a varied and complex world? The English language has many thousands of words, but all of the words are composed from one or more of the 26 letters of the alphabet. Cf. STAR, RATS, ARTS, TARS. Could letters of the alphabet be thrown into a container, shaken well, and thrown out onto paper to form a newspaper? Most assuredly not! How much less likely then could the atoms of the various elements be cast together to form our world! The
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complex atom could not have come into being by chance, and it is also certain that these atoms could not have come together by chance to form our universe.

7. It has been demonstrated that there is considerable empty space in an atom, and estimates have been made that if all the empty space in the atoms of a 250-pound man was eliminated, he would be no larger than a particle of dust and would appear as a speck on the head of a pin. No wonder the Lord said that a man should not think more highly of himself than he ought to think (Rom. 12:3). And no wonder the Psalmist asked, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" (Ps. 8:4). This helps us appreciate more all those statements in the Bible which enjoin humility on us!

XII. THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD.

- A. Nearly 3,000 years ago, Solomon wrote: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccl. 1:7).
 1. He described the evaporation cycle which every schoolboy is taught today. But Solomon could know this scientific fact only by special revelation from the Creator.
 2. God furnishes this bounty free of charge, and it stands as powerful testimony to the existence, goodness and power of God: "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" (Acts 14:17).
 3. No oceans have been seen on other planets. Why? The land mass on the earth and the area of its seas are in the right proportion? Why? The above verse answers!
 4. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" (Job 38:4-11).
 - B. Ozone is a gas in the atmosphere which is said to be poisonous to humans, but it plays an important part in his welfare. There is a thin layer of ozone about 40 miles above the earth. Without it, life on earth would cease. It keeps most of a certain type of ultraviolet rays from reaching the earth; just enough gets through to keep green algae from building up and clogging earth's rivers. This ozone layer allows the short ultraviolet rays to get through; these are necessary to life.
 - C. The atmosphere forms a protective blanket around the earth which prevents great damage from the meteorites which streak through the sky. It also keeps too much heat from escaping from the earth during the hours of darkness. The atmosphere furnishes us the oxygen we need in order to survive; it provides a means by which sound can travel.
 - D. Space is unfathomable to man's finite mind, and cannot be entirely seen by his most powerful telescopes. The earth is 8,000 miles in diameter; the sun is 864,000; a star near Orion has a diameter of 215 million miles. Arcturus, a star mentioned by Job, is said to be 25,600 times greater in volume than our sun. And Antares is estimated to have a diameter of 400 million miles. And there are even larger stars.
 - E. Our galaxy is 100,000 light years in width. There are a billion or more galaxies. Two-hundred-inch telescopes can see about 1.5 billion light years into space; beyond that, the stars appear as great clouds of light.
 1. Job 9:8-9: "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."
 2. Psalms 8:3: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained."
 3. Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."
 4. Isaiah 40:22: "*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as
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grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."

5. Jeremiah 33:22: "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me."
6. Romans 1:19-22: "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. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

F. No wonder great men of the Bible trembled at his spoken word and manifestations!

XIII. THE HUMAN BODY IS EVIDENCE OF A WISE CREATOR.

A. Consider these Bible statements:

1. Genesis 1:26-28: "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. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."
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."
3. 1 Corinthians 12:18: "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."
4. Psalms 139:14-15: "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."

B. The common man often gazes in awe at the wisdom, knowledge, and skill of our race.

1. We marvel at the great bridges, highways, communication equipment, automobiles, aircraft, ships, spacecraft, and buildings. All of these are wisely designed and carefully constructed; they are indeed marvelous and complex.
2. Magnificent as these are, they are far surpassed by the ingenuity of design, complexity, and abilities of the human body.

C. The human body is comprised of many separate parts, which all work in perfect harmony together under the direction of the brain.

1. The skeletal system has 206 bones which can outlast the best steel; its joints produce its own lubrication; it provides the structure for the body itself and at the same time offers protection (ribs guard the vital chest organs, the skull guards the brain); it forms the foundation to which many muscles are attached; yet in a 160-pound man this whole framework only weighs 29 pounds.
 - a. Bones act like levers. "When our muscles move us about, they do it by working a series of articulated levers that make a most efficient use of every ounce of muscular motive power. The levers are the bones of the body's framework, fitted together with the neatness of jigsaw pieces and hinged by joints that must win the admiration of any mechanic" (Miller and Goode, 1960, p.25; in Jackson, pp.19f).
 - b. Bones are strong, but light; they grow; they repair themselves; they are able to lubricate themselves; they have no down-time, but can operate continually.
 - c. The joints are marvelous and complex; the shoulders, knees, hands, and feet are able to move in various directions, and possess remarkable strength and durability.
 - d. "Perhaps an engineer will someday develop a substance as strong and light and efficient as bone,

- but what engineer could devise a substance that, like bone, can grow continuously, lubricate itself, require no shut-down time, and repair itself when damage occurs?" (Brand & Yancy, 1980, p.91; Jackson, p.20).
- e. "As a specific example of bone design, consider the bones of the foot. One-fourth of all the body's bones are in the feet. Each human foot contains 26 bones. The feet have been ingeniously designed to facilitate a number of mechanical functions. They support, with arches comparable to an engineered bridge. They operate as levers when one presses an automobile accelerator peddle. Feet act like hydraulic jacks when one tip-toes. They catapult a person as he jumps. And feet act as a cushion for the legs when one is running" (Jackson, p.21).
2. The muscle system is made up of more than 600 members with the ability to contract and release; these are placed by design into two subsystems: voluntary and involuntary (for example, we can reach out and pick up some item, but our heart muscle beats without any conscious effort on our part).
 - a. "In the automobile engine, the spark ignites vaporized gasoline, the piston moves, and keeps moving in response to a series of explosions. 'A muscle cell performs the functions of both the spark and the piston; the cell itself splits a molecule of fuel and also exerts the resulting physical power' (Miller & Goode, 1960, p 23). It is clear that the automobile engine was intelligently designed, why is it not reasonable to draw the same conclusion with reference to the muscles" (Jackson, pp.23f).
 - b. Muscles demonstrate modern engineering principles. This was admitted by the evolutionist John Lenihan. Another evolutionist made this admission: "...If the most gifted scientists cudged their brains they probably could not come up with a stronger or more perfect tool for grasping and delicate manipulation than the human hand. And seen from an engineering standpoint, the loveliest hand actually is a highly complex mechanical device composed of muscle, bone, tendon, fat, and extremely sensitive nerve fibers, capable of performing thousands of jobs with precision" (Wylie, 1962, p 25; Jackson, p.25).
- D. The human ear can distinguish over 2,500 different tones; the average piano can distinguish the sounds of only 88 keys. The ear can detect sound waves which vibrate the ear drum only one-billionth of a centimeter (the diameter of a hydrogen atom). If we were in a completely soundproof room, the ear could hear the blood coursing through the veins. Over 100,000 hearing receptors in the ears are sending impulses to the brain to be decoded and answered.
 1. "The balancing ability of the auditory system has been compared to the 'inertial system used in missiles and submarines' (Lenihan, 1974, p.90). So the ear-mechanism is actually designed to accomplish two functions—hearing and balance. This feature of the body demonstrates incredible planning" (Jackson, p.59). No one can logically maintain that the ear resulted from blind forces of nature!
 2. Psalms 94:9: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"
- E. The human eye is a perfect camera. Even Darwin, the father of modern evolutionary thought, admitted: "That the eye with all its inimitable contrivances...could have been formed by natural selection seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree...If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down" (*The Origin of Species*, pp. 167,170). The human eye is such an organ, thus by his own admission, Darwin's theory collapses.
 1. The human eye is composed of over 107 million cells with 7 million cones (allowing the eye to see in full, living color), and 100 million rods (which gives the eye the ability to see in blacks, whites, and greys). The eyes are connected to the brain by over 300,000 nerves, and can detect light as feeble as 1/100 trillionth of a watt.
 2. No "intermediate state" or long sequence of such can explain this perfect camera which is able to see in full color, full motion, in splendid depth, in 3-dimension, and has a means of storing pictures for instant recall.
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3. An evolutionists made this admission: "The eye is a marvelous instrument, resembling a telescope of the highest quality, with a lens, an adjustable focus, a variable diaphragm for controlling the amount of light, and optical corrections for spherical and chromatic aberration. The eye appears to have been designed; no designer of telescopes could have done better. How could this marvelous instrument have evolved by chance, through a succession of random events?' (Jastrow, 1981, pp 96-97)" (Jackson, p.56).
 4. G.K. Chesterton said: "When men stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing. They believe in anything." Mark Twain said: "It's amazing what men will believe, so long as it's not in the Bible!"
 5. Psalms 94:9: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?"
- F. The human brain is a wondrous creation, so complex, so powerful, and so compact that it demands the existence of a Divine Creator.
1. Statements by prominent leaders of infidelity about the brain:
 - a. Isaac Asimov, world-famous atheist, admitted that our brain is "the most complex and orderly arrangement of matter in the universe' (1970, p.10; Jackson, p.50).
 - b. An atheistic professor (Paul Davies), conceded that the human brain is "the most developed and complex system known to science' (1992, Jackson, p.50).
 - c. Carl Sagan states: "The equivalent of twenty million books is inside the heads of every one of us. The brain is a very big place in a very small space" (Jackson, p.50).
 2. The brain contains over 10 billion nerve cells and 100 glia cells (which provide the biological "batteries" for brain activity). These cells sift through information, store memories, creating what we call consciousness (May, 1982). More than 120 trillion connections tie these cells together.
 3. The brain sends out electrical impulses at a speed of 393 feet per second (270 mph), and receives nerve impulses at a rate of over 2,000 per second. It continuously receives information from 130,000 light receptors in the eyes, 100,000 hearing receptors in the ears, 3,000 tastebuds, 30,000 heat spots on the skin, 250,000 cold spots and 500,000 touch spots.
 4. The brain does not move but consumes 25% of the blood's oxygen supply. Its vessels receive 20% of all the blood pumped from the heart. If the blood's oxygen supply is interrupted for 15-30 seconds, unconsciousness results. Brain damage occurs if the blood is cut off for up to 4 minutes. Four major arteries carry blood to the brain as a sort of "fail-safe" system.
 5. The brain is protected from damage by three systems: the outer skull bone, the protective lining around the brain (the dura mater), and the absorbing fluid which keeps the brain from hitting against the inside of the skull.
 6. A few years ago it was estimated that the Pentagon building would hardly hold the computer with as many synapses (synapse: the point of contact between adjacent neurons, where nerve impulses are transmitted from one to the other) as are found in the human brain; and all the power generated at Grand Coulee would be needed to operate such a computer (*Genes, Genesis and Evolution*, pp.516f).
 7. "It has been suggested that it would take a bookshelf 500 miles long—from San Francisco, California to Portland, Oregon—to house the information stored in man's brain. Does anyone actually believe that this kind of a library just happens?" (Jackson, p.51). "The Cray-2 super-computer has a storage capacity about 1,000 times less than that of the human brain. One authority states that 'problem solving by a human brain exceeds by far the capacity of the most powerful computers'" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1989, 2:189; Jackson, p.51).
 8. "One of the astounding features of the brain is its ability to process and react to so many different circumstances at once. While an artist is working on a painting (using his voluntary muscles at the behest of the brain), he can: smell food cooking and know whether it is turnip greens or steak; hear a dog barking and determine if it is his dog or a neighbor's; feel a breeze upon his face and sense that rain is near; and, be reflecting on a warm friendship of the past. Even while all of this is going on, the brain is regulating millions of internal bodily activities that the person never even 'thinks' about" (Jackson, p.54).
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9. We are asked to believe that the marvelous creation we call the brain "just happened!" A prominent brain surgeon, Dr. Robert White, observed: "I am left with no choice but to acknowledge the existence of a Superior Intellect, responsible for the design and development of the incredible brain-mind relationship—something far beyond man's capacity to understand" (1978, p.99; Jackson, p.54).
- G. The cells of the human body form a strong argument for the Creator.
1. There are more than 30 different types of cells in the human body, totaling more than 100 trillion cells in the average adult. These cells come in different sizes and shapes, with different functions and life expectancies. Some cells would be only 1 inch long if 6,000 were laid end to end; 20,000 of the smallest cells would fit inside the capital "O" of a standard typewriter. Yet if all the cells of a human body were set end to end, the line would encircle the earth 200 times. A cell is tiny but each contains 5 major systems: communication, waste disposal, nutrition, repair, and reproduction. Each cell is of itself a living organism.
 2. "The genetic information contained in each cell of the human body is roughly equivalent to a library of 4,000 volumes" ("NFD Journal," October 1987). Multiply this by the trillions of cells in a single human and see how complex one person is.
 3. "Red blood cells (there are approximately 30 trillion of them) live about 120 days; white blood cells (the blood's defense system) live about 13 days; platelets (which help blood to clot) live about 4 days; nerve cells may live over 100 years! In any given 60-second period, approximately 3 billion cells have died and been replaced in the human body—replaced by the process we call mitosis, whereby the standard chromosome number (in the human, 46) is faithfully reproduced.
 - a. "A single cell contains a strip of DNA (placed in the nucleus in a spiral-staircase configuration) which is about one yard long, and which contains over 6 billion biochemical steps! Every cell of the body contains such DNA —over a billion miles total in one human....Although each cell contains the whole structure of DNA, only a part of that message is 'activated'—causing one cell to be a fingernail cell, another to be an eye cell, another to be a blood cell, etc. How this process occurs baffles even the most brilliant scientists...[DNA] provides, in coded form, every characteristic of every living person.
 - b. "How many people are there on the face of the earth?...If there are roughly 4 billion people on earth [more than six billion today—bw], it took two cells to make each of them [one male sperm and one female ovum], that's approximately 8 billion cells. Extract the DNA from those 8 billion cells (remember: this is the DNA it took to give every living person every characteristic he or she has), and that DNA would fit into no more than 1/8th of a cubic inch!! (*Reason and Revelation*, October 1987).
 4. Yet we are told that life is an accident of nature! "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God" (Heb. 3:4).
- H. The skin of the body is nearly a waterproof layer, enclosing the body; the body is about 60% water. The skin prevents too much moisture entering or exiting. It is both a radiator and retainer of heat, helping to regulate the body's temperature. It acts to protect the body against bacteria, etc. It has the power to regenerate itself.
- I. The heart is another amazing part of the body which argues for the Creator. "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" (Lev. 17:11). It weighs less than a pound but is able to pump blood through 12,000 miles of blood vessels. The body has about 2.5 gallons of blood; the heart pushes about 650,000 gallons through the body in a year's time. It beats about 3 billion times in an average lifespan.
1. As blood moves from a chamber into arteries, a check valve prevents its return to the chambers. Man obtained knowledge of cameras by examining the eye; he learned about check valves by examining the heart.
 2. There is an opening between the auricles of an unborn baby's heart which is open before birth, but
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instantly at birth this opening is closed by flaps; this is the only time that operation occurs (Baxter, pp.70-72). The muscle which allows the lungs to open only operates once: at birth, when it contracts.

XIV. PALEY'S WATCH ARGUMENT— CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

A. "In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there, I might possibly answer, that for anything I knew to the contrary it had lain there forever; nor would it, perhaps, be easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that for anything I knew the watch might have always been there.

1. "Yet why should not this answer for the watch serve as well as for the stone? For this reason, and for no other, namely, that when we came to inspect the watch—what we could not discover in the stone—that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, that is, that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none that would have answered the same use now served by it. To reckon up a few of the plainest parts and of their offices, all tending to one result: We see a cylindrical box containing a coiled elastic spring, which, by its endeavor to relax itself, turns round in the box....
2. "We find then a series of wheels, the teeth of which catch in and apply to each other, conducting motion from the fusee to the balance and from the balance to the pointer (hands), and at the same time, by the size and shape of these wheels, so regulating that motion as to terminate in causing an index, by an equable and measured progression, to pass over a given space in a given time. We take notice that the wheels, are made of brass, in order to keep them from rust; and the springs of steel, no other metal being elastic; that over the face of the watch there is placed a glass, a material employed in no other part of the work...
3. "This mechanism being observed—it requires indeed an examination of the instrument, and perhaps some previous knowledge of the subject to perceive and understand it; but being once, as we had said, observed and understood, the inference we think is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker—that there must have existed at sometime and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it to actually answer, who comprehended its construction and designed its use. Its mechanism would be unique to us in any case.
4. "Nor would it...weaken our conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made—that we had known an artist capable of making one—if we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or understanding in what manner it was performed....
5. "Ignorance of this kind exalts our opinion of the unseen and unknown artist's skill, if he be unseen and unknown, but raises no doubt in our minds of the existence and agency of such an artist, at some former time, and in some other place.
6. "Nor can I perceive that it varies at all the inference, whether the question arise concerning a human agent or concerning an agent of a different species, or an agent possessing in some respects a different nature" (William Paley, *Natural Theology*, pp.9-16, quoted by Hearn).

B. The universe, our solar system, the earth, the complexities of life, the untold number of design features of nearly everything around us, all argue conclusively for the existence of a Grand Designer and Creator.

1. The earth rotates at approximately 1,000 MPH and is never late; the eclipses of the sun and moon can be predicted to the hour many years beforehand; the appearance of Halley's comet can be forecast 75 years ahead of time.
2. Paley's argument regarding the watch obviously and undeniably having had a designer and maker is unanswerable; how much more obvious, undeniable, and unanswerable is the argument that the complex nature of the universe and our world demands the existence of Almighty God!

XV. THE HISTORICAL CHRIST IS A VIABLE PROOF OF GOD'S EXISTENCE.

A. It is impossible to explain Christ apart from the fact that he came from God.

1. Jesus Christ is a proven historical character. "His name was Jesus and he was born in the latter half of the eighth century of the Roman era. His ancestry was Hebrew; his country Palestine. He died in Jerusalem in the administrations of governor Pontius Pilate and emperor Tiberius Caesar. These are incontrovertible facts; they are as historically certain as history can be" (*Fortify Your Faith*, p.22).
2. His divine identity is proved by the testimony of reliable eyewitnesses: their number is sufficient, their reliability is undoubted, their sincerity is evident from the fact that they suffered for what they told.
- B. This same Jesus established a religion which has forever changed the course of human affairs. No other religion or philosophy can even approximate the influence of Christianity. Its closest rivals can be accounted for on natural grounds.
 1. Muhammadanism has been spread largely by force and by offering sensual rewards to its adherents in the afterworld.
 2. Buddhism promises escape from the harsh circumstances of earthly life through asceticism and self-hypnotic meditation. It is mostly confined to those lands where miserable living conditions are perpetual.
 3. Christianity cannot be spread by force. "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).
 4. The gospel forbids fleshly lusts. "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" (Gal 5:19-21).
 5. Its adherents are not permitted to escape through asceticism.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 5:9-13: "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."

XVI. CONCLUSION.

A. The Evil Consequences of Unbelief.

1. Every significant decision we make has consequences, good or evil. To choose to disbelieve in the existence of the God of the Bible certainly produces some unpleasant results.
 2. The Bible describes the awful aftermath of unbelief:
 - a. Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
 - b. John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."
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- c. 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; 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. 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 fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 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. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, 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."
 - d. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: "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; 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."
3. Common sense shows the tragedy of rejecting belief in God.
 - a. It leads to a materialistic concept of life, and ultimately fosters idolatry (of some kind), selfishness, and hedonism.
 - b. It removes genuine purpose of living, and places man on the level of beasts.
 - c. It robs man of the Providential aid of the Almighty, and thus subjects him to all manner of evil that otherwise might have been avoided.
 - 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) 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."
 - 3) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 10:12-13: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*."
 4. Unbelief leads to hopelessness as many infidels have discovered. (See Baxter, pp.75-78).
 - a. Voltaire: "Strike out a few sages, and the crowd of human beings is nothing but a horrible
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assemblage of unfortunate criminals, and the globe contains nothing but corpses. I tremble to have to complain once more of the Being of Beings in casting an attentive eye over this terrible picture. I wish I had never been born."

- b. Goethe (regarding his life): "Yet, truly, there has been nothing but toil and care; and I may say that, in all my seventy-five years, I have never had a month of genuine comfort. It has been the perpetual rolling of a stone, which I have always had to raise anew....Men will become more clever and more acute, but not better, happier, and stronger in action...."
- c. Renan: "We are living on the perfume of an empty vase."
- d. Jouffroy: "I knew then that at the bottom of myself there was nothing left standing, that all I had believed about myself, about God, and about my destiny in this life and in that to come, I now believed no more. This moment was frightful; and when, towards morning, I threw myself exhausted upon my bed, it seemed to me as if I could feel my former life, so cheerful and complete, die away, and before me there opened another life, dark and is peopled, where henceforth I was to live alone, alone with my fatal thought which had just exiled me thither, and which I was tempted to curse."
- e. Ingersoll: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities."
- f. Mark Twain:
 - 1) "A myriad of men are born; they labor and sweat and struggle for bread; they squabble and scold and fight; they scramble for little mean advantages over each other. Age creeps upon them; infirmities follow; shames and humiliations bring down their pride and vanities. Those they love are taken from them and the joy of life is turned to aching grief. The burden of pain, care, misery, grows heavier year by year.
 - 2) "At length ambition is dead; pride is dead; vanity is dead; longing for release is in their place. It comes at last—the only unpoisoned gift earth ever had for them—and they vanish from a world where they were of no consequence; where they achieved nothing; where they were a mistake and a failure and a foolishness; where they have left no sign that they have existed—a world which will lament them a day and forget them forever.
 - 3) "Then another myriad takes their place and copies all they did and goes along the same profitless road and vanishes as they vanished—to make room for another and another and a million other myriads to follow the same arid path through the same desert and accomplish what the first myriad and all the myriads that came after it accomplished—Nothing!"
- g. Bertrand Russell: "The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach, and where none may tarry long....That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand."

B. Consequences of Faith in God.

1. Faith in God is necessary in order for there to be any meaningfulness to life on earth for mankind; and this same unfaltering faith lends confident hope for the future. "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" (2 Tim. 1:12).
2. Because of obedient faith (Rom. 1:5; 16:26; Jas. 2:14-26; Heb. 5:8-9), we may have the confidence as did the psalmist: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of

righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Psa. 23).

3. Hope gives us the confidence Paul expressed in Philippians 4: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice...Be careful for nothing ["]in nothing be anxious"—ASV]; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus....Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content....I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me....But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (verses 4, 6,7,11,13,19).
 4. Paul's sermon to the Athenians speaks great things regarding the God of heaven: "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 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 see 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. 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 17:22-31).
- C. T.B. Larimore, one of the greatest modern preachers, expressed the hope that all saints should have:
1. "My faith has never been stronger; my hope has never been brighter; my head has never been clearer; my heart has never been calmer; my life has never been purer. I hope all; I hate none. My love for some lifts my soul into the realm of the sublime. I am willing to die today; I am willing to live a thousand years, to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.
 2. "My friends are dearer to me; association with them is sweeter to me; my sympathy for suffering souls is stronger; my love for all the pure, the true, the beautiful, the good, and the sublime—from the bud, the blossom, the babe, up to Him from whom all blessings flow—is truer, tenderer, sweeter, than ever before....I sleep soundly, dream sweetly, and 'rejoice evermore.' 'The word' is sweeter and stronger to me than ever before. O it is delightful to love and be loved, and to do whatsoever duty demands! My vanity is all gone. What the people say does not bother me. I'll never waver, but always to the right be true" (Baxter, p.85).
- D. Here are some plain, affirmative pronouncements from God's word:
1. 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."
 2. 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."
 3. 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."
 4. 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."
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5. 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."
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What God Is Like

I. AN EARLIER STUDY ESTABLISHED THE EXISTENCE OF GOD TO ALL OPEN MINDS.

A. But not everyone has an open mind, thus some believe and some do not believe in God.

1. Some firmly believe God is the eternal creator and sustainer of the universe.
 - a. These accept God as a real being who created and continues to direct the universe.
 - b. As much as 97% of Americans have this view.
2. Some reject God, claiming that the universe, man, and all things came about accidentally.
 - a. A much smaller percentage of Americans accept this view.
 - b. One would have to be God to say authoritatively there is no God!
 - c. Atheists are often afraid or uncertain as they approach death. Ingersoll, an infamous infidel, is reported to have made the following statement: "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul, from hell, if there be a hell."

B. Nature and sound logic tell us that God is.

1. Earlier in this study many significant arguments and evidences were adduced to show that there is a God in heaven.
2. The evidences in nature and our sound logic also tell us of God's power, goodness, and intelligence, but we cannot learn what he expects of us by looking at nature and using our own wisdom only. "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).
3. The Bible reveals God's will for us and tells us what God is like.

II. GOD IS ONE.

A. There are many false gods but only one true, living God.

1. Plain statements from the Bible affirm this truth:
 - a. Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD."
 - b. Isaiah 44:6: "Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God."
2. But that does not mean that the Godhead is comprised of only one person.
 - a. Christ prayed that all who would believe on him should be one (John 17:20-21); the Bible later states that there are many members of the Lord's church (his spiritual body), but there is only one body. God and Christ are one; members of the body of Christ are one; but that does not mean that God and Christ comprise only one person any more than the many members of the Lord's church are only one individual.
 - b. God decreed that in marriage, husband and wife become one flesh (Gen. 2:23-24; Matt. 19:45; Eph. 5:28-31). The husband and wife are plainly said to be one flesh, but they are separate and distinct individuals; they are one in purpose.

B. Three distinct and separate personalities are found in the Godhead: God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

1. They are listed separately, as distinct individual, but they are perfectly united in purpose.
 2. Each of the divine three was present at the creation.
 - a. 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."
 - b. Colossians 1:15-17: "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."
 3. Each of these three was present as indistinguishable separate persons at the Lord's baptism: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.
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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" (Matt. 3:15-17). Christ was at the river's edge, the Holy Spirit descended upon him, and the voice of the Father was heard speaking from heaven.

III. GOD IS MANIFESTED IN THREE PERSONS.

- A. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are separate persons who are united perfectly in purpose.
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. 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."
 3. 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."
 4. Acts 5:3-4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."
 5. Ephesians 4:4-6: "*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."
 6. Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."
- B. There is one Divine Nature and three Divine Persons.
1. A husband and his wife are one, but are still separate persons.
 2. John 17:20-22: "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. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one."

IV. GOD IS A SPIRITUAL BEING.

- A. There is nothing material or physical about him.
1. 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." The apostles thought the risen Lord was a spirit; he gave them proof that they were seeing a flesh and blood person; a spirit has no such body.
 2. John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
- B. God the Father, Christ the Son [in his eternal state], and the Holy Spirit are all spirit Beings.
1. We do not know what a spiritual body is like. We cannot see any person's spirit with our physical eyes; the physical and the spiritual are entirely different.
 2. In heaven, it will be necessary for us to have spiritual bodies in order to fill our role there; physical items and entities are not fashioned for heaven: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50). On a much smaller scale, a fish is not equipped to survive on land and man is not naturally equipped to live under water.

V. GOD IS OMNISCIENT—He Possesses All Knowledge..

- A. He has the capacity to know everything he wills to know.
1. There is no limit to his knowledge and understanding except as he wills to limit himself. He knows everything he wills to know.

2. His omniscience is shown by the universe.
 - a. There is an obvious design and balance in nature. This design is not accidental; it could not have happened without an all-knowing Designer.
 - b. The laws we observe in nature are dependable, indicating the omniscience of the one who produced those laws. These laws could not have produced themselves.

B. His omniscience is shown clearly by Biblical prophecies and affirmations.

1. These prophecies are found by the hundreds in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, and their fulfillment in minute detail denotes the infinite knowledge that produced the utterances.
2. Biblical statements affirming God's Omniscience:
 - a. Job 28:26: "When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder."
 - b. Psalms 69:5: "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."
 - c. Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - d. Isaiah 40:26: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth."
 - e. Acts 15:18: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."
 - f. Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

VI. **GOD IS OMNIPOTENT—HE HAS ALL POWER.**

A. Biblical statements:

1. Genesis 18:14: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."
2. Psalms 8:3: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained."
3. Psalms 33:9: "For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast."
4. Matthew 19:26: "But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

B. He is limited in power only in that which he limits himself.

1. It is impossible for God to lie: "That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:18).
2. He cannot act unwisely.
3. He is not involved in absurdities: i.e., making a rock too heavy even for him to lift; or trying to make a square circle.

VII. **GOD IS OMNIPRESENT—HE IS NOT LIMITED BY TIME OR SPACE.**

A. Biblical statements:

1. 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?"
2. Psalms 139:7-10: "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; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."
3. Acts 17:24-28: "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."

B. God is ever present; he always has man in his view; we cannot escape his eye.

1. Jeremiah 23:23-24: "*Am* I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD."
2. Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
3. Hebrews 4:13 "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

VIII. **GOD IS INFINITELY JUST.**

A. He is utterly fair and impartial.

1. Romans 2:11: "For there is no respect of persons with God."
2. Romans 2:16: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

B. His actions, words, and motives are perfectly just.

1. Genesis 18:25: "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
2. Psalms 89:14: "Justice and judgment *are* the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face."
3. We are instructed be righteous in our judgments: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).
4. Daniel 6:10-17: "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask *a petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which *is* of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard *these* words, was sore displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed. Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. *Now* the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel." The pagan king could not satisfy both civil justice and extend mercy to Daniel.

C. God can only satisfy justice *and* extend mercy through Christ.

1. Romans 3:25-26: "Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
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."

IX. **GOD IS INFINITE IN HOLINESS—HE IS UTTERLY SEPARATED FROM SIN.**

A. Biblical statements:

1. Isaiah 59:2: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
2. James 1:13: "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."
3. 1 Peter 1:16: "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."
4. 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."

B. The most holy man cannot be compared with God.

1. Isaiah 6:3: "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
2. 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."
3. Revelation 4:8: "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."
4. God is infinite in his goodness.
 - a. Psalms 145:9: "The LORD *is* good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works."
 - b. He always acts for the greatest good of his creation. Sometimes this requires punishment. Even human parents recognize the need for the chastisement of their disobedient children.

X. GOD IS ETERNAL.**A. God has ever existed; he had no beginning.**

1. He had no beginning and he can have no end. The nature of deity is such that it is impossible for a divine being to have either a beginning or an end.
2. What is said about God the Father, is equally applicable to Christ.
 - a. Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
 - b. 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."
 - c. Revelation 22:13: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

B. Biblical statements:

1. Exodus 3:14: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."
2. Psalms 33:11: "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."
3. Psalms 90:2: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God."
4. Isaiah 46:10: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."
5. 1 Timothy 1:17: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

XI. GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE.**A. This is a strange concept to us.**

1. Our experience shows us that society, individuals, and worldly conditions are constantly in a state of change. The face of the earth itself is always in a state of change. But God does not change.
2. Malachi 3:6: "For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

B. Since he experiences no change, he can always be trusted.

1. 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."
2. Our Savior, being part of the Godhead, does not change.
 - a. Hebrews 1:8-12: "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: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."
 - b. Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

XII. CONCLUSION:

A. God conducts no experiments and makes no mistakes.

1. He never needs to repent in the sense that men must repent: "God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it?* or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num 23:19).
2. The nature of God is the constitution of the universe.

B. His will is supreme.

1. None can escape his eternal word.
2. 1 Peter 1:24-25: "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."
3. Revelation 20:12: "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."

C. Do you need to bow in submission to his will?

The God Of Heaven Is Good

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. The Bible affirms both the existence of God and his inherent goodness.

1. Psalms 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good."
2. Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."
3. Isaiah 40:25-26: "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth."
4. 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."
5. 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."
6. 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. Fundamental to Christianity is the proposition that God is Good.

1. Those who believe the Bible know that God, because of his goodness, created the universe and perfected and adapted the earth for man's habitat.
2. Without his goodness, life would not and could not exist.
3. Apart from his goodness there could be no salvation from sin.
 - a. 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."
 - b. Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - c. 2 Peter 3:8-9: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
4. His goodness has provided heaven for the righteous: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

C. God's existence is demanded by the evidence but many deny his goodness because evil is present.

1. Epicurus (342-271 B.C.) set forth this argument against God's goodness: "God either wishes to take away evils and is unable; or he is able and unwilling; or he is neither willing nor able, or he is both willing and able. If he is willing and unable, he is feeble, which is not in accordance with the character of god; if he is able and unwilling, he is envious, which is equally at variance with god; if he is neither willing nor able, he is both envious and feeble, and therefore, not god; if he is both willing and able, which is alone suitable to god, from what source then are evils? or why does he not remove them?" (Quoted by Warren, *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?*, p.271).
2. J.L. Mackie, an Australian philosopher of our time, says: "...God is omnipotent: God is wholly good; and yet evil exists. There seems to be some contradiction between these three propositions so that if any two of them were true the third would be false....Good is opposed to evil, in such a way that a good thing always eliminates evil as far as it can, and that there are no limits to what an omnipotent thing can do. From these it follows that a good omnipotent thing eliminates evil completely, and then the propositions that a good, omnipotent thing exists, and that evil exists, are incompatible" (ibid., pp.2f). Thus:
 - a. "If evil exists, then God does not exist."

- b. "Evil exists."
- c. "Therefore, God does not exist."

D. The strongest argument against God's existence is the presence of evil in the world.

1. The assumption is that God (as presented in the Bible) and evil (which is present in the world) cannot both exist. Since God is said to be good, he should not allow evil to exist. This is the heart of the argument, but is baseless assumption.
2. They argue that God is either unable or unwilling to eliminate evil, and that in either case, he does not measure up to what the Bible says about him.
3. Woolsey Teller, in his debate with J. Bales in 1947, argued:
 - a. "I think there are definite proofs of the non-existence of God right within reach of your own lives. Many in this audience are young...and I dare say a large proportion of you may have participated in the last war. If you did, you know its horrors, its agony, its distress, and what it meant to millions of homes. All things which are vile and vicious entered the world war. What was God doing during all that time? On the assumption of the theologians, there is somebody sitting on a cloud watching over us and anxious about how things are going on down here below. Did he take an interest in this world war?"
 - b. "How many millions of prayers were uttered during the last world war for its cessation? What happened? Nothing—the war went on for long dreary years. Prayer after Prayer after Prayer asked God to stop the war. The bloodshed went on. That is the way God is concerned about you.... What would the Devil have done under the same circumstances?"
 - c. "The situation offers, in that respect, a definite proof against the existence of a heavenly being interested in your welfare. He did not stop the war. You remember, for example, when England had a national day of prayer. (We had many prayer days, too.) And I think it was on either the second or third day after that national day of prayer that the English people suffered one of the worst blitzkriegs in the whole war. That is the way their prayers were answered" (Quoted in "The Restorer," March, 1987). [We will answer this argument later].

E. Faithful Christians often are distressed over evil that afflicts us.

1. Although our faith may not flag, yet we are caused to wonder why we face trouble.
2. Our little baby dies and we ask, "Why?" A faithful saint tragically loses his life while many despicable sinners live on—Why? Evil men prosper and the godly suffer want—Why?
3. Job's wife succumbed to this weakness and advised her husband to curse God and die (Job 2:9); his friends thought that Job had earned his troubles through his own misconduct (Job 4:7).
4. God assures us that he has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth" (Ezek. 18:31). Neither is it his will that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9).

II. **THE NEXT LOGICAL STEP IN THE STUDY IS TO DEFINE WHAT EVIL IS.**

A. There is evil of the natural sort.

1. This includes those accidents and tragedies caused by natural means such as storms, earthquakes, tornadoes, landslides, lightning strikes, and floods.
2. Also, there are attacks by wild animals, snakebites, and dog bites.
3. There are many kinds of accidents which happen to us, plus diseases and afflictions, and pain and sorrow caused by separations and death.
4. Hardship and suffering from natural means may not be directly traceable to any person or to God, although sometimes these may be given as punishment for evil which we have done, or simply because of the nature of this life.

B. There is evil of the moral sort.

1. This is evil which results from man's misconduct. Man is responsible for the sin he commits. Often physical punishment is brought to bear on him because he has committed an offense worthy of direct retribution. God may punish the guilty party, or civil authority may imprison or execute those guilty of crime. "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* the fruit of their thoughts,

because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it" (Jer. 6:19). God imposes the proper penalties, sometimes a limited punishment in the present, but the ultimate penalty is administered in eternity.

2. The consequences of sin on the part of one may be brought to bear upon innocent parties. Innocent children often suffer because their father was an alcoholic or drug user; innocent citizens may suffer on account of the misconduct of their country's leader (cf. the people of Iraq under Hussein).

III. FACTORS IN THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL IN THIS WORLD.

A. Man's free will contributes to the presence and spread of evil.

1. Genesis 1:31: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." There was not one flaw in the creation as God made it; it was only after man had exerted his influence on this world that imperfections came.
2. In his wisdom, God saw fit to give man the full range of choice as he conducted his affairs. This freedom of choice carries a heavy weight of responsibility for if the wrong choices are made, certain consequences are in the offing.
 - a. Deuteronomy 30:15,19: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil...I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."
 - b. Man with his limited wisdom wonders whether God could have created man in such a state that would make him incapable of sin, or could have made him so that he would always make the right choice, therefore avoiding the grievous consequences of sin (pain, suffering, disasters, death, etc.). Such a suggestion would result in making man nothing more than a robot, a mere machine; it also is from a finite being who is unqualified to speak on such matters. Having only a limited choice is not full and free moral agency [freedom to decide and act].
3. God made man in his own image, and as he has freedom of choice, so he wanted man to have the ability to choose righteousness, and thus have fellowship with the Almighty.
4. But with freedom comes responsibility; if man makes the wrong choice, he must pay the consequences for his error. It is man, not God, who bears the blame when he opts to engage in evil deeds, words, or thoughts.
 - a. Genesis 2:16-17: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."
 - b. Genesis 3:16-19: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
 - c. Romans 5:12: "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."

B. Nature and Natural Laws contribute to the presence and spread of evil (suffering).

1. In the Creation, God brought into existence an orderly universe; he gave all the many laws of nature by which this orderliness is maintained. These laws pertain to the operation of the universe as God intended, the reproduction, growth and spread of the many life forms, chemical processes, laws governing gravity and light, and the untold other laws needed for the earth and life to exist. Millions have spent their lives discovering and studying these laws, and yet the surface has only been scratched.
 - a. 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."
- b. 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."
 - c. Matthew 5:45: "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."
 - d. 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."
 - e. Colossians 1:17: "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
 - f. Hebrews 1:2-3: "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; 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."
2. These laws work together for the good of humanity, but abuses and violations cause harm to befall us.
- a. Sunshine is essential for life, for from it we derive nourishment and health. But too much exposure can cause our skin to be burned, crops to be dried up, and our days hot and miserable.
 - b. Water is essential for life also, and the rain God sends by means of his natural laws enables crops to be grown, and replenishes our drinking supply. But too much rain can cause destructive floods. Or if a baby falls into a body of water, it will perish despite its innocence.
 - c. The sun, the circulation of wind, and the evaporation cycle operate together to cause the weather systems to move across the face of the earth. These changing weather systems are necessary for the rain we need and the different seasons. But they often bring storms which can be destructive to life and property.
 - d. Fire is a wonderful tool which is able to enhance our comfort and our food. But the fire that cooks our food and warms our house is able to consume our house and us if it is not carefully controlled.
 - e. Gravity is essential for us to remain on the earth! Without it everything unanchored to the earth would be hurled off into space. But if we consciously or unconsciously violate the law of gravity, we can be severely injured or killed.
 - f. God created the lower forms of life for the benefit of man, and gave man supreme dominance over them (Gen. 9:1-3; I Tim. 4:3-4). But nature is "raw in tooth and claw" and often mankind, even innocent little babies, is harmed by animals.
 - g. The material God has provided by which we are able to build our houses and our cities can disintegrate and fall, causing injury and death.
3. Some of these natural tragedies are inevitable; some are caused by our lack of caution, skill, or knowledge; some are caused by the misuse of nature by evil men.
- a. The very operation of the laws of nature causes storms, floods, lightening strikes, cave-ins, landslides, earthquakes, etc., which often result in harm to man. The very nature of earthly life demands such eventualities. This does not mean that God is lacking in either goodness or power.
 - b. A little baby can fall from a balcony and be crushed to death on the sidewalk below. This does not make God a monster for having created gravity. A criminal might throw a victim from a tall building, but it is not through God's lack of goodness or power that an innocent person is thus murdered.
 - c. When the laws of nature are violated (even by innocent babes), there is a severe penalty that must be paid. Whether those laws are violated on purpose or by accident, the same kind of consequence is met. "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the
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tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:1-5).

4. The laws of nature will be present "as long as the earth remaineth" (Gen. 8:22). Therefore the penalties for violations of these laws are ever with us.

C. Sin has contributed to the presence and spread of evil in the world.

1. First, notice that all tragedy, pain, and hardship is not the direct result of sin. Just because a man engages in sin does not mean that he will face immediate punishment for his offense: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).
 - a. Job's friends thought his afflictions were due to horrendous crimes he had done against God (Job 4:7; 42:7). His sufferings were not due to personal guilt.
 - b. John 9:1-3: "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." This man did not suffer blindness directly because of any evil he or his parents had done.
2. However, there are certain cases in the Bible where people were severely punished, directly and immediately, when they violated God's law.
 - a. The case of Nadab and Abihu: 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" (Lev. 10:1-2).
 - b. The case of Uzzah:
 - 1) 2 Samuel 6:6-7: "And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God."
 - 2) 1 Chronicles 13:9-10: "And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God."
 - c. The case of the younger prophet (1 Kings 13).
 - d. The case of Ananias and Sapphira: "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him" (Acts 5:1-6).
 - e. The case of Herod: "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" (Acts 12:21-23).
 - f. The case of Elymas: "And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them,

- seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty 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” (Acts 13:6-11).
- g. The cases of Er and Onan: “And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also” (Gen. 38:7-10).
 - h. God has overthrown cities and nations because of their wickedness: Sodom and Gomorrah; Nineveh; Babylon.
 - i. Even Israel was punished time and again because of their sin: “If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good” (Josh. 24:20; cf. 1 Cor. 10:1ff).
3. When Adam and Eve sinned, they caused untold misery to come upon their descendants (Gen. 3:16-19; Rom. 5:12; 8:22).
 - a. A curse was placed upon the earth because of their sin (Gen. 3:17).
 - b. Disease, sickness, affliction, and death followed.
 - c. Thus, indirectly, we all suffer on account of sin which our first parents introduced, and which every generation has perpetuated by their own disobedience.
 - d. Under the gospel system, there is no need for anyone to suffer the eternal penalty of sin.
- D. In order for our character to be developed, hardships and sufferings are necessary.
1. God has made this earth a proving-ground for eternity for mankind.
 - a. The earth is to be utterly destroyed at the end of time (2 Pet. 3:10; Mt. 24:35).
 - b. We are called "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13).
 - c. It is God's will that every human being be with him in heaven after earthly life is done (2 Pet. 3:9; John 3:16), but those entering heaven must be pure (Rev. 21:27; Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14).
 - d. To be made fit for heaven, children of God (who have had their past sins washed away in the blood of Christ—Rev. 1:5; Mt. 26:28) are called upon to endure all sorts of hardship, persecutions, and afflictions which help us purge our minds, hearts, and lives of wrong thoughts, beliefs, ideas, motives, love of the world, and practices of sin (Ps. 119:67,71; Job 23:10; Ps. 66:10; Dan. 11:33-35; Zech. 13:9; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 5:1-10; Heb. 12:5-7, 11).
 2. When some trial comes upon us we should be happy, for this gives us an opportunity to shine more brightly for our Father (I Pet. 4:12-16; Acts 5:41; Jas. 1:2-3; Rom. 5:3).
 - a. For metal to be made strong, both the fire and hammer are necessary.
 - b. For gold to be purified, the extreme heat of fire is necessary to burn away the impurities.
 - c. Before the plant can spring forth, the shell confining the kernel of life must be rent.
 - d. Before a Christian can be made fully strong, he must be able to overcome certain difficulties and problems.
 - e. When a Christian does his duty in this world, he will be faced with opposition from those who do not want the truth (2 Tim. 3:12; cf. Matt. 18:7; John 3:20-21).
 - f. Therefore, it is both natural and necessary for persecution, hardship, trials, temptations, and suffering to come upon the faithful children of God.
 3. Faithful saints who endure hardship, because of their obedience to the Almighty, have been strong influences in getting the lost to turn to the Lord.
 - a. Centuries after the life of Job, many have been encouraged by the faithful endurance of Job (Jas.
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- 5:11).
- b. Old Testament prophets still encourage many by their example.
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) James 5:10: "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience."
 - c. Jesus and Paul still inspire faithfulness.
 - 1) Hebrews 12:1-2: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:22-27: "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 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."

E. The unrighteousness of men causes evil to be present and to spread in the world.

1. In view of the fact that God will not compel men to submit to his will, they most often do what they please, for their own gratification and advantage.
 - a. When one man does evil, his evil is felt by others. That "no man is an island" is an adage that ever retains its veracity.
 - b. In ancient Israel, when one generation sinned, the punishment forthcoming [the consequence of one generation's sins] was visited to the third and fourth generations following (Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9). "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities" (Lam. 5:9).
 - c. When a nation rejects the gospel, the next generations are apt to venture even deeper into sin, and thus the punishment, when it comes, is severe indeed. The evil influence of one generation is felt by those which follow.
2. In a more personal way, the evil men do brings severe harm to others who may be entirely innocent.
 - a. A criminal robs a bank and kills a worker during the robbery; God cannot be blamed for this tragedy for the criminal acted contrary to what God has said in his word. Remember, God does not force any man to be obedient to his will.
 - b. A cocaine-using woman gives birth to an infant who is born with a dependency on that evil drug; it is not the innocent baby's fault, neither is it God's fault. As long as people reject the will of God, this kind of evil will be present in our world, and the innocent will continue to suffer needlessly.
 - c. A homosexual man contracts AIDS because of his sinful lifestyle; he spreads it to others; he and those he infects suffer very grievously, and die from the affliction. God cannot be blamed, for he warned against such sinful practices.
 - d. A man is an alcoholic, and due to this sinful practice he spends his wages for liquor instead of paying the rent and buying food for his family; he beats his wife, and mistreats his children. Is God to blame for these tragic results? Certainly not! God did not make the liquor, he did not encourage the man to drink it, but rather gave counsel against such. But the innocent suffer when sinful men

- insist on disobeying God.
- e. A drunk driver runs his car head-on into another car, killing and crippling those in the other vehicle. These victims are innocent, yet some of them are dead and others face a life of suffering and expense. Is God at fault?
 - f. A man seizes control of the government of a country; he builds up the army and starts a war of conquest in which millions of people lose their lives, countless others are injured or suffer loss in many ways, cities and nations are destroyed, and the course of history is tragically altered. Can the blame be charged to the Almighty? God did not instruct that evil man to do what he did; he warned against such conduct.
 - 1) If God should directly, miraculously stop the war, he would be interfering with the free agency of man, and would be violating the commitment he made not to interfere directly in man's affairs.
 - 2) If he supernaturally prevented one war, he would be obliged to stop every other war, if he is to be impartial. If he prevented a war between two nations, he must also prevent a fistfight between two individuals. If he should prevent cases of physical violence, he would be obliged to prevent conflicts of words.
 - 3) Where would be the logically stopping point if he intervened in these cases? Every rape? Every lie? Every murder? Every theft? Every lightning strike? Every roll of thunder? Every storm?
 - g. God does not violate the commitment he made about allowing man full freedom: "...The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 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. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 13:24-30, 37-43).
3. There is no infallible, practical solution to such tragedies we have described. The only alternatives would be if God had created us as mindless machines, incapable of committing sin, or to have put each individual on earth completely separated from all others. Such a life as a machine or in total isolation would hardly be worth living. The Creator could gain no glory from such an arrangement, and there would be no happiness and fulfillment for man.
 4. God created man with the capacity of obedience or disobedience to his will. He gave all the principles and instructions and motivations necessary for man to be able to live in peace with his neighbors. Our Heavenly Father cannot be faulted when his offspring choose to ignore his word, do that which is evil, and as a consequence, cause innocent people to suffer.
- F. Because God is Good and is Longsuffering, evil men are given time to repent.
1. "The goodness of God consists not only in his justice—keeping man from suffering *more* than he deserves; it also consists of his mercy and kindness—keeping man from suffering as *much* as he deserves" (Workman).
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- a. Exodus 34:6: "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,"
- b. Psalms 103:10: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."
2. When the wickedness of man increased to its zenith, God resolved that he would destroy the entire race of men except for Noah and his family. But he still gave the wicked 120 years in which to make a change. I Peter 3:20-21 describes this as the "longsuffering of God" which waited while the ark was being constructed.
 - a. God wanted to spare man the terrible tragedy of the flood and the eternal fate which awaited those dying in sin—so he gave them time to repent.
 - b. But while he was extending this opportunity, man still did violence to man; many people experienced evil at the hands of others; but they all were steeped in sin, and perhaps most of them were deserving of the ill-treatment they received.
 - c. The point is: God is good, but men take advantage of it and press their evil.
3. God remains longsuffering with humanity today.
 - a. 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - b. Revelation 2:21: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."
 - c. Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
4. He still gives man time and opportunity to change his ways.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 6:2: "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."
5. Opportunity unseized is lost!
 - a. 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."
 - b. Hebrews 3:13: "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
6. The day is coming when his longsuffering will end.
 - 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. 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. 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. 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."

IV. THE GOODNESS OF GOD IS SEEN IN HIS DEALINGS WITH MANKIND.

- A. Consider these statements from God's word:
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1. Exodus 34:6: "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."
 2. Psalms 33:5: "He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD."
 3. Psalms 100:3-5: "Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name. For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations."
 4. Psalms 107:1: "O give thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever."
 5. Jeremiah 33:9: "And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it."
 6. Hosea 3:5 "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days."
 7. Nahum 1:7: "The LORD *is* good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him."
 8. Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 9. 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."
- B. He showed his goodness in the creation.
1. The very gift of life itself to mankind was an act of goodness.
 - a. We have our lives [our being] from God, for life can come only from God.
 - b. We are the offspring of God for we are made in his image: we are rational and intelligent; we have the ability to discern good and evil with his revelation as the standard; our spirits are eternal.
 2. Because of his goodness, he perfectly adapted the earth for our life and happiness.
 - a. He provided food, water, air, and the means to obtain shelter and clothing.
 - b. He furnished protection from the animals by giving us dominance over the lower creation and giving the animals an instinctive fear of man (quickly developed).
 - c. He gave us seasons, capability to grow crops, and the ability to reproduce.
 3. His goodness furnished us with the five senses whereby we can function properly.
 4. He placed within the earth the means for our health, happiness, and comfort: great deposits of coal, petroleum, metals, plants and trees; he made it possible for us to have chemicals and other sources from which medicines can be made.
 5. When mankind faces some great problem or need, God has seen fit to allow man to discover the solution for the problem or find the means for providing the need. Thus, cures for various diseases, the information to stop the spread of plagues, better means of transportation and communication, and more productive methods of producing food and clothing, have been learned. God's goodness made all such things possible!
- C. He has shown his goodness by the punishment he meted out to the disobedient.
1. We must remember that God hates sin but loves mankind; his love for his offspring required him to punish wickedness in order to show goodness to the whole race. An American hero during World War I was Alvin York, from Tennessee. He was a conscientious objector to war at the first, but later killed many enemy soldiers; he stated that he did so in order to save the lives of American soldiers, who were being killed by the enemy.
 2. He punished wickedness in many instances in Bible times:
 - a. He destroyed the whole race, except for the family of Noah, when evil became so entrenched that it overspread the whole world (Gen. 6-9).
 - b. He consumed Nadab and Abihu with fire when they tried to introduce false worship into the holy nation of Israel (Lev. 10:1-2).
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- c. He ordered the execution of Achan because he directly disobeyed God's command.
- d. He demanded that King Saul utterly destroy the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15).
- e. He slew Uzzah when he touched the ark of the covenant (2 Sam. 6:6-7).
- f. Sodom and Gomorrah, Assyria, Babylonia, Tyre, and many other nations and cities were overthrown because of their wickedness.
- g. Ananias and Sapphira (Christians) were slain when they lied (Acts 5).
- h. Elymas was smitten with blindness when he opposed the spreading of the gospel (Acts 13).
3. But men are inclined to ask how such punishment could be an expression of goodness!
 - a. First, God is not obligated to prolong a man's life when that man enters into disobedience.
 - 1) Genesis 2:16-17 : "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."
 - 2) Sin places man outside the blessing and the protection of the Almighty. Punishment for sin is richly deserved.
 - b. Second, the innocent babies and children who lost their lives in the punishment brought upon the wicked adults would have grown up to become as wicked as their parents. By dying in their innocence their eternal salvation was assured!
 - 1) Genesis 8:21: "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil **from his youth**; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done."
 - 2) 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."
 - 3) Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) 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."
 - c. Third, by punishing sin God sought to halt the spread of disobedience among others. Only God knows how many precious souls were prevented from entering into lives of rebellion because he chose to punish sin in those direct ways.
4. By punishing sin, God showed mankind that he means what he says; what he requires is for man's good, not his hurt. Therefore, when he punished sin, he was showing his goodness for he wants that punishment to serve as a warning to the rest.
- D. God commanded death as the penalty for sin, but even death suggests God's goodness.
 1. Death means separation: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26).
 - a. Death is often painful to experience, as in the case of disease, accident, or murder.
 - b. It is painful to us when we lose someone we dearly love; these are irreplaceable.
 2. But think what earthly life would be like if there was no death:
 - a. Those who were wicked would only increase in their wickedness, and their number would grow; the earth would be filled with the most horrible population.
 - b. Those who suffer from disease, pain, and affliction could only get worse.
 - c. The earth would be filled with people and animals, and life would be miserable.
 - d. Without death, life on earth would be almost as horrible as the devil's hell!
 3. His goodness has made death the portal of eternity where joy, glory, life and peace await the faithful!
- E. God showed his goodness by giving the Law of Moses to the nation of Israel.
 1. The roots of the nation started with righteous Abraham who stood head and shoulders above the others

- of his nation, spiritually. God chose this great and good man to become the father of that special nation. "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).
2. Over the next few hundred years, Jehovah caused the descendants of Abraham to grow into a mighty nation, and gave them his Law through Moses. This law was what made them to be a special, holy people unto God. It made them to be different from all the other nations. It set a high moral standard for Israel to follow.
 3. The Law was an expression of God's goodness, especially to Israel, but indirectly, to others. It was a wonderful blessing in and of itself to be given God's word!
 - a. Deuteronomy 4:7-8: "For what nation *is there so* great, who *hath* God *so* nigh unto them, as the LORD our God *is* in all *things that* we call upon him *for*? And what nation *is there so* great, that hath statutes and judgments *so* righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?"
 - b. Romans 3:1-2: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."
 4. Through the law, Israel received a special revelation from the Creator; it gave them special insight into the will of the Almighty.
- F. God showed his goodness by giving Israel the six cities of refuge (Josh. 20).
1. This was a provision of the law in behalf of one who accidentally killed another. Lest a near kinsman take vengeance on the individual causing the mistaken death, that unfortunate person could flee to one of the cities and find refuge.
 2. God in his goodness provided this benefit for the ancient Israelites.
- G. God showed his goodness in the greatest way by sending his Son to earth.
1. The coming of Christ was the focal point of the entire Old Testament, from Genesis 3:15 onward. All the sacrifices commanded throughout those long centuries pointed to Christ's sacrificial death on the cross for all mankind (cf. Isa. 53).
 - a. Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - b. Job 19:25: "For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth."
 - c. Galatians 4:4-5: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."
 2. Without Christ we would not have anything that is truly important:
 - a. No Savior—Acts 4:11-12; John 14:6.
 - b. No perfect example—1 Peter 2:21-22.
 - c. No Master Teacher—John 7:46; 3:2; Matthew 7:28-29.
 - d. No atonement for sin—Hebrews 10:1-4; 7:25-27; Revelation 1:5.
 - e. No mediator between man and God—1 Timothy 2:5; John 1:1,14; Hebrews 4:14-16.
 - f. No righteous Judge—Acts 17:31; John 5:30; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 4:15.
 - g. No hope beyond the grave—Job 14:14; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; 14:19; 1 Corinthians 15:19-20.
 3. Is there any wonder that we call John 3:16 the "Golden Text" of the Bible?
- H. God showed his goodness by giving the gospel to mankind.
1. God originated the gospel plan; Christ executed the plan; the Holy Spirit revealed that plan. The gospel has been fully revealed, recorded, and preserved for us. What an extraordinary example of God's goodness!
 2. The gospel was intended for man's good, not his hurt.

- a. 2 Timothy 3:12-17: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 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. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
- b. 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.”
3. It is called the "gospel" because it is good news; it is glorious: “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” (2 Cor. 4:3-4).
4. We should also see God's goodness is preserving the pure gospel down through the centuries even though powerful men and organizations have tried to destroy it.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:24-25: “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. Matthew 24:35: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
 - c. 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.”
5. Without the gospel record we would not know enough about the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, or what is required of us before God. The gospel record gives all the details we need to know to tell us how to become Christians, live as we ought to live, and be as we are required to be.
- I. God showed his goodness by providing the church, which is the body of Christ.
 1. The church is that group of people who have obeyed the gospel and who comprise the family of God on earth.
 2. The church is that body of believers who are able to extend mutual encouragement to each other, do the work of Christ on earth, and bring proper praise to the Father.
 3. It is that powerful spiritual kingdom that is united in work and worship.
 4. It is a beautiful example of God's goodness and wisdom.
 - a. 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. Ephesians 5:23: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”
 - c. Ephesians 5:25-27: “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."

J. God shows his goodness by his providential aid and assistance.

1. His providence gives us our daily needs.
 - a. Matthew 5:45: "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."
 - b. Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - c. 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."
 - d. Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
 - e. 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."
2. His providence protects his people.
 - a. Exodus 34:24: "For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year."
 - b. Hebrews 13:5-6: "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*"
 - c. 1 Peter 3:12: "For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil."
 - d. 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - e. 1 John 5:14-15: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."
3. His providence gives us a way to escape temptations: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:12-13).

K. God has shown his goodness by providing the eternal reward of heaven.

1. Heaven is offered to all, but given only to the prepared: "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" (Rev. 21:27; cf. 2 Pet. 1:5ff).
2. Blessings beyond our comprehension are there.
 - a. Psalms 16:11: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore."
 - b. 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
 - c. Revelation 21:4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

V. THE GOD OF HEAVEN IS JUST.

A. Many entertain a perverted view of God.

1. They see God's love, mercy, and goodness only. While these are wonderful features of our Heavenly Father's true nature, they are not the only qualities he has. Thinking only of these traits, many have developed a twisted theology.
 - a. Because they view God as only a God of love, they cannot conceive of him ever sending some unfortunate soul into eternal torment.
 - b. They denigrate the necessity of obedience, and think that any honest, sincere person, regardless of what he believes and does, is a proper subject for heaven.
 - c. To such people, the Bible is not the inerrant guide and infallible standard that it professes to be.
2. We must have a balanced view of the Almighty, maintaining the view just as it is presented to us in God's word, the Bible.
 - 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. 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."
 - c. Galatians 6:7-8: "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."

B. God is Just.

1. Consider these statements from God's word:
 - a. Deuteronomy 32:3-4: "Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. *He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he."
 - b. Psalms 18:20-26: "The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me. I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight. With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt show thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward."
 - c. Psalms 97:2: "Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: righteousness and judgment *are* the habitation of his throne."
 - d. Exodus 34:6-7: "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*."
 - e. Isaiah 43:10-12,15: "Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, *even* I, *am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when *there was* no strange *god* among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God....I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King."
 - f. Isaiah 44:6,8: "Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God....Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared *it?* ye *are* even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, *there is* no God; I know not *any*."
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- g. Hebrews 10:31: "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"
- h. Hebrews 12:29: "*For our God is a consuming fire.*"
- 2. Justice: "The giving to every person that (and all of that and only that) which he is entitled to, and that without partiality or favor, whether good or bad." God's righteousness is accompanied by his grace.
- 3. Because God is just, he will do right in all matters (I Kings 8:32; Gen. 18:25).
 - a. He will not clear the guilty (Ex. 23:6; Nahum 1:3; Acts 17:30-31).
 - b. He will take delight in those who serve him faithfully (Acts 10:34-35).
- C. God's justice is impartial.
 - 1. God is as alert and certain to recognize good in a person as he is to recognize evil. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds...For there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. 2:6,11).
 - a. "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" (Rom. 11:22).
 - b. He takes special pleasure in the righteous: "For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil" (1 Pet. 3:12; cf. Isa. 66:2).
 - c. But those who live in sin and error can expect his wrath.
 - 2. He has shown his impartiality by recording in the Bible the sins of his people as well as the sins of his enemies, who live in rebellion.
 - 3. A man's standing with God is not determined by either the wickedness or righteousness of his father (Ezek. 18:20). God's justice will not allow him to punish or reward us according to the spiritual status of our father, mother, or someone else.
 - 4. The impartiality of God's justice is set forth clearly in Ezekiel 18:5-18: "But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, *And* hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, *And* hath not oppressed any, *but* hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; *He that* hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, *that* hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he *is* just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. If he beget a son *that is* a robber, a shedder of blood, and *that* doeth the like to *any* one of these *things*, *And* that doeth not any of those *duties*, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife, Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination, Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. Now, lo, *if* he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like, *That* hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, *but* hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment, *That* hath taken off his hand from the poor, *that* hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. *As for* his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did *that* which *is* not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity."
- D. God's justice punishes and blesses.
 - 1. Galatians 6:7-8: "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." The primary punishment and blessing of God are in eternity.
 - 2. But God has punished and blessed his people even in this life.
 - a. David received a just and severe penalty for his adultery even though he saw his sin and repented

- (2 Sam. 11; 12:1-14). David reaped what he sowed: the baby conceived in adultery died and David had great troubles in his family.
- b. Abraham sowed to the spirit and was blessed (Gen. 22:1-18).
3. In Bible times God often punished in direct and miraculous ways.
 - a. The Flood (Gen. 6-9).
 - b. Judah's two sons (Gen. 38).
 - c. Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10).
 - d. Two unfaithful Christians (Acts 5).
 - e. Herod (Acts 12).
 - f. Elymas (Acts 13).
 - g. The Jews in 70 A.D. (Matt. 24:1-35).
 4. In Bible times God often blessed in direct and miraculous ways.
 - a. God delivered Israel from bondage (Exod. 1-14), fed and clothed them in the wilderness.
 - b. God saved Judah from the Assyrians (2 Kings 19:35-37).
 - c. He delivered Peter from prison (Acts 12).
 - d. He saved Paul from many assaults (Acts 13-28).
 5. Who besides God knows how many have been providentially punished and blessed in the past 2,000 years?
- E. God's justice helps prepare people for heaven.
1. The Bible teaches that relatively few will be privileged to enter heaven.
 - a. 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."
 - b. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - c. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - d. 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."
 - e. 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."
 2. Two factors decide whether one will spend eternity in heaven or in hell:
 - a. Whether he obeyed the gospel and became a Christian.
 - 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 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - 3) 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. Whether he remained faithful unto death
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) 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.”

- c. It is often more difficult to restore fallen members than to convert some aliens: “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).
 3. Men are wont sometimes to ask: "Why did God make man in the first place since most of them are destined to be lost?"
 - a. First, it is not God's fault when men disobey his will and condemn themselves to eternal punishment. He is infinitely impartial in his dealings with men; it is his will that all be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9). It should not be surprising that the majority, who are governed by human frailties, will be lost; it is in fact more amazing that God should remain interested in sinful humanity at all!
 - b. Second, why do human couples desire children? We want the privilege of tending to them and providing for their needs. Having them around brings us great joy and happiness; we wish to see them develop and grow into responsible, mature adults. And we are social beings—we desire to be among others like ourselves. In all of these matters we are akin to our Father for we are made in his image.
 4. But God is infinite holy, and he can have association only with those who are holy. The guilt of sin causes us to be unholy and thus separates us from our holy Father (Isa. 59:1-2). We must become holy in order to have fellowship with God (1 Pet. 1:15,16; Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14), and to be prepared for heaven (Rev. 21:27).
 - a. 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.”
 - b. 1 Peter 1:15-16: “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.”
 - c. Matthew 5:8: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”
 - d. Hebrews 12:14: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”
 - e. 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.”
 5. There can be no holiness without freedom to choose and responsibility. Otherwise, we would be nothing but mere machines, with no capability for either good or evil.
 - a. God's aim was and is to have creatures after his own image and likeness: having the freedom to make intelligent, moral choices.
 - b. What fellowship could exist between a mechanical device and a holy God? There would be no value in such an association any more than there is any valuable relationship between you and a shovel which can operate only by your direct force. The Creator and Sustainer could derive no glory from such an arrangement, and there could be no loving fellowship.
 - c. God cannot force his holiness upon any man; he will not coerce any one to obey his word against that person's will; he exerts his influence on man by declaring to man his need for God, by showing him the consequences of disobedience and the rewards of obedience, and by the mighty drawing power of holiness and love.
 6. Through the wonderful truths of the gospel system God seeks to convert sinful man, and change him back into the glorious, holy image in which he was originally made. Hence, the justice of God can
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prepare people for that prepared place called heaven!

F. God's justice prepared a place for fallen man even before the Creation.

1. Only members of the Godhead are infinite Beings, capable of absolute perfection.
 - a. Angels and men are created beings, each with freedom of choice; this freedom gives each angel and man the capacity to do good or evil.
 - b. Man has a two-fold nature: a mortal body and an eternal spirit. The flesh has a predisposition to sin and the spirit has a predisposition to do good: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41).
 - c. God placed within the physical being of each of us certain drives which are necessary to life.
 - 1) Without a desire for food we would soon die of malnutrition.
 - 2) Without a desire for water we would die from the poisons which continually build up in the body, or from losing the life-sustaining fluids.
 - 3) Without the sex drive, we would not reproduce and continue the race.
 - 4) Without the drive to obtain and advance, we would not keep up with our needs.
 - d. When man misuses these desires, God's word is disobeyed and sin occurs.
2. God's justice cannot allow sin to go unpunished, or righteousness to go unrewarded.
 - a. God always knew that man would become sinful for man is incapable of absolute perfection in this life; God also knew that man's sin must be punished and his obedience must be rewarded (this was demanded by his infinite justice).
 - b. So God had a dilemma to solve: man cannot perfectly keep God's will but his sins cannot be overlooked.
3. The death of Christ was in God's plan for man before the creation.
 - a. Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
 - b. Ephesians 1:4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."
 - c. Romans 8:29-30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."
4. The blood that he shed for sinful man reached all the way back to Eden and gave cleansing to those who sought to follow God's way under those Old Testament systems.
5. Christ's death met and requited every demand of justice (Rom. 3:23-26; I John 2:2). The sacrifice of Christ made it possible for God to overlook sins under the old dispensation and to do so also for those today who are faithful.
 - a. Romans 3:23-26: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
 - b. 1 John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world."
6. To appreciate the awfulness of sin one may look at the ordeal of the Savior: he forfeited the glory he had in heaven, he withstood the assaults of false teachers, he endured the cold realities of Gethsemane, and suffered the agony of Calvary!

G. What about the ignorant heathen?

1. Consider these Biblical statements:
 - a. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - b. 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. 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."
 - d. Romans 3:9-10,23: "What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one....For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - e. 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."
 - 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. Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."
2. Every person who has reached an age and maturity to take responsibility for his actions has committed sin and stands condemned before God. This includes those we classify as "the ignorant heathen." Every spiritual blessing is given in Christ; those out of Christ do not have these blessings. "The ignorant heathen" do not have these spiritual blessings.
 3. Therefore, Christians are charged with the great obligation of presenting the gospel of Christ to the lost of this world (Mark 16:15-16).
 - a. Our commission to preach the gospel to every creature (the whole creation) includes "the ignorant heathen."
 - b. A man must be lost before he can be saved. You cannot save a man from freezing if he lives at the equator; nor can one be saved from sin if he is already safe from sin. All men need the gospel because they are lost; if they are not lost then they do not need the gospel.
 4. Why are the heathen lost?
 - a. Why is anyone lost?
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 3) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - b. How can heathen men be lost in sin if they know nothing about God, Christ, or the Bible? How can they sin without knowing God's will? "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. 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 fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (Rom. 1:19-23).
 - 1) These have their modern counterparts. God said that they are without excuse.
 - 2) The very nature of the universe around us all demands the existence of a Creator; God expects every responsible person to use his God-given intelligence to diligently search out God's will—the individual has as much obligation to search as we have to carry it to him. If

- Christians do their duty, and if the sinner does his part, everyone can learn God's will!
- c. Romans 2:14-15: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." The heathen have the law of conscience, imprinted on their hearts. In every rational man there is a sense of moral responsibility: a sense that some things are right and some things are wrong. Cf. Romans 14:22-23: "Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin."
 - d. The heathen, and the civilized, are lost because of personal SIN. Their ignorance of the Bible does not cause God to overlook their disobedience.
5. But some may still think that God would be harsh if he condemned those who lived and died without ever learning about Christ. But the counter question is, "Can God be just if he saves some sinners without their obedience to the gospel, while he requires obedience of others?"
 - a. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Sin demands punishment. But God sent his Son to die in man's place on the cross.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Romans 3:26: "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
 - 3) 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."
 - b. If God saves some without their having to believe and obey Christ, this would be a plain case of partiality. Since God is totally impartial in the salvation process, everyone during the Gospel Age is saved by the same requirements.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Romans 2:6,11: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds....For there is no respect of persons with God."
 - c. "God is just because he has made provisions to save all men. He is not willing that any perish. (II Pet. 3:9). He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. (Ezek. 18:23). He gave his only son to save all sinners who would believe on him. (John 3:16). He gave the church to be as a beacon light to all men in darkness. (Phil. 2:15). He gave the gospel which has the power to save all men. (Rom. 1:16). He laid upon every Christian the duty of preaching that gospel to every creature. (Matt. 28:19-20). God has promised, 'If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching...' (John 7:17). We Christians may be unjust because we have not dedicated ourselves to the great task of evangelizing the world, but our God is just. Let no man raise the question about God's integrity in dealing with sinners!" [John Waddey, Barber tract, "Is God Just?"].
 - d. Luke 12:47-48: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." This passage teaches that there will be different degrees of punishment meted out, which takes into account man's knowledge and opportunity.
 6. The notion that the ignorant heathen will be saved in their unbelief and disobedience has some very serious implications.
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- a. It implies that the death of Christ was unnecessary. If the heathen of today can be saved without believing in Christ, why could not the entire Gentile world of the first century likewise have been saved? If God could be just and excuse one such person, why not overlook all? Then, why did Jesus have to die? While once God did overlook some things, that time has passed: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).
 - b. It implies that there would be a distinct advantage in being an ignorant pagan with no knowledge of the gospel. If that is true, then we would be doing the heathen a disservice by telling them anything at all about Christ! If he did not accept the message he would come under condemnation; if he never learned of the gospel he could do as he pleased and still be saved! If the precept is so, then preaching the gospel is more deadly than the most dreaded disease!
 - c. It implies that the word of God is wrong in all those places where it teaches that they are lost. And it makes Jesus the author of a message that brings condemnation instead of salvation.
 - d. Therefore, rather than vindicating the justice and mercy of God, the doctrine that the heathen will be saved in their ignorance and disobedience makes God to be a respecter of persons, self-contradictory, and harsh to Christ and his own offspring.
- H. There are some objections that many take to the idea that God will punish sinners.
1. "God has changed; he was vengeful in the Old Testament days; he was blood-thirsty and wicked then, but he has changed." A little girl asked her mother why God had punished so many in Old Testament days. Her mother said that was "before God had become a Christian!" How juvenile!
 - a. The Old Testament ages were dark, ignorant, and wicked times; God frequently used direct force in punishing evil, and gave a record of much of that punishment for the encouragement and warning of later generations (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:1ff).
 - b. He often used other people in punishing other wicked people.
 - c. For the good of the whole, God often had to directly punish the few.
 2. "Hell is only a corrective measure, not an eternal punishment" [i.e., the doctrine of *purgatory*].
 - a. There is no hope of deliverance for one who dies lost!
 - 1) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." The reward is eternal and the punishment is eternal.
 - 2) Luke 16:26: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence." It is impossible for one to change his eternal destiny after he has died.
 - 3) Revelation 22:11: "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." The spiritual condition one is in when he dies is the spiritual condition he will retain in eternity; it cannot be changed.
 - b. The doctrine of Purgatory is not in the Bible!
 3. "But no parent would punish his child so!"
 - a. But no parent is able to do so; neither is he able to bless as does God.
 - b. Disobedience toward God is far worse than disobedience toward one's parent.
 - c. Only God is able to ascertain what the proper punishment for sin is. Since the suffering death of God's Son was necessary for forgiveness of sin, sin must be awful beyond our comprehension.
 - d. The eternal reward and the eternal penalty are equal—each is eternal.
 4. "If God is so good, why does he not destroy the devil and all evil?"
 - a. He is planning to do so—at the proper time: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10).
 - b. His longsuffering toward man stays the punishment the wicked have coming. That he gives time for repentance, during which time sin spreads and afflicts many people, is a demonstration, not of
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God's unconcern, but his goodness toward all.

- 1) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
- 2) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

c. A moral, spiritual battle is to be fought to prepare men for heaven.

VI. CONCLUSION:

A. God is a holy and sinless Being.

1. The Bible plainly says so:
 - a. 1 Samuel 2:2: "*There is* none holy as the LORD: for *there is* none beside thee: neither *is there* any rock like our God."
 - b. Isaiah 6:3: "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
 - c. 1 Peter 1:16: "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."
2. He has given his commandments which are every one underwritten by his solemn and holy nature (Ex. 20:1-17). This is true of the Ten Commandments and the rest of the Mosaic Law, it is true of the prophets and the remainder of the Old Testament, and it is true of the gospel.
3. Men are to walk in his commandments as perfectly as is humanly possible, but there is no man who does not transgress.
 - a. 1 Kings 8:46: "If they sin against thee, (for *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near."
 - b. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - c. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - d. 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."
4. God does not change (Mal. 3:6); he still hates sin and his wrath properly abides on those who live in disobedience.
 - a. Psalms 7:11: "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day."
 - b. Romans 6:17: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."
 - c. Ephesians 2:2-3: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."
 - d. Ephesians 5:6: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."
 - e. Colossians 3:6: "For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."
5. If sinful men are to see God in peace, we must understand the good he has done for sinners.
 - a. Isaiah 53:6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."
 - b. 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."
 - 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."

d. 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. What the goodness of God has provided far surpasses the penalty man deserves.

1. John 1:29: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."
 2. Romans 5:6-9: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
 3. Romans 5:20: "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."
 4. 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
 5. 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."
 6. 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."
 7. Hebrews 7:22-28: "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."
 8. 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
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The Bible Is The Inspired Word Of The God Of Heaven

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Bible makes many claims that it is the inspired Word of God.

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 1:19-21: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
3. 2 Samuel 23:1-2: "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."
4. 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
5. Are these claims reliable? Can they be supported by solid evidence? Can the Bible be proved to be inspired of God?

B. What is inspiration?

1. The Greek word *theopneustos* (translated *inspiration*) is found in the Greek text of the New Testament (2 Tim. 3:16). The literal meaning of the Greek term is "God-breathed."
 - a. The word denotes the influence God wrought on those whom he chose to receive and communicate his word; this influence was exercised by the Holy Spirit over the ones who were inspired.
 - b. God was the source of this influence; it produced effects where went beyond any natural means or earthly causes.
2. There are two false theories of Biblical inspiration which are prominently held.
 - a. The **natural theory** of inspiration holds that the writers of the Bible were inspired only as poets are inspired today. This views Biblical inspiration as nothing more than the use of human talent, an expression of unusual ingenuity which soars to great, but entirely natural, heights.
 - 1) This view of the Scriptures would make the writings of the Bible entirely a human production; it could not be considered authoritative or reliable.
 - 2) This view also fails to account for the supernatural element found in the Bible, and contradicts the many claims the Bible makes that its messages originated with God and are final authority in spiritual matters. These claims would have to be regarded as fanciful or fraudulent.
 - 3) The Bible is reduced to a piece of ancient literature, good only to satisfy the idle curiosity of the casual reader.
 - b. The **thought theory** maintains that God merely gave the writer the thought, and allowed him freedom to express the ideas in his own way.
 - 1) But this makes the Bible untrustworthy. How could we know that the thoughts expressed are

accurately presented? The author might have erred in communicating the thought, either deliberately or out of ignorance.

- 2) This view also contradicts the Bible statements that God gave its very words.
 - a) 1 Thessalonians 2:13: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."
 - b) Matthew 10:20: "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."
 - c) Mark 13:10-11: "And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
3. The correct view of Biblical inspiration is plenary, verbal, inerrant inspiration.
 - a. **Plenary** means "full and complete." The entire message is inspired of God.
 - 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." All of the truth was revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) Acts 20:20: "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."
 - 3) Acts 20:27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Paul gave them everything they needed to know, or could know, in regards to God's will.
 - 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." When the revelation of the New Testament had been completed, there was nothing else to deliver; all of God's word has been revealed for the rest of time.
 - b. **Verbal** means that inspiration extended to the very words of the revealed message; the writer was not at liberty to pick and choose exactly how to express the thoughts. God gave the very words they were to receive and record.
 - 1) Matthew 10:19,20: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."
 - 2) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 2:10,13: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God....Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth...."
 - 4) Matthew 22:32: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The Lord's argument turned on the difference between the present and past tense of the word. The statement would be meaningless unless the very word was selected.
 - 5) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Paul's argument rested on the difference between the singular and plural of the word *seed*. His point would not be reliable unless the very word of the text had been inspired.
 - c. **Inerrant** means that no errors of any kind are to be found in the Bible.
4. With this full claim before us, can Biblical inspiration be sustained? If so, by what means?

II. SOME GENERAL EVIDENCES OF THE BIBLE'S INSPIRATION.

A. The Bible is an indestructible book.

1. It is still here despite having had more enemies than any other book.
 2. Many of its enemies have tried literally to eradicate it from the earth.
 - a. King Jehoiakim, king of Judah, tried to destroy Jeremiah's writings by cutting up the scroll on which it was written, and burning it. Jeremiah 36:11-32.
 - b. Diocletian, the Roman Emperor, tried to destroy the Bible when he issued an order in March, 303 that the Christians turn in all of their copies of the Holy Scriptures, which were to be burned.
 - c. The Roman Catholic Church has tried to destroy the Bible and its influence by force. [See F.W. Mattox, *The Eternal Kingdom*, pp.224f,274ff; Sidney Collett, *All About The Bible*, pp.32ff.].
 - 1) John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English. The Catholic hierarchy forbade the reading or even possessing his work, under penalty of death. Wycliffe died a natural death in 1384, but about 40 years later, his bones were exhumed and burned, by order of the Catholic authorities.
 - 2) William Tyndale made another English translation in 1525 which he had to have smuggled into England. Romanists seized and burned thousands of copies of his translation. On October 6, 1536, the Catholic authorities strangled Tyndale and burned his body at the stake. His last words were these: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" Tyndale's translation was very accurate.
 - d. The Bible had been banned in many countries through the centuries, and only recently has been allowed into Russia. It is still banned in China, where about one-fifth of the world's population resides, and is not welcomed in some Moslem countries.
 - e. Even in our own country, the Bible has been barred from the public classroom.
 3. Many of the enemies of the Bible have tried to destroy its influence by undermining its teachings.
 - a. About 176 A.D., Celsus, an avid enemy of Christianity, wrote a book in which he sought to refute the teachings of the Bible. His work, rather than to destroy the Bible, actually preserved many direct quotations from the Scriptures, giving us added proof of the accuracy of the text.
 - b. Thomas Paine, famous man of the American Revolution, wrote a book entitled *The Age of Reason*, in which he tried to destroy the Bible. He predicted that within fifty years, the Bible would be found only in museums. But his book has all but disappeared and the Bible is being printed in increasing numbers. Just before his death in 1809, Paine cried: "I would give worlds, if I had them, that the 'Age of Reason' had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ help me!... Send even a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone. If ever the devil had an agent, I have been that one."
 - c. Voltaire, the infamous French infidel, spent his life trying to destroy the word of God. He spoke of Christ as "the cursed wretch." He arrogantly claimed that although it took twelve men to write the Bible (he is wrong about the number), by his single hand he would destroy it. But after his death, his very house was used by the Geneva Bible Society as a distributing center for the Bible. His last words included this melancholy cry: "I am abandoned by God and man...then I shall go to hell...O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"
 - d. German philosophers of the nineteenth century tried to work out a systematic method of explaining the Bible on purely human terms. A theory was developed that tried to show that the Old Testament was put together by redactors who weaved a book from various traditional stories and myths. Instead of being the inspired book we know it to be, this modernistic view of the Bible makes it a mere human production, devoid of any authority, and without any reliability. This theory has been adopted by the modernistic religious organizations of our day.
 4. Other methods are being employed today that effectively neutralize the teachings of the Bible.
 - a. Catholics claim that the Bible is only one of three ways the authority God is expressed. The (1) decrees of the pope and councils and (2) tradition form the other two legs of real authority; one is as important as the other, in their view.
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- b. Some try to limit the influence of the Bible by asserting that only certain officials are capable of understanding and teaching the Bible. In this fashion, the common man is kept in darkness as to what the Bible actually teaches.
 - c. Many people maintain that the Bible was never intended to be a rule-book, that it merely teaches principles that are to be applied as the individual sees fit. This is the basic position of the "new hermeneutics" philosophy. They claim it does not contain any kind of a pattern for us to follow. These and their cousins teach that the Bible is not to be taken literally, and scoff at those who do so.
 - d. One of the most effective methods invented by sinful man to stifle the influence of the Bible is accomplished by the modern versions of the Scriptures. In the past, men tried to accommodate the Bible to their creeds, but now they blatantly put their creeds into the text itself, thus polluting the sacred word, and turn it into the word of man, instead of the word of God. Galatians 1:6-9 shows that no one, whether angel or man, has the right to pervert God's word, and to do so is to condemn their souls to torment. When the Word of God is perverted by adding to or subtracting from the sacred text, what results is not God's word.
5. But despite the earnest efforts of powerful, well-financed, highly-placed, well-equipped, and powerful enemies, the Bible continues with us. No other book has undergone such vigorous opposition. Why is the Bible still here?
- a. It is here because of the protective power of Almighty God, and because no man is strong enough to withstand God.
 - 1) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:23-25: "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."
 - 3) 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."
 - 4) 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."
 - b. God's providential power, and his miraculous power in some special cases during Bible times, have preserved his word down through the long ages of its existence!
- B. The Bible's well-rounded and unified contents argues for its inspiration.
1. It contains all the major elements of literature, including poetry, drama, history, romance, jurisprudence, stories of war and adventure, and statements of wisdom. Its stories are interesting and thought-provoking, appealing to both young and old, and to the educated and uneducated.
 2. The Bible addresses the various components of learning.
 - a. It has elements of sociology, dealing with all significant human problems. It presents great principles that benefit society [e.g., the Sermon on the Mount; the book of Philemon; Romans 12].
 - b. It contains principles of philosophy and wisdom, in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job.
 - c. It deals with exposition and argument, especially in the statements of Christ and writings of Paul.
 - d. Although it is not intended to be a book on science and geography, when it speaks of such, it is always correct, and its scientific references are as up to date as the latest scientific discoveries. See Genesis; Job 38.
 3. The Bible books were written by poor men and rich men, peasants and kings; its thoughts were
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recorded by those with formal education and by those who were not educated; men from various work backgrounds are listed among the authors used.

- a. The various books were written by about 40 different men over a period of about 1600 years; the writings of each addressed different aspects of the theme and different subjects of the theme; in many cases, they did not know about the others who wrote or what the others had written.
- b. Despite all these differences, the book is a unified whole; all its writings are in harmony.
- c. "All the facts of the Bible are harmonious with themselves and with the historic record of man. There is an utter absence of any effort to avoid seeming contradictions and inconsistencies. So surface difficulties are found; but close examination eliminates these one by one, and a record, matchless in the truths revealed, in the morals proposed, in the laws given, in the end to be accomplished, proclaims the book of God, supported by incontestible signs and wonders that no man could do except God be with him" (*Salvation from Sin*, pp.5f).

C. No mere man could have or would have written the Bible.

1. The devil did not write it.
 - a. He opposes God's kingdom, and would not work against himself. "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges" (Mt. 12:25-27).
 - b. He fights against the Bible, not for it: "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved" (Luke 8:12).
 - c. The Bible predicts his overthrow, which he would not want known: "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" (Matt. 25:41).
 - d. Satan could not and would not write a good book: "Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).
 - e. Matthew 12:34: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Neither the devil nor his followers are capable or interested in promulgating God's word.
2. Atheists did not write it.
 - a. They would have eliminated Genesis 1:1, and other references to God.
 - b. The Bible calls such people fools: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good" (Ps. 14:1).
 - c. Bible writers were believers in God, not deceivers: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).
 - d. Infidels are not martyrs: "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).
3. Universalists did not write the Bible.
 - a. They think that no one is lost, everyone is saved, a doctrine repudiated by the Bible.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 3) Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
 - 4) 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." This passage is rejected by universalists.
- 5) Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God." They do not believe the wicked will be turned into hell.
- b. They would not write what they do not believe.
 - 1) Romans 12:19-21: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
 - 2) 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."
4. Sectarians did not write the Bible for it contradicts their cherished beliefs.
- a. They think that every church is approved; that there are many ways to heaven; and that religious division is fine.
 - b. But the Bible says there is one body.
 - 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 4:4: "*There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."
 - 3) 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."
 - c. The Bible teaches unity.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 14:33: "For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."
 - d. Sectarianism is condemned by the Bible.
 - 1) Matthew 15:13: "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 3:4: "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"
 - e. God's approved name for his people is **Christian**, not Mormon or any of the other sectarian appellations. "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" (Acts 11:26).
 - f. The Bible teaches that a saint can fall from grace, a truth rejected by many of the sectarians. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4).
 - g. Sectarians would not have written these! They do not cite these passages except to try to refute the plain import of the verses.
 - 1) Mark 16:16: "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 8:38-39: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the
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- 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."
- 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - h. The creed writers would not have penned these passages:
 - 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."
5. Some members of the church did not and would not write the Bible.
- a. Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 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."
 - d. 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."
 - e. Hebrews 10:25: "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."
 - f. 1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."
6. Others who did not and would not write the Bible.
- a. The profligate:
 - 1) 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) 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 covetous:
 - 1) Malachi 3:8-9: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 9:7: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
 - 3) 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."
 - c. The lukewarm:
 - 1) 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*."
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- 2) James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin."
 - 3) Revelation 3:15-16: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."
- D. The Bible's anticipation of religious error indicates its inspiration.
1. The prominent Catholic errors were anticipated by the Bible and exposed as erroneous before the doctrines or practices came into being. "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).
 - a. The worship of Mary began in 788 A.D., but was anticipated and exposed by the Bible ahead of time.
 - 1) Luke 8:20-21: "And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it."
 - 2) Luke 11:27-28: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it."
 - b. The cup of the communion was denied to the common man later, but the Lord taught that each was to partake of it.
 - 1) Matthew 26:26-27: "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."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:28: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup." This was spoken to all the members of the church.
 - c. The bank of good works ("supererogation") was developed centuries after the giving of the Bible, but God's word repudiated such an idea in Luke 17:10: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."
 - d. The doctrine of purgatory originated in the mind of men, but was repudiated by the inspired word, by means of the story of the wicked rich man and the beggar Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
 - e. The mediatorship of Mary or some other human came centuries after the close of the Bible, but inspiration exposed it as error before it developed: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
 - f. Forced celibacy and forbidding the eating of meats were decried by the inspired writers beforehand: "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).
 - g. The ecclesiastical priesthood (separate, special priests) which interposed itself between man and God was denied by the Holy Spirit: "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 Pet. 2:5,9).
 2. All denominational division, which is practiced and defended by many today, was foreknown and condemned by the Bible.
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- 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. 1 Corinthians 1:10-13: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 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. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"
 - c. 1 Corinthians 3:1-4: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"
 - d. 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."
 - e. 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."
3. Salvation by faith alone was anticipated and condemned by the inspired writers of the Bible: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:24-26).
 4. The Bible anticipated and denied the claim of men that they had received special revelations from heaven separate and distinct from the inspired revelation of the Bible.
 - 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. Acts 20:27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."
 - c. 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."
 - d. 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).
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- e. 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).
 - f. 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."
 - g. 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."
 - h. 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."
5. God's word exposed as false the notions that later developed concerning the kingdom of God, that it was still future.
- a. Matthew 3:2: "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [It was to be set up soon, not centuries later].
 - b. Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [It was to be set up soon, not centuries later].
 - c. Matthew 10:7: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." [It was to be set up soon, not centuries later].
 - d. Luke 10:9: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." [It was to be set up soon, not centuries later].
 - e. John 3:1-5: "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." [Those who are born again are in the kingdom; one cannot be in an institution that does not exist].
 - f. 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." [All of them were in the kingdom].
 - g. Hebrews 12:28: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." [The kingdom has been received].
 - h. Revelation 1:9: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." [John was in the kingdom].
6. The Bible foresaw the false doctrine of Calvinism which claims that Christ died only for a select few.
- a. 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."
 - 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."
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- d. 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."
 7. Inspiration gave beforehand information that exposed as error the doctrine that one church is as good as another.
 - a. Matthew 16:16-19: "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. 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. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 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. 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."
 - 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."
 - e. 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."
 - f. Matthew 15:13: "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."
 - g. Psalms 127:1: "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."
 8. It forever condemned the doctrine before it even arrived which asserts that obedience to God is unnecessary to salvation.
 - a. Matthew 7:21-27: "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. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 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."
 9. No mere men or group of men, regardless of their education and intelligence, could have anticipated the development of these errors centuries before they sprang into being. The Bible anticipated and answered these errors. The only explanation for this is to give the Bible credit for being produced by
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the infinite power and foreknowledge of God, which was revealed to the selected writers.

E. The impartiality of the Bible toward its heroes indicates its inspiration.

1. When men write about their great people, the weaknesses and errors of these heroes are down-played or entirely ignored. The Bible does not show this partiality.
2. The greatest heroes among the human family, even those who had an exalted standing with God, often have their weaknesses and failures exposed.
 - a. Abraham, although one of the greatest men who ever lived, still erred twice by claiming that his wife was only his sister (Gen. 12:10-20; 20:1-12).
 - b. David committed the sins of adultery and conspiracy to murder, the full report of which is part of the inspired record (2 Sam. 11:1-21).
 - c. Solomon's idolatry and other sins are reported (1 Kings 11:1-14).
 - d. James and John have their errors listed in the divine record.

- 1) Matthew 20:20-28: "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. 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: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
 - 2) Luke 9:51-56: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, 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*. And they went to another village."
- e. Peter's errors are also reported.

- 1) Matthew 26:69-75: "Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly."
 - 2) Galatians 2:11-14: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly
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according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

3. "This book speaks with equal calmness of the virtues of its enemies and the faults of its friends. It will tell of the sin of a good King David...without assigning him a motive to make him look better. It gives no rebuke to Judas for his betrayal and no apology for Peter for his denials. How could any author be so impartial when so deeply involved emotionally in his subject? Nor does it allow for man's whims today. It condemns many things he might enjoy most and requires things which he might find distasteful. It maintains that total impartiality" (Nick Hamilton, *Spiritual Sword*, Vol. 23, No. 2, January, 1992, p.34).

F. The incomparable nature of the Bible's ethics is a mark of inspiration.

1. Philosophy and other human systems cannot lift man from the pit of sin and immorality into which he has fallen.
 - a. The Bible depicts this fallen state:
 - 1) Proverbs 16:25: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
 - 2) Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
 - 3) 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. Great philosophers accepted, by argument and example, the most scandalous and vile practices known to our race.
 - 1) Plato taught the expedience and lawfulness of exposing children in certain cases (Thomas H. Horne, *Introduction to the Scriptures*, Vol. 1, p.12).
 - 2) Aristotle taught the rightness of abortion (ibid.).
 - 3) Aristippus maintained that it was lawful for a wise man to steal, commit adultery and sacrilege, when opportunity was given him (ibid., p.13).
 - 4) Many of the ancients, such as Cicero and Seneca, pleaded for the rightness of suicide, and even "carried about with them the means of destruction" (ibid.).
 - 5) "There were indeed some *few* philosophers, who cherished better principles, and inculcated, comparatively, purer tenets; but their instructions were very defective, and they were never able to reform the world, or to keep any number of men in the practice of virtue" (ibid., p.14).
 - c. The wisest instructions among the ancient philosophers were unable to bring about any great degree of change for the better in the lives of most people
 - d. Polygamy, divorce for any pretense, and the cheapness of human life, were common to the nations where the will of God was not known; it remains so even today.
 - e. Where the morality of the Bible is unknown, society descends into all kinds of sexual promiscuity and perversion. Many of the famous philosophers were practioners of homosexuality.
 2. The whole tenor of the Old Testament was far above the general attitudes and conduct of the people of the time.
 - a. Idol worship was commonly practiced among the heathen nations, but Israel was taught to believe in and worship only one God. Idol worship included many vile and corrupt practices, which would even shock many "free thinkers" of today.
 - b. Israel was instructed to be concerned about and treat their fellow man with love and respect (Ex. 20; Lev. 19:18).
 - c. The Old Testament called for a much purer life than was lived by people around Israel (Ps. 15).
 3. The teachings of the New Testament far surpass anything that has ever been expressed by human wisdom (cf. Rom. 12).
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- a. Matthew 5:21-22: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."
- b. 1 Corinthians 6:16-20: "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
- 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."
- d. 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."
- e. Matthew 5:38-44: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also....Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But... 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."

III. SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE ESTABLISH ITS INSPIRATION.

A. The Bible addresses many subjects and themes, including references to science.

1. It cannot be classified as a scientific textbook, and it does not use complex terminology when it speaks about some scientific matters. While it is not a book of science, it is not unscientific.
 - a. In every instance, where the truth is finally discovered, the Bible has always been vindicated, even in these scientific references.
 - b. In 1861, the French Academy of Science published a list of fifty-one **facts** of science which they claimed to contradict the Bible. With the passing of time and with the discovery of additional information, these 51 facts were shown to be in error, but the Biblical statements involved were vindicated. (Harry Rimmer, *The Harmony of Science & Scripture*, p.59).
2. The Bible and scientific truths are never at variance, but if the Bible or scientific evidence is misinterpreted, the conclusion is bound to be wrong.
 - a. Several years ago, some scientists discovered human bones buried under thick deposits of mud in California. Quickly, **scientific examination** indicated that the bones were 75,000 years old. Further investigation discovered a U.S. Army button beneath the bones! The bones were no older than the button.
 - b. On the Japanese island of Kyushu, scientists found some *ancient* drawings, which they claimed to be 10,000 to 13,000 years old. But a lifelong resident of the area came forward to show that, when he was a boy, he often had scribbled on the walls, using charcoal.
 - c. The *scientific dating system*, although widely accepted, is suspect (to say the least), as are also many theories and interpretations forced upon some facts and discoveries. Scientific theory is in a constant state of change; what is taught as fact today, is often rejected tomorrow.
 - d. Misinterpreted Bible passages can also lead to a conflict with science, but it is not the Bible that is wrong; it is the interpretation of the text. Someone objected to the Bible because "apples do not grow in Mesopotamia, where Eden was located." Apples are not the only fruit! And the fruit of the proscribed tree is not identified.

B. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) set forth the five fundamentals of science.

1. These principles are time, force, space, matter, and motion.
 2. All five of these are found in the first two verses of the Bible: "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" (Gen. 1:1-2).
 - a. Time — in the beginning.
 - b. Force — God.
 - c. Space — heavens.
 - d. Matter— earth.
 - e. Motion— created.
 3. If Moses was not inspired of God to record these facts, how can we account for his knowledge of the scientific principles?
- C. Genesis 1:9 speaks of God gathering the waters under heaven into one place.
1. "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so" (Gen. 1:9). The Hebrew term literally means "one bed." Verse ten says that God called this collection of water seas.
 2. If the writer of this history was not inspired, how can we account for his knowing that all the waters of the oceans are connected, literally lying **in one bed**? A glance at a globe shows that all the seas are connected.
 3. Further, how did he know the sea could be classified in the plural? Living in those ancient times, he had no human knowledge of more than one sea.
- D. Isaiah 40:22. Isaiah said the earth is round.
1. "*It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in" (Isa. 40:22). The word Isaiah used means literally something with "roundness" or "sphericity" (Wayne Jackson, *Reason & Revelation*, Vol. I, No. 9).
 2. Isaiah was not saying that the earth is flat, and round like a coin; he was not speaking of the circular horizon we see. When the Bible speaks of the "four corners of the earth," it is not saying the earth is square; it is speaking figuratively of the four cardinal directions.
 3. Men thought the earth was flat, but the Bible has always spoken of it as round. From man's viewpoint, the earth appears flat (or nearly so), but we now know it is round.
 4. Job 38:14: "It is turned as clay to the seal...."
- E. Psalms 8:8: There are paths in the sea.
1. In 1854, while Matthew Maury, an American sea-captain, was in his sick-bed, his son was reading to him from Psalm 8.
 2. When verse eight was read, the venerable gentleman's attention was arrested by the thought that there were paths in the sea: "The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas."
 3. He vowed to try to discover the meaning of the passage by exploring the sea, by means of which he was the first on record to discover that there is a circulation of water through the oceans. These currents provided the means for ocean vessels to travel much more rapidly than otherwise possible.
 4. His book on oceanography is still considered a basic text for studies on the subject (Wayne Jackson, *ibid.*).
- F. Job 38:16 gives two pieces of information only recently discovered by science.
1. Job 38:16: "Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?"
 2. The first point is "the springs of the sea." Fresh water has been found in the midst of the sea, indicating a spring or fountain located in the ocean floor which spews forth this potable water, which sometimes reaches the surface.
 3. The second point grows out of the ASV rendering of the verse: "Hast thou entered into the springs of
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the sea? Or has thou walked in the recesses of the deep?"

- a. The Hebrew word for *recesses* ("trenches") refers to that which is hidden and discovered only by investigation.
- b. Ocean exploration has found trenches in the Pacific extending more than 6 miles below sea level. (Wayne Jackson, *ibid.*).

G. Job 26:7: "He hangeth the earth upon nothing."

1. The myths of the ancients show their conceptions of how the earth was situated in the universe. They thought the earth was flat, of course.
 - a. The Egyptians thought the earth was supported by five great pillars, one under each corner and the fifth under the middle. Rimmer suggested that if that were so, then one should be able to peer over the edge and see the corner pillars. But what supported the pillars?
 - b. The Greeks had a legend of Atlas who stood under the earth, and with head bowed, supported the it on his neck and shoulders. What supported Atlas?
 - c. The ancient Hindu view was that the earth was balanced on the back of a great elephant, which stood on the back of a great turtle, which was swimming in a cosmic sea.
2. In contrast to these foolish explanations, God's words said the earth was hung upon nothing.
 - a. Adding to Job's picture (26:7) the statement of Isaiah 40:22 ["*It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth...*"], we get the picture of the earth, as a great round structure, floating in space.
 - b. Combining this picture with Job 38:14 ["It is turned as clay to the seal..."], we can see the earth depicted as a large ball, spinning in space.

H. Ecclesiastes 1:7: The Evaporation Cycle is depicted.

1. "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccl. 1:7). To get a better idea of the great significance of this, consider how much water enters the oceans annually.
 - a. One cubic mile of water would form a lake one mile long, one mile wide, and one mile deep. Each year, 286,000 cubic miles of water thus flows from the land into the sea (Rimmer, *ibid.*).
 - b. This has been going on for thousands of years, yet the sea is not full. Its level remains stable and constant. "Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" (Job. 38:8-11).
2. Solomon gives the reason why the sea does not overflow: the water returns from whence it came, by the evaporation cycle. "When he uttereth his voice, *there is* a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures" (Jer. 10:13).
3. Science only discovered this process of evaporation in the 17th century. How could Solomon describe this operation nearly 3,000 years before modern science found it?

I. There are many other examples of scientific knowledge shown by the ancient writers.

1. Job 38:24: "By what way is the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth?" Light can be parted. Science learned this truth in 1650.
 2. Job 38:22: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail." There is treasure in snow and hail. Discoveries in 1905 and 1966 found minerals in these which are valuable to the soil.
 3. The stars are innumerable. This was discounted as a myth until 1940, when telescopes verified it. The farther we can see, more and more stars are observed.
 - a. Genesis 15:5: "And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."
 - b. Jeremiah 33:22: "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me."
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IV. MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE THAT PREDATES MAN'S DISCOVERIES SHOWS INSPIRATION.**A. Leviticus 13-15: Certain medical procedures were incorporated into the law of Moses.**

1. The use of quarantine is an excellent means to control a contagious disease was prescribed by Moses' inspired law.
2. Principles of bacterial contamination from person to person are indicated.
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) Leviticus 13:45: "And the leper in whom the plague *is*, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean."
 - 2) Leviticus 15:19-33: "And if a woman have an issue, *and* her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even. And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean: every thing also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean. And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even. And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even. And if it *be* on *her* bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even. And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean. And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she *shall be* unclean. Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be unto her as the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation. And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even. But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And the priest shall offer the one *for* a sin offering, and the other *for* a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for her before the LORD for the issue of her uncleanness. Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that *is* among them. This *is* the law of him that hath an issue, and *of him* whose seed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith; And of her that is sick of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and of the woman, and of him that lieth with her that is unclean."
 - 3) Leviticus 19:5-22: "And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, ye shall offer it at your own will. It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow: and if ought remain until the third day, it shall be burnt in the fire. And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it *is* abominable; it shall not be accepted. Therefore *every one* that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the hallowed thing of the LORD: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather *every* grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I *am* the LORD your God. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob *him*: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I *am* the LORD. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Thou shalt not go up and down *as* a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou

stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I *am* the LORD. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD. Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee. And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that *is* a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, *even* a ram for a trespass offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him."

- b. Only about a century ago did man discover bacteria, which cause disease. It is common knowledge now that diseases are spread by bacteria, and to prevent getting a disease we need to wash and sterilize certain vessels.
- c. Moses had no microscope, so how could he have known these things?

B. Circumcision should be done on the 8th day after birth.

1. Genesis 17:12: "And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed."
2. "In 1935 Professor H. Dam proposed the name 'Vitamin K' for the factor in foods which helped prevent hemorrhaging in baby chicks. We now know that Vitamin K is responsible for the production of prothrombin by the liver. If Vitamin K is deficient, there will be a prothrombin deficiency and hemorrhaging may occur, since both Vitamin K and prothrombin are necessary for proper bloodclotting. Oddly enough, it is only on the 5th through the 7th days of the newborn male's life that Vitamin K begins to be produced (the vitamin is usually produced by bacteria in the intestinal tract). And, it is *only on the eighth day* that the percentage of prothrombin climbs *above 100%*! The only day in the entire life of the newborn that the bloodclotting element prothrombin is about 100% is day eight! The best day for circumcision is, therefore, the eighth day" (Jackson, *Reason & Revelation*, Vol. I, No. 9).
3. No one could logically attribute this medical knowledge on Moses' part to mere coincidence or a lucky guess. He must have had some inside information given to him by the Supreme Medical Authority!

C. The life of the flesh is in its blood.

1. Leviticus 17:11-14: "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood. And whatsoever man *there be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. For *it is* the life of all flesh; the blood of it *is* for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh *is* the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off."
2. "Because the red blood cells can carry oxygen (due to hemoglobin in the cells) life is made possible. In fact, human red blood cells carry 270 million molecules of hemoglobin *each*. If there were any less, there would not be enough residual oxygen available to sustain life after, say, a good sneeze, or a hard pat on the back! We know today that 'the life of the flesh is in the blood.' But it wasn't known in George Washington's day. He was bled to death through the blood-letting process" (ibid.).
3. In 1628, William Harvey set forth the theory that blood is circulated through the human body. Only a few generations ago, medical authorities claimed that if blood was let from one arm, a precise amount must be taken also from the other arm; otherwise, the individual would be off balance!

D. Paul said there were four different kinds of flesh.

1. 1 Corinthians 15:39: "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."
2. Earlier in this century, medical science followed a theory called the *Continuity Theory*, which claimed that since all animals and men evolved from a common ancient source, the cell structure of all flesh was similar; therefore current thought asserted that Paul was wrong.
 - a. One young student took issue with his professor on this point, arguing very convincingly on this line: "For instance, let us assume that you ate your dinner today in the Palace Hotel and ordered quail on toast, for which you were charged. If they served you codfish, you would yell loudly enough to be heard across the Bay of San Francisco....That proves that while *you* might not know the difference between a fish and a bird, your stomach and your taste buds do, and it seems, then, as though we have more sense under our belts than we have under our hats" (Harry Rimmer, *The Harmony of Science and Scriptures*, pp.108f).
 - b. The theory has long since been abandoned.
3. Science has proved that Paul's statement was correct, and with a particle of flesh, bone, skin, or blood, the kind of animal from which it was taken can be identified.
4. Paul did not have a pathological laboratory at his disposal when he penned his letter to the Corinthians, but in knew the truth on this matter; he knew it only because the Master Pathologist revealed the truth to him. Now that DNA has been discovered and studied, scientists have learned that each individual has a distinctive DNA profile. Thus, from a small sample, individuals can be identified by their DNA profiles. This has greatly advanced police investigation.

E. The following are among the many other medical statements in the Bible.

1. The human body can be opened for surgery during a deep sleep: "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" (Gen. 2:21).
2. We are taught that there is a danger in eating an animal that died naturally: "And every soul that eateth that which died *of itself*, or that which was torn *with beasts*, *whether it be* one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean" (Lev. 17:15).
3. It gives the wisdom in not eating certain animals that carry disease (Lev. 11).
4. Both man and woman possess the seed of life: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:18). The ancient pagans asserted that the woman was nothing more than an incubator, and that the seed of man could just as well be incubated in warm mud.
5. It gave instructions on how to diagnose leprosy (Lev. 13).
6. The Bible taught the wisdom of burning clothes and bathing after the individual came in contact with a possibly diseased animal or person (Num. 19).

V. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.**

A. Many discoveries of ancient records confirm the Bible's record of historical events.

1. Nelson Glueck, a noted expert in archaeology, stated: "No archaeological discovery has ever been made that contradicts or controverts historical statements in Scriptures."
 2. It was once claimed that writing had not been developed at the time Moses recorded the Pentateuch.
 - a. In 1901 a large stone was found which had the "Code of Hammurabi" inscribed on it. The date of the inscriptions predates Moses' time by several hundred years.
 - b. No one makes this charge any more.
 3. Critics of the Bible used to claim that the Hittite nation never existed, except in the Bible, which was undoubtedly wrong.
 - a. But much evidence has been found of the Hittites, showing they had a very large and powerful
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- civilization in Asia Minor and were prominent in Palestine, also.
- b. The Bible's record of the Hittites is no longer questioned.
 4. When Paul was enroute to Rome, Acts 27:40 described the ship he was in as having more than one rudder, a very strange arrangement which some have had difficulty accepting: "And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore" (Acts 27:40).
 - a. *National Geographic*, in November, 1974, published an article describing a very old ship which had been found in 1969. It was in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Cyprus.
 - b. This ancient ship had two rudders, just as the one Luke described.
 5. Modernist theologians have claimed that the books of Moses were not written until after the Babylonian exile of the Israelites, thus casting grave doubt on the Old Testament record written by Moses (Genesis—Deuteronomy).
 - a. Gabriel Barkay conducted archaeological excavations in the south of Jerusalem between 1975-1980 which yielded two tiny scrolls. These miniature scrolls were made of tightly rolled sheets of silver. When these scrolls were unwound and read, they were found to contain the passage of Numbers 6:24-26.
 - b. These scrolls have been dated to a time prior to the Babylonian captivity, which began in 606 B.C. They are the oldest copies of Bible text that are known, predating the Dead Sea Scrolls by 400 years (Wayne Jackson, *Christian Courier*, February, 1989).
 6. Isaiah 20:1: "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it." King Sargon was known only from this Bible passage until discoveries were made verifying Isaiah's statement. Until then, critics pointed to the verse as an example of the Bible's unreliability as a historical record.
 - a. In 1842, discovery was made of a city named *Dur-Sharrukin* ("Sargonsburg"); it is called "Khorsbad" now. The palace of Sargon II (the one named by Isaiah) was found at this place.
 - b. On the walls of the city were found artistic reliefs which record the conquests of Sargon II, including his capture of Samaria. It reports that 27,290 captives were taken.
 - c. The discoveries verify the reliability of Isaiah's record, and furnish additional information regarding the fall of Samaria.
 7. Joshua 1-6 gives details concerning the capture of Jericho. The tactics involved were very strange, and the story has been rejected or severely modified by modern Bible critics. One critic wrote, "...On a purely literary level, the *Book of Joshua* reads more like an adventure story than history...there is no archaeological evidence to support it" (See Wayne Jackson, *Reason & Revelation*, April, 1990). How reliable is this Biblical record?
 - a. The Bible says that Jericho was a strongly fortified city (Josh. 2:5,7,15; 6:5,20). Archaeological evidence shows that a 15-foot high wall was at the base of the hill on which the city was built; another wall was closer to the city itself.
 - b. Joshua's record indicates it was in the springtime when the city was taken, at the time when grain was harvested (5:10; 3:15). Rahab was drying flax on her roof (2:6). Archaeological excavations uncovered large amounts of stored grain, a very uncommon discovery.
 - c. The Bible says that the conquest was quickly executed: "And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times" (6:15). The abundance of food stored in the city, found by the spade, confirms Joshua's record.
 - d. Joshua reports that the wall fell down flat. Archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon, no supporter of the Biblical record, admitted that the wall had collapsed.
 - e. The Bible record says God told the Israelites not to take any personal booty from Jericho. The presence of a large amount of grain, which was often used as money, indicates Israel followed the Lord's instruction.
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- f. Joshua reports that the city was set on fire; the ruins of the city agree.
 - g. The Bible speaks of Rahab's house being on the wall (2:15). Several houses were found just inside the collapsed wall.
 - h. In a cemetery outside Jericho, Egyptian scarabs have been found, with inscribed evidence which dates the relics from the 18th into the 14th century B.C., thus fitting the city's existence within the time frame indicated by the Scriptures. Liberal scholars place the Exodus at about 1200 B.C., but 1 Kings 6:1 places it at about 1445 B.C., and Jericho's fall therefore at about 1405 B.C.
8. Various other archaeological discoveries confirm the Biblical record.
- a. In Egypt, storage bins, treasure cities, bricks made with and without straw, have been found. This lends credence to the Genesis record.
 - b. Evidence of the great flood of Genesis 6 has been found. The evidence includes:
 - 1) Thick layers of water-laid clay that could only have been deposited by a very great amount of flood water.
 - 2) Frozen mammoths, encased in ice, have been found in arctic regions, some with grass in their mouths or stomachs. The bodies being encased in ice indicates a sudden and tremendous inundation.
 - 3) Marine fossils, including whales, have been found on the tops of mountains.
 - c. Ahab's ivory palace is described in 1 Kings 22:39: "Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?" Evidence of such palaces have been discovered.
 - d. The Moabite Stone, discovered in 1868, confirms 2 Kings 3:5-7,25 (Joseph Free, *Archaeology and Bible History*, pp.186, 191). "But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and numbered all Israel. And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: *I am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, *and* my horses as thy horses....And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kirharaseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about *it*, and smote it" (2 Kings 3:5-7,25).
 - e. 2 Kings 20:20 and 2 Chronicles 32:30 speak of Hezekiah's conduit. This engineering feat has been found, showing that two parties of workers operated from opposite directions; where they met is discernible today.
 - 1) 2 Kings 20:20: "And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?"
 - 2) 2 Chronicles 32:30: "This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works."
 - f. The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, invaded Palestine in 701 B.C., taking many cities (see 2 Kings 18:13). He obtained tribute from Hezekiah, and boasted of having shut up Hezekiah "like a bird in a cage in his royal city Jerusalem." He failed to capture Jerusalem because an angel smote his army (2 Kings 19:20-36; Isa. 37:36).
 - 1) 2 Kings 18:13: "Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them."
 - 2) 2 Kings 19:20-36: "Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *That* which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. This *is* the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast

thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy *One* of Israel. By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, *and into* the forest of his Carmel. I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places. Hast thou not heard long ago *how* I have done it, *and* of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities *into* ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the house tops, and *as* corn blasted before it be grown up. But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD *of hosts* shall do this. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh."

- 3) Isaiah 37:36: "Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses."
9. In every instance where the Bible can be checked, it has proved to be right. Even its geographical facts are correct: going **up** to Jerusalem was a journey **upward!**

VI. FULFILLED PROPHECIES ESTABLISH THE FACT OF BIBLE INSPIRATION.

A. First, consider this information about prophecy.

1. Here are some things that God said regarding prophecy:
 - a. Isaiah 46:9-10: "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."
 - b. Deuteronomy 18:22: "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."
2. The surest proof of a person's prophetic office is the fulfillment of events which he clearly predicted before the fact. If a predicted event fails to materialize, the prophet is false. Some vague similarity to the prophecy does not prove fulfillment.
3. For a prophetic statement to offer conclusive evidence it must meet certain requirements.
 - a. The event predicted must plainly be beyond the power of man to foreknow; since men cannot know the future, when the Bible accurately predicted a future event, its claims to inspiration are verified.
 - b. The evidence must be present to show that the prediction preceded the event predicted. Ellen G. White said she had a "vision" beforehand of the great California earthquake of 1906 and the

famous Chicago fire, but she did not tell anyone until after these disasters occurred. Anyone could make such claims. One failed prophecy marks the prophet as false.

- c. The prophecy must be free of error. If the prediction states that a Chinaman would go on a rampage, shooting a thousand people to death, the *prophecy* is not fulfilled in the case of an African who poisons five hundred.
- d. The prophecy must have sufficient detail to be clear.
- e. There must be a definite fulfillment, not some mere assertion that the event was fulfilled. Evidence must exist to clearly link the prophecy and the fulfillment.

B. Prophecies concerning specific events were given and fulfilled.

1. More than 1400 years before Christ, at the time Jericho was destroyed, it was prophesied that to rebuild Jericho would spell disaster to the builder.
 - a. Joshua 6:26: "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."
 - b. 1 Kings 16:34: "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun." The fulfillment took place hundreds of years after the prophecy was given.
2. The "young" prophet of 1 Kings 13 delivered a very detailed prophecy as to what would become of the altar Jeroboam had erected at Bethel.
 - a. 1 Kings 13:1-2: "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."
 - b. About 350 years later, the fulfillment occurred. "Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel. And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria....And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem" (2 Kings 23:15-18,20).
 - c. Josiah inaugurated his religious reform due to finding the book of God in the temple where it had been lost for many years. When the "young" prophet had uttered his prophecy in which he called Josiah by name, Rehoboam was still alive. Josiah was a descendant of Rehoboam; they lived nearly 300 years apart. That would be like someone predicting 300 years ago who would be elected president of the United States in 1992, what party he belonged to, and what his platform was.
3. Another amazing prophecy pertained to the Babylonian Captivity of the Jews (*Reason & Revelation*, Vol. XI, No. 7, July, 1991, gives a fuller discussion of this and the next point).
 - a. Jeremiah 25:12-13 predicted the captivity, even the length of it. Babylon came against Judah in 606 B.C. and brought them into submission; they came back in 597, and finally destroyed the temple and Jerusalem in 586 B.C., carrying the people to Babylon. The Jews began their return in 536 B.C., a full 70 years from Babylon's initial invasion. "And it shall come to pass, when

- seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations" (Jer. 25:12-13).
- b. Their return is the point of interest we are emphasizing. In 536 B.C., after conquering Babylon, the Persian king issued an edict that permitted the Jews to return to Palestine, stating that the God of heaven was behind his decree (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:2-3).
 - 1) 2 Chronicles 36:22-23: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? The LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up."
 - 2) Ezra 1:2-3: "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem."
 - c. Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1 ff contain a prophecy given nearly 200 years earlier that **Cyrus** would release the Jews from the captivity which had not even taken place at the time of Isaiah's prediction. What could possibly have happened to cause this pagan king to do what God wanted him to do to fulfill the predictions of both Isaiah and Jeremiah?
 - 1) Isaiah 44:28: "That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."
 - 2) Isaiah 45:1-5: "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me."
 - d. Josephus gives some information that sheds light on the matter. He quotes a statement that Cyrus had made in issuing the decree: "Thus saith Cyrus the king: Since God Almighty has appointed me to be king of the habitable earth, I believe that he is the God which the nation of the Israelites worship; for indeed he foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem, in the country of Judea" (*Antiquities* 11.1.1). Josephus adds: "This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies..." (11.1.2).
 - e. When he saw his name in an old prophecy that predated his birth by about 150 years, calling him by name and detailing what he would do, he naturally would be inclined to comply. What would be your reaction if you were shown an old writing that called you by name and spelled out some specific action you were to take?
4. The Jews returned to their land by virtue of the decree of Cyrus, beginning in 536 B.C. After a while, their work lagged, and God raised up two prophets to inspire them; Haggai's message urged them to complete the work of rebuilding the temple; Zechariah's work was to create a spiritual revival in the people. It was during the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, when these two great prophets were sent.
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- a. Haggai 1:1: "In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying."
- b. Zechariah 1:1: "In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet...."
- c. Zechariah 9 contains predictions of the conquests the Greek army would make 200 years later, under Alexander the Great. The prophecy deals with the Greeks inflicting punishment on Damascus, Phoenicia, and Philistia. In 333 B.C., the Grecian army defeated the Persian army, and conquered the land of the east.
- d. As the invaders made their way to the south toward Philistia, Jerusalem lay in their path, and logically should be taken. But in Zechariah 9:8 God promised: "And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes."
- e. Josephus provides an insight into the background of this development (see *Antiquities*, 11.8).
 - 1) While pressing the siege of Tyre, Alexander sent messages to several places, including Judea, requisitioning supplies. The Jewish high priest refused. Alexander determined to destroy Jerusalem as soon as Tyre was conquered.
 - 2) When the Greeks marched on Jerusalem, Josephus says the Jewish priests met Alexander, dressed in their fine robes, with the city's gates wide open. They showed the commander a copy of the scroll which contained the writings of Daniel, in which Daniel had prophesied that the king of Grecia should destroy the empire of the Persians.
 - a) Daniel 7:6: "After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it."
 - b) Daniel 8:3-8: "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had *two* horns: and the *two* horns *were* high; but one *was* higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither *was there any* that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat *had* a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven."
 - c) Daniel 8:20-22: "The ram which thou sawest having *two* horns *are* the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat *is* the king of Grecia: and the great horn that *is* between his eyes *is* the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power."
 - d) Daniel 11:3: "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will."
 - 3) Alexander was over-awed by this information and, believing the Jewish prophet was describing him, he did not attack Jerusalem.

C. The Bible gave specific prophecies of the overthrow of great nations.

1. The Old Testament predicted the details of the overthrow of mighty **Babylon**: "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" (Isa. 13:19-20; cf. Jer. 51:24-58).

- a. The ancient writer, Herodotus, visited Babylon and left behind an impressive description of the city. He says the city was surrounded by great walls that were 350 feet high and 75 feet thick. Jeremiah (51:44,53,58) commented on the greatness of her walls. Herodotus said there were 100 brass gates in the wall; Isaiah (45:2) speaks of her "gates of brass."
 - 1) Isaiah 45:2: "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron."
 - 2) Jeremiah 51:44,53,58: "And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall....Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD....Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary."
 - b. Concerning Babylon's overthrow, the Bible offers several explicit prophecies.
 - 1) God would use Cyrus in her overthrow: "That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid" (Isa. 45:28). "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut" (Isa. 45:1).
 - 2) Herodotus said the city was built astride the Euphrates River, with the river running under her great walls. God promised to dry up the river: "A drought *is* upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it *is* the land of graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols" (Jer. 50:38). Cyrus took Babylon by diverting the river and marching his troops into the city by the river bed. Herodotus said the Babylonians could have still defended the city had they not been engaged in festivities. Jeremiah speaks of this feast:
 - a) "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD" (50:24). "In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD" (51:39).
 - b) "And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise *men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts" (51:57).
 - c. The ultimate result of Babylon's fall is pictured in meticulous detail by the inspired prophets.
 - 1) She would sit in the dust: "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: *there is* no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate" (Isa. 47:1). [Note: Babylon is called a *virgin* because this was the first time she had been conquered. Darius later took the city again in 521 B.C., Xerxes in 483 B.C., and Alexander in 331B.C.].
 - 2) These attacks on Babylon eventually reduced the walls to rubble, destroyed the temple of Belus, and demolished the city itself. Just before the time of Christ, Strabo visited the site and said it was a desert. In the 12th century A.D., another visitor described it as only a ruins, without inhabitants.
 - 3) The description given by Isaiah (13:19-20) is not far-fetched!
2. The Bible gave some prophecies regarding **Egypt**.
 - a. Ezekiel 29:12-15: "And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. Yet

- thus saith the Lord GOD; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered: And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations."
- b. Ezekiel 30:12-16: "And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have spoken it. Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No. And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily."
 - c. Egypt was prominent and powerful in the ancient past, but no more. Although it was once great, it would become desolate. As the Bible predicted, Egypt was under bondage, to Alexander and his successors. Even until the past century, Egypt was ruled by Britain. The rulers in Egypt now are not true Egyptians, but Arabs.
 - d. She had never risen to prominence again. Her canals have filled up; the 7 fingers of the Nile are all stopped up, except two. The land is less productive; there is less water coming down the Nile; idolatry has been destroyed and their great temples torn down. The great city of Thebes was divided into about nine hamlets.
3. The destruction of **Nineveh** was predicted.
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) Isaiah 10:12-14: "Wherefore it shall come to pass, *that* when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done *it*, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant *man*: And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs *that are* left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped."
 - 2) Zephaniah 2:13-15: "And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, *and* dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; *their* voice shall sing in the windows; desolation *shall be* in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work. This *is* the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I *am*, and *there is* none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, *and* wag his hand."
 - 3) Nahum 3:1-19.
 - b. Nineveh had once been a magnificent city, but when Alexander the Great invaded that part of the world, he could not even find its location.
 4. The utter demolition of **Tyre** was predicted in accurate detail.
 - a. "And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock" (Ezek. 26:4; see verses 1-21). It was to be made completely desolate. Ezekiel's work dates back to about 592 B.C. What he predicted concerning Tyre was fulfilled about 260 years later.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar laid waste to the city and left it in ruins, as indicated by Ezekiel 26:7-11, but verses 4 and 14 were not fulfilled at that time.
 - 1) Ezekiel 26:7-11: "For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuch-
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adrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground."

- 2) Ezekiel 26:4,11: "And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock....With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground."
- c. The city was rebuilt on an island about a half-mile off shore, in the Mediterranean Sea. Alexander the Great came on the scene about 332 B.C., and conquered the city by blocking up the harbor so the famed Phoenician Navy could not attack his fleet; meanwhile, his soldiers were building a causeway from the mainland to the island. To have enough material for the causeway, they used the ruins of the original city, scraping the ground bare!
5. The city of **Sidon's** troubled future was revealed by inspired prophecy.
 - a. "Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her. For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD. And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor *any* grieving thorn of all *that are* round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD. Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God" (Ezek. 28:21-26).
 - b. Although she would not be desolated, yet she would suffer great bloodshed and slaughter. Forty thousand of her citizens shut themselves up in houses and burned themselves to death rather than submit to capture. The wickedness of Sidon is seen in one of its most infamous citizens—Jezebel (1 Kings 16:30-31).
 - c. God would not make a full end of Sidon. The city still stands as a monument of fulfilled prophecy.
- D. Prophecies concerning the future of the Jews confirm Bible inspiration.
 1. "Frederick the Great of Prussia once asked the court chaplain to give him an argument, in a word, that the Bible is inspired, and he answered, 'Your Majesty, The Jews' (Roy J. Hearn, Knight Arnold Bulletin Article, May 21, 1985).
 2. God would not make a full end of them, although he would severely punish them. This is tantamount to saying that they would be around to the end. "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).
 3. Numbers 23:9: "For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Jews have been scattered among many nations through the centuries; they were scattered abroad in the captivities of Old Testament

times, and they are presently scattered, and have been so since 70 A.D.

4. Deuteronomy 28:36-37: "The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee." Their history is one in which they have endured the contempt of many.
5. Deuteronomy 28:53-57 details the siege before they fell to the enemy; in the famine that afflicted them, they would eat their own sons. What is described happened during the siege of Samaria in Old Testament times, most likely also when the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. during the Roman siege. "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: *So that* the man *that is* tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all *things* secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates."
 - a. Leviticus 26:29: "And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat."
 - b. 2 Kings 6:24-30: "And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was *sold* for fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five *pieces* of silver. And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And he said, If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress? And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh."
 - c. Lamentations 2:20: "Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, *and* children of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?"
 - d. Lamentations 4:10: "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people."

VII. CHRIST IN PROPHECY.

A. The Old Testament foretold the coming of Christ.

1. Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
2. Abraham foresaw him.
 - a. John 8:56-58: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."

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- b. Acts 3:25: "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."
 - c. Galatians 3:8: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed."
 3. Moses foresaw him.
 - a. Deuteronomy 18:5: "For the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever."
 - b. Acts 3:22: "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."
 - c. Luke 24:44-47: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - d. John 5:46: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."
 - e. Acts 26:22-23: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."
 4. Samuel prophesied of Christ. "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days" (Acts 3:24).
 5. David prophesied of him.
 - a. Psalms 16:8-10: "I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
 - b. Psalms 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."
 - c. John 19:36: "For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."
 - d. Acts 2:25-28: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."
 6. Isaiah prophesied of him (cf. Isaiah 53).
 - a. John 12:41: "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."
 - b. Acts 8:32-34: "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?"
 7. Zechariah prophesied of Christ.
 - a. Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn."
 - b. Zechariah 13:7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine
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- hand upon the little ones."
- c. Matthew 26:31: "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."
 - d. John 19:37: "And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."
8. Many prophets desired to see the days of Christ, thus they knew beforehand of his coming.
- a. Matthew 13:16-17: "But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."
 - b. 1 Peter 1:10-12: "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."
9. Old Testament prophets and Scriptures spoke beforehand of Christ.
- a. Acts 3:18: "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."
 - b. Acts 3:24: "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."
 - c. Acts 10:43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."
 - d. Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
 - e. John 5:39: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."
 - f. Acts 17:2-3: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."
 - g. Acts 17:11-12: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

B. The Messianic Passages of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New Testament.

1. Jesus said so.
- a. Luke 18:31-33: "Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again."
 - b. Luke 22:37: "For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end."
 - c. Luke 24:27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."
 - d. Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
 - e. Luke 24:46: "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to
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- rise from the dead the third day."
2. John the Baptizer affirmed it: "He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias" (John 1:23).
 3. Philip taught it: "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).
 4. Peter was guided to affirm it.
 - a. Acts 2:25-28: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."
 - b. Acts 3:18: "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."
 - c. Acts 3:24: "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."
 - d. 1 Peter 1:10-11: "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."
 5. Paul taught it.
 - a. Acts 13:27-29: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre."
 - b. Acts 17:2-3: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."
 - c. Acts 26:22-23: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."
 - d. Acts 28:23: "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening."

C. Specific Prophecies and their Fulfillment.

1. The Birth of Christ.
 - a. The place of his birth.
 - 1) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
 - 2) Matthew 2:1-6: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

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- b. The manner of his birth.
 - 1) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - 2) Matthew 1:18-25: "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. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 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. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
 - 2. The Ancestry of Christ.
 - a. The seed of woman.
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - 2) 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. The seed of Abraham.
 - 1) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
 - 2) Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - 3) Galatians 3:8,16: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.... Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
 - c. The seed of Isaac.
 - 1) Genesis 21:12: "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."
 - 2) Romans 9:7: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called."
 - 3) Hebrews 11:18: "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called."
 - d. The seed of Jacob.
 - 1) Genesis 28:14: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."
 - 2) Romans 9:13: "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."
 - e. The seed of Judah.
 - 1) Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
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- 2) Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - 3) Revelation 5:8: "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."
 - f. The seed of David.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 7:12-14: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."
 - 2) Psalms 89:3-4: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah."
 - 3) Matthew 22:41: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them."
 - 4) John 7:42: "Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"
 3. The Incarnation of Christ.
 - a. He would be Divine: Isaiah 9:6 ("The mighty God, the Everlasting Father").
 - b. He would be human: Isaiah 9:6 ("A child...a son").
 - c. Romans 1:3-4: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
 - d. Romans 8:4: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
 4. The Offices of Christ.
 - a. He would be a Prophet.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 18:15-18: "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; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
 - 2) Acts 3:22: "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."
 - 3) Acts 7:37: "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear."
 - b. He would be a Priest.
 - 1) Psalms 110:4: "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."
 - 2) Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 - 3) Hebrews 5:6: "As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
 - 4) Hebrews 7:24: "But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."
 - 5) Hebrews 8:4: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law."
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- c. He would be a King.
 - 1) Psalms 2:5-6: "Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."
 - 2) Psalms 110:1: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."
 - 3) Daniel 7:23-24: "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings."
 - 4) Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 - 5) John 18:36-37: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."
 - 6) Acts 2:34-35: "For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool."
 - 7) Revelation 1:6: "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
 - 5. The Parables and Miracles of Christ.
 - a. The parables.
 - 1) Psalms 78:2: "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old."
 - 2) Matthew 13:10-14: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive."
 - 3) Matthew 13:34-35: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."
 - b. The Miracles.
 - 1) Isaiah 35:3-5: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."
 - 2) Micah 7:15: "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous *things*."
 - 3) Matthew 11:4-6: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me."
 - 4) John 20:30-31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which
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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."

6. The Triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
 - a. Zechariah 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."
 - b. Matthew 21:1-11: "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me. And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed *them* in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."
7. The Death of Christ.
 - a. He would be a vicarious sacrifice for sin: "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 8:32; cf. Isa. 53).
 - b. He would be betrayed by a friend.
 - 1) Psalms 41:9: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up *his* heel against me."
 - 2) John 13:18: "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."
 - c. He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.
 - 1) Zechariah 11:12: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give *me* my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty *pieces* of silver."
 - 2) Matthew 27:3: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders."
 - d. This silver would be used to purchase a potter's field.
 - 1) Zechariah 11:13: "And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD."
 - 2) Matthew 27:5-10: "And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."
 - e. He would be reviled, insulted, and spat upon.
 - 1) Isaiah 50:6: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."

- 2) Matthew 26:67: "Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands."
 - f. He would be crucified with the wicked.
 - 1) Isaiah 53:9: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth."
 - 2) Luke 23:32-33: "And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left."
 - g. He would be taunted and jeered.
 - 1) Psalms 22:7-8: "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."
 - 2) Matthew 27:39-43: "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God."
 - h. He would be forsaken in his death.
 - 1) Psalms 22:1: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so* far from helping me, *and from* the words of my roaring?"
 - 2) Matthew 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
 - i. He would be given gall and vinegar.
 - 1) Psalms 69:21: "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."
 - 2) Matthew 27:34: "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink."
 - j. They would cast lots for his clothes.
 - 1) Psalms 22:18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."
 - 2) Matthew 27:35: "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots."
 - k. No bones would be broken in his body.
 - 1) Psalms 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."
 - 2) John 19:31-36: "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 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. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."
 - l. His side would be pierced.
 - 1) Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn."
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- 2) John 19:34-37: "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."
8. The Resurrection of Christ.
- a. Psalms 16:8-10: "I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
- b. Acts 2:24-29: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."
- c. Acts 13:32-37: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption."
9. The Ascension of Christ.
- a. He would ascend to heaven.
- 1) Psalms 68:18: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*."
- 2) Ephesians 4:8-10: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)"
- b. He would pass through the heavenly gates.
- 1) Psalms 24:7: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."
- 2) 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."
- c. Complete picture of his ascension given.
- 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) Psalms 24:7-10: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the
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LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory."

- 3) 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."

VIII. CONCLUSION.

A. The Bible is the Word of the God of Heaven.

1. How can this evidence we have studied be accounted for otherwise?
 - a. The Bible gave scientific information centuries before man discovered these truths; it is historically accurate; it contains many fulfilled prophecies.
 - b. More than sufficient evidence was given to establish the Bible as God's word.
2. Since the Bible is the word of God, what also is established?
 - a. There is a God in heaven; Christ is his Son; the gospel is his power to save lost men.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 3) 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. Obedience to the gospel is essential to salvation.
 - 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) 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."
 - 3) 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."
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) 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."
 - 6) 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."
 - 7) 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."
 - 8) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 9) 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. Faithfulness is indispensable: we must live godly lives, develop and exercise the Christian graces,

- worship scripturally, give liberally, attend regularly, and put God first in our hearts and lives.
- 1) Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - 2) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - 3) 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."
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) Hebrews 10:25: "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."
 - 6) 2 Peter 1:5-11: "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."
- d. God is able to bless.
- 1) 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
 - 2) 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."
- e. We cannot modify the Bible's message without destroying our souls.
- 1) 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."
 - 2) 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."
- f. The Bible offers great comfort and hope.
- B. God's word is a "lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105).
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Jesus Christ is the Son of the God of Heaven

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Greatness of Christ.

1. One Solitary Life: "Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, and that a despised one. He worked in a carpenter shop for thirty years, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things which usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. While he was a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the courtesy of a friend. Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of all human progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth, as that One Solitary Life" [Author Unknown].
2. The Influence of Christ: "Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, has conquered more men than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed and Napoleon. Without science and learning, he has shed more light on things both human and divine than all other teachers and scholars combined. Without the eloquence of schools He has spoken such words of life as were never spoken before. Without writing a single line, he has set more pens in motion and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art and songs of praise than all the vast army of great men of ancient and modern times. Born in a manger, and crucified as a malefactor he still controls the destiny of the human race. Jesus Christ is the soul specialist, and he holds before us himself as the ideal, and commands us, if we would be perfect, to follow him. If we could in any way discover in him one single imperfection, then we could repudiate him as our standard; but no one has ever discovered a word uttered by the matchless and sinless Son of God that should not have been said. No act or word in his life has ever shocked the moral sense of any man or woman. As we study the lives of other men, sometimes we are amazed at their greatness, and in less than a day we are shocked by their littleness; one moment we are startled by their wisdom, and the next moment we are disgusted by their stupidity..." [Author Unknown].

II. DISCUSSION.

A. How can we account for Jesus?

1. His greatness cannot be attributed to his parentage—they were obscure and poor members of society.
 2. We cannot attribute his greatness to formal education for he had none: "And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15).
 3. He did not derive his greatness from his environment (Galilee was of no reputation and Nazareth was a despised little hamlet); nor from the times in which he lived on earth for that was a sinful and ignorant period.
 4. His greatness cannot have been derived from his followers for they were ignorant and unlearned (in formal education): "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).
 5. His greatness is not limited by national boundaries or by time. It is truly marvelous to human wisdom how one from such an insignificant background could be so widely-known and loved.
 6. As these very points suggest, and which further evidence in these studies will show conclusively,
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Jesus Christ can be accounted for only on the basis that he is the only begotten Son of the Living God.

B. The Historical Jesus: Does Secular History Verify His Life?

1. Christianity depends upon whether Jesus actually lived on earth as the New Testament says.
2. Some of the other religions depend on ideas, not events; but the gospel system has at its heart the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. If he did not live on earth, die vicariously for mankind, lie buried in the earth three days, and rise victorious over death and hades on the third day, then Christianity is robbed of its power to save.
3. Bruno Baur, a German theologian and historian, claimed during the 19th century that Christ was an invention of a few Christians during the second century (Wayne Jackson).
4. Albert Schweitzer, famous medical missionary, acknowledged that Jesus did live on earth, but that the Jesus honored by Christians is so different from the real Jesus that there is hardly any resemblance (ibid.).

C. Various evidences are available to verify the reality of Jesus of Nazareth.

1. The New Testament is the primary record.
 - a. Whether one denies or affirms Jesus' existence, the New Testament must be consulted for it furnishes the only documents in existence penned by authors contemporary with Jesus. There is every reason to believe that the New Testament is what it claims to be.
 - b. Liberal theologians have claimed that the New Testament was written later than the first century. But modernistic theologian John A.T. Robinson admitted in a recent book (*Redating The New Testament*) that all of the New Testament was written during the first century; that James was written by a brother of Jesus within 20 years of Christ's death; that Paul authored the books that bear his name; and that John the apostle penned the fourth gospel account. This is an amazing admission (ibid.).
2. Josephus (37-100 A.D.) refers to Jesus in his uninspired history of the Jews. In *Antiquities of the Jews* (18.3.3) he speaks of the "marvelous deeds" of Jesus and refers to the Lord's death and resurrection. He speaks also of the trial of James and identifies him as "the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ" (20.9.1).
3. Another Jewish document (the *Talmud*) which was put into written form during the 5th century A.D. but which was based on materials which originated in the 1st century, testifies of the historical life of Jesus. Its testimony is hostile which lends even greater credence to the New Testament record. It claims that Jesus was born out of wedlock after his mother was seduced by a Roman soldier named Pandera (it calls Jesus "Ben Pandera"). This document also speaks of Jesus' miracles, says he claimed to be God, and that he was executed on the eve of the Passover (ibid.).
4. Roman historical records make mention of Christ.
 - a. Pliny, the governor of Bithynia, wrote to Emperor Trajan about 112 A.D. asking for advice as to how he should deal with Christians who met on an appointed day to sing hymns "to Christ as if to God" (*Epist. X.96*).
 - b. Tacitus, a Roman historian, in *Annals* (115 A.D.) speaks of "Christus, who in the reign of Tiberias the emperor was condemned to death by the procurator Pontius Pilate" (XV.44).
 - c. Suetonius, another Roman writer, declared that Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome as they "were continually making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus" (*Vita Claudii XXV.4*). Compare: "And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them" (Acts 18:2).
5. The obvious influence of the life of Jesus on our world is undeniable evidence that he indeed existed just as the New Testament depicts. If he did not live, then how could one explain the powerful impact of Christianity? To give the credit for this awesome effect to an imaginary character requires a greater miracle than to give the credit to whom it belongs—to Christ Jesus!

III. **CONCLUSION:**

- A. Some who have rejected the New Testament have said some great things about Jesus.
1. French philosopher and infidel Rousseau: "Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God" (*Emile*, 1.4, quoted in *Christian Courier*, Vol XIII, No. 7).
 2. Infidel philosopher John Stuart Mill: "About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast" (*Three Essays on Religion*, p.255, *ibid.*).
 3. H.G. Wells, unbelieving historian: "Is it any wonder that to this day this Galilean is too much for our small hearts?" (*The Outline of History*, p.599).
- B. Even those who reject his divinity feel compelled to acknowledge his superiority to the rest of humanity.
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A Picture of Christ in Old Testament Words

I. CHRIST IS CALLED "THE SEED" WHICH EMPHASIZES HIS ANCESTRAL LINE.

A. Christ is called the Seed of Woman.

1. Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
2. 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. Christ is called the Seed of Abraham.

1. Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
2. Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
3. Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

C. Christ is called the Seed of Isaac.

1. Genesis 21:12: "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."
2. Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

D. Christ is called the Seed of Judah.

1. Genesis 28:14: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."
2. Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."

E. Christ is called the Seed of David.

1. 2 Samuel 7:12-13: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever."
2. Psalms 89:3-4: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."
3. Psalms 132:11: "The LORD hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

II. OTHER OLD TESTAMENT NAMES.

A. Christ is called "Shiloh" which means *Peace*.

1. Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*." Shiloh means "giver of rest" or "giver of peace."
2. Jesus gives rest: "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29).
3. He gives peace:
 - a. John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto

- you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."
- b. John 16:33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."
 - c. Ephesians 2:14: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*."
 - d. Philippians 4:6-7: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
 - e. Colossians 1:21: "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."
- B. He is called "A Star" and "A Sceptre."
1. Numbers 24:17: "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."
 2. As a star Jesus is our guide:
 - a. Matthew 2:1-2,9: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him...When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was."
 - b. 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."
 3. As a sceptre he holds regal power and reigns as King: "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. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:33-36).
- C. He is called "Prophet."
1. Deuteronomy 18:15-18: "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; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
 2. He is the greatest of all of the prophets of God. "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).
 3. God speaks to humanity today through this Spokesman. "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" (Heb. 1:1-2).
 4. He revealed God's full truth. "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" (Rom. 16:25-26).
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D. He is called "Redeemer."

1. Job 19:25: "For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth."
2. Christ is our Redeemer:
 - a. Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
 - b. 1 Peter 1:18-19: "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."
3. He has paid our ransom: "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:6).

E. He is called "Immanuel."

1. Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 8:8: "And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach *even* to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."
2. Immanuel means "God with us" (Matt. 1:23).
3. Christ in the flesh was both man and God.
 - a. Matthew 1:18-23: "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. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 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."
 - b. He was as human as his mother (Mary), and as divine as his Father (God).

III. **DESCRIPTIVE NAMES FROM ISAIAH NINE.**A. Isaiah 9:6-7:

1. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (KJV).
2. Isaiah 9:6-7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this" (ASV).

B. He is the Prince of Peace.

1. He is the most wonderful Person of all time and history.
 - a. The root of the word translated "wonderful" occurs in Psalm 78:12 and shows the meaning of the word: "Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt...." The word describes the miracles which God did there, including the dividing of the sea, etc.
 - b. Christ is said to be "full of wonder"—he has awesome miracle-working abilities.
 - 1) Matthew 15:30-31: "And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed

to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."

- 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) John 11:43: "And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth."
 - 4) John 11:47: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles."
 - 5) Colossians 1:16-17: "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."
 - 6) 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."
2. He is full of wonder in his nature, his glory, his work, his birth, his ministry, his love, his obedience, his temptations, his death, his victory over death, hades and the devil, his resurrection, his ascension, and in his mediatorship, saving power, and kingship.

C. He is the greatest and wisest Counsellor.

1. To sit upon David's throne requires the greatest of wisdom. "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isa. 11:2).
2. "Wisdom and ability to give counsel are necessary for a king, and hence the words 'counsellor' and 'king' are used as synonyms in Micah 4:9. There is a certain uniqueness about the word, for it suggests that this One has no need of being surrounded with counsellors and advisors as is the case with mere human kings; He is Himself Counsellor" (Young's Concordance, p.335).
3. "This also cometh from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (Isa. 28:29).

D. He is the Mighty God.

1. John 1:1-2: "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."
2. Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."
3. 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 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."
4. Only the one to whom this appellation pertains could have done what Jesus did on earth: read the hearts of men, see into the future, walk on water, heal the sick, the maimed, the deaf and the blind, raise the dead, and bring himself forth from the grave.
 - a. His "goings forth" have been from eternity. He had no beginning and will have no end (Mic. 5:2; Rev. 1:11,18; John 1:1-3). Such things can only be said about deity.
 - b. John 8:58: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."
 - c. John 10:30: "I and *my* Father are one."
 - d. Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

E. He is called Everlasting Father.

1. The word "Father" describes the Messiah's relationship to his people.
 - a. Hebrews 2:13: "...Behold I and the children which God hath given me."
 - b. Ephesians 1:22-23: God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things

- to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
- c. Isaiah 63:16: "Thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting."
 - d. Psalm 103:13: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."
2. The quality of his fatherhood is described by the word "everlasting." He is an eternal Father; he forever guards and assists his children.
 - a. Hebrews 13:5: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
 - b. John 10:11: "I am the good shepherd."
 3. Christ is unendingly a Father to his people!
- F. He is called the Prince of Peace.
1. He came to establish peace between men, and between men and God. "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Eph. 2:16-17).
 2. His kingdom is one of peace:
 - a. Isaiah 11:9: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain..."
 - b. Isaiah 2:3-4: "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - c. Zechariah 6:12-13: "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 3. His message is the gospel of peace: "...How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15).
 - a. Although warfare exists between those who reject the gospel of peace and those who accept it (Matt. 10:35-36), yet among all those different races and nationalities in the Lord's church, peace exists.
 - b. And inside each individual there is peace, a peace is beyond human understanding (Phil. 4:7).

IV. OTHER APPELLATIONS.

- A. He is called the Ensign of the people.
1. Isaiah 11:10: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."
 2. Ensign: A standard which was erected in a conspicuous place for communicating information (Jer. 50:2); for gathering troops together (Isa. 18:3; Jer. 4:21); for gathering of fugitives (Jer. 4:6); and for gathering people together from around the world in Christ:
 - a. Isaiah 5:26: "And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly."
 - b. Isaiah 11:10: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."
 - c. Isaiah 11:12: "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."
 - d. Isaiah 49:22: "Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* shoulders."
 - e. Isaiah 62:10: "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people."
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3. As the Standard he is lifted up that all men may gather about him.
 - a. John 3:14: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."
 - b. John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."
 4. Unto him would the Gentile nations who knew not God be gathered.
- B. Isaiah 53: He is described as the Suffering Savior.
1. He suffered vicariously: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth" (Isa. 53:3-9).
 2. He was given as a sin offering: "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand" (Isa. 53:10).
 3. He would bear the sins of many: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:11-12).
 4. He would be enabled to make intercession for the offenders (Isa. 53:12).
- C. He is the King.
1. Jeremiah 30:9: "But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."
 2. Ezekiel 37:24: "And David my servant *shall be* king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them."
 3. Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
- D. He is the Messiah.
1. "Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" (Dan. 9:25).
 2. "Messiah" is the Hebrew word for the Greek word for "Christ."
 3. The meaning of each is "The Anointed One."
- E. He called the Plumbline.
1. A plumbline is a device by which vertical alignment is determined. Christ, through his gospel, is the final authority in all religious and spiritual matters, and will be the Judge in the last day.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 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."
 - c. John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the
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word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

2. "And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more" (Amos 7:8).

F. He is described as the Desire of all Nations.

1. Haggai 2:7: "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts."
 - a. The *desire of all nations* (KJV) is translated *the precious things of all nations* in the ASV. The reference is to those things which are highly prized and desired by the nations; these desired and desirable things would be brought into the Lord's house (the temple), to add to its glory.
 - b. "The church of the New Testament is the house of God, filled with the glory of God to a far larger degree than ever was the house of Solomon, Zerubbabel, or Herod. The application of the passage made by the writer of Hebrews (12:26) confirms this view. As God shook the heaven and earth at the giving of the law at Sinai, so he shook the heathen nations, removing them; and now he has shaken and removed the Jewish economy that man could receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:28). It was this removing of the old order and the founding of a new one that was before Isaiah's mind when he wrote of old things being forgotten and the creation of new heavens and a new earth (65:16-17)" (Homer Hailey, pp.310f).
2. There is something especially attractive about Christ; there is nothing unappealing about him. His sinless life, his unselfish earthly mission (Acts 20:38; Luke 19:10; Phil. 2:5-11), and his willingness to die for the sins of the world (Matt. 26:28; Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:15) cause those who are willing to accept the evidence to be drawn to him.
 - a. John 12:32-33: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."
 - b. 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."

G. He is called the Sun of Righteousness.

1. Malachi 4:2: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (Mal. 4:2).
2. As the sun of our solar system gives life and light to our planet, so Christ gives life and light to those who believe in him. New Testament passages describe the Lord as the giver of life and light:
 - a. Luke 1:78-79: "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."
 - b. Ephesians 5:14: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."
 - c. Matthew 4:16: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."
 - d. Luke 2:32: "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."
 - e. John 1:4,9: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men....That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John denied that he was the Light, but that he came to bear witness to the Light; that Light was Christ. "He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (John 5:35-36).
 - f. 2 Corinthians 4:4: "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."
 - g. 2 Corinthians 4:6: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in

our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

h. 2 Peter 1:19: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

3. If the commentators are correct, *righteousness* is personified, and is depicted as giving light to those who fear God. But the statement itself seems to clearly indicate a person, one who would have healing in his wings as he goes forth on his great mission of mercy.

H. He is our High Priest.

1. Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

2. Zechariah foretold that Christ would serve the dual role of king and priest simultaneously as he sits on the throne of his glory. That he is now serving as King is abundantly taught in the New Testament; that he is currently doing his duty at High Priest is likewise taught clearly (Heb. 7, 9; 1 Tim. 2:5).

3. Hebrews 7:25-28: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

THE ETERNAL CHRIST

John 1:1-3, 14, 18

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. In the beginning was the Word.

1. This is speaking of the pre-fleshly state of Christ.
2. He existed in the beginning, before time.
 - a. Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God [plural word in the Hebrew text] created the heaven and the earth."
 - b. 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."
 - c. John 17:5: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

B. Christ is therefore eternal.

1. Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
2. John 6:62: "*What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"
3. John 8:14: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go."
4. John 8:58: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."
5. John 16:28: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."

II. DISCUSSION.

A. He is called the Word.

1. We use a word or words to express ideas and thus to communicate with each other. In this sense, God uses Christ (the Word) to communicate to mankind: "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" (Heb. 1:1-2).
2. "Word" is translated from the Greek "Logos," and is capitalized; this means that it is used as a proper name for the Lord.

B. The Word was **with** God.

1. "With" suggests intimate closeness. He was "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18).
2. They were wholly united in their purposes: "I and *my* Father are one" (John 10:30).
3. Because of his perfect unity with the Father he was able to express to mankind what the Father is like.
 - a. John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."
 - b. John 14:8-9: "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father?"

C. The Word **was** God.

1. He possesses all the attributes of Deity: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).
2. The Father's attributes include infinite mercy, love and justice; he is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient; he is eternal.
3. All these and other traits and characteristics possessed by the Father are also possessed by the Son.

D. He is called "**God**."

1. John 20:28: "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."
 2. Hebrews 1:8-12: "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: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."
 3. He possesses the glory that pertains to Deity.
 4. It thrills our hearts to read the following passage and see the awesome and beautiful majesty of Deity described.
 - a. Isaiah 6:1-5: "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. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 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."
 - b. But John 12:41 shows that the Being Isaiah is describing is Christ! "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him" (John 12:41).
- E. All things were **made** by him.
1. It was he who created the universe.
 - a. John 1:3: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - b. Colossians 1:15-16: "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."
 - 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."
 2. The Hebrew word translated "God" in Genesis 1:1 is a plural form denoting the three members of the Godhead: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. They all acted in concert in bringing about the Creation. He was "with" (Greek—*pros*) which suggests united activity. The passages listed above show the Son was the special Agent involved in the Creation.
 3. He maintains control over the universe, keeping it in proper operation.
 - a. Colossians 1:17: "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." We speak of dough having consistency when it is able to hold together. Christ holds the creation together, otherwise it would instantly go into chaos.
 - b. Hebrews 1:3: "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."
- F. The Word was made **flesh** and dwelt among men.
1. 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."
 2. "Dwelt" is a term which in the Greek means that he "pitched tent" or "tabernacled" with men. The same word is used by Paul to denote the human body in distinction to the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1).
 3. This is a reference to the entry of Christ into earthly life in the fleshly form of a man.
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4. The means of this entrance was through the Virgin Birth.
 - a. Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - b. Matthew 1:22-23: "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."
 - c. 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."
 - d. He was as human as Mary, but he still retained his Divinity as is evidenced by his miraculous activities. "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. 1:23).
 - e. The nature he had while dwelling in the flesh is described by the verse.
5. He was **glorious**. He manifested his glory in the transfiguration scene, in the many miracles he performed, in the unequalled lessons he taught, by his ability to see into the hearts of men and foretell the future, and by his resurrection from the dead and ascension back into heaven.
 - a. John 2:11: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."
 - b. 1 John 1:1-3: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."
6. He was full of **grace**. "Grace" has reference to his beauty, kindness, goodwill, and the unmerited favor he extended to the lost.
7. He was full of **truth**. He is the embodiment of truth (John 14:6); the communicator of truth (John 1:17); he saw that the apostles were guided into all the truth (John 16:13); his truth sets men free from the guilt and penalty of sin (John 8:32).
 - a. 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."
 - b. John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."
 - c. 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."
 - d. John 8:31-32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. He is the only begotten of the Father.

1. 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."
2. 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."
3. 1 John 4:9-10: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins."

B. Jesus is both special and unique.

1. The term (*monogenes*) means more than "only" and more than "unique." It has reference to one who is "one of a kind." Christ bears a relationship with the Father which is had by no one else.
2. There is no one else in heaven or on earth, in either time or eternity, who is like Christ!

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS

- A. Although "Divinity" is not found in the Bible, Jesus is presented as a divine Being.
1. Divinity means to have the attributes of Deity, to be God. Foolish men allow themselves to be referred to as "divines." Only one who is Deity (God) is divine.
 2. Colossians 2:9: "In him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily."
 3. He is Omniscient.
 - a. John 1:47-49: "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."
 - b. John 2:19-25: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."
 4. He is Omnipotent.
 - a. John 5:26-29: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 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. Colossians 1:15-17: "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."
 5. His Omnipresence is indicated in Hebrews 13:5: "*Let your conversation be* without covetousness; *and be content with such things as ye have:* for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
 6. We are to be able to show others why we believe what we believe. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*" (1 Pet. 3:15).
- B. That Christ is a Divine Being is seen by his unnatural statements.
1. Luke 2:46-49: "And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? **wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?**"
 2. John 11:41-43: "Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." He prayed before raising Lazarus; he did so for the benefit of those standing by him. Thus, he gave the Father the credit in advance for the miracle which followed. Natural men are not so inclined.
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3. Mark 9:29: "And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." A natural man would have said, "I'm the only one who can cast out this kind."
 4. John 8:7: "So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." These are not the words of human wisdom but of divine.
 5. Luke 23:34: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This is not what a natural man would have said under the circumstances.
- C. That Christ is a Divine Being is seen by his unnatural deeds.
1. Even though he knew he was to die, he made no preparations to prevent it. This is not the way a natural man operates. From a purely human viewpoint, there was no compelling need for him to die on the cross. "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21).
 2. Matthew 21:12-17: "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. 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." When he was given a hero's welcome into Jerusalem, he did not stay in the city for further accolades. A natural man would have basked in this glory as Herod did in 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."
 3. Matthew 22:17-22: "Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled...."
 - a. Jesus supported the authority of the Roman Emperor even though his harsh and corrupt rule was hated by the Jews. The natural man would not have given this kind of support, for the Lord did not simply say the tax should be paid to avoid punishment, but rather upheld the right of the civil authority to impose the tribute.
 - b. 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."

- D. That Christ is a Divine Being is seen by his unnatural teachings.
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1. Matthew 5:22: "Whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." No natural man would have made such a strong statement, or could have known that such a statement was true. *Hell fire* is from "Gehenna"—the place of punishment awaiting the disobedient after death, resurrection, and the Judgment.
 2. Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." He showed that earthly wealth and prosperity are of little value in comparison to eternal, heavenly treasure. A man would have emphasized the former.
 3. 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." Men do not think or act this way; only the Lord could have spoken thus.
 4. 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." This is not the natural man's way of thinking.
 5. John 8:58: "Before Abraham was, I AM." Who in our generation would say, "Before George Washington was, I am?" No sane person would so speak, but no sane person would accuse Jesus of being insane!
- E. Jesus is shown to be a Divine being by these following considerations:
1. By the contrasts he showed between what the Old Testament prophets said and what he now said (see Matt. 5:21-48). His word superceded even the word given through the Old Testament prophets.
 - a. Matthew 17:5: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
 - b. 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."
 - 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. 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. By the miracles he did.
 - a. John 2:11: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."
 - b. John 3:1-2: "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."
 - c. John 20:30-31: "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."
 3. By his unfailing memory. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:4-5). "His remarkable memory is that of one who is divine. It leaps back over all the ages to the glory he had with the Father before the world was. Was he dishonest? A lunatic? No! Then how account for this wonderful memory of this remarkable person if he is not divine? Peter wrote years later and said that God did answer that prayer and gave him glory. I Pet. 1:21" (F.W. Gould, *Word of Life*, February, 1975).
 4. By his bold affirmations. No mere prophet ever would or could have made such statements as the
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following:

- a. Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light."
- b. 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."
- c. John 11:25-26: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"
- d. John 14:1-6: "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. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
5. By his errorless teaching. No one ever found any inconsistency or error in what he said.
 - a. John 7:46: "The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."
 - b. John 8:46: "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?"
6. By his sinless life. No one has ever convicted the Lord of being inconsistent with his teaching or of his ever committing even a single sin.
 - a. John 8:46: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?..."
 - b. Hebrews 4:15: "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."
 - c. 1 Peter 2:21-22: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

F. His Divinity rests on many infallible proofs, including:

1. The inerrant testimony of infallible Scripture.
2. The many fulfilled Old Testament prophecies given centuries ahead of time which predicted a great variety of detailed specifics about him.
3. The tremendous impact of his short earthly life on human history. There is no logical way to account for this other than to see him as he is: Deity!
4. The exalted nature of his doctrine. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine. For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28-29).
5. His glorious resurrection from the dead!
 - a. Acts 1:1-3: "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."
 - b. Romans 1:4: "And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

G. No man is a Divine Being, but faithful saints partake of the divine nature.

1. The purpose of the gospel is to restore people back into the pure image which God gave to man in the beginning, which man tainted by disobedience.
 - a. 2 Peter 1:3-4: "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."
- b. Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - c. 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - d. Colossians 3:10: "And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
 - e. Hebrews 12:10: "For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness."
 - f. Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."
2. When we obey the gospel the guilt and stain of our past lives are removed; as we walk in the light of the gospel as faithful Christians, we become more and more like the Lord in purity. We never become equal to God but we can be holy since God is holy.
 - a. 2 Peter 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 1 Peter 1:15-16: "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."
 - d. 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 3. Following the resurrection and judgment, when we are ushered into heaven clothed with our new spiritual bodies, we shall be as immortal and pure as the Lord.
 - a. Philippians 3:20-21: "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."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:50-57: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 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. 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. 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."
 - c. 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."
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THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST

- A. A great controversy has raged for many years between "conservatives" and "liberals."
1. The battle is between belief and unbelief; between taking the Bible as the fully inspired and authoritative word of God or viewing it as a good book with many good ideas and stories, but which is not to be taken very seriously. One side takes it as always right, the other as unreliable, unauthoritative, and filled with myths.
 2. Lying at the heart of this controversy is the issue of the Virgin Birth of Christ.
 - a. One who believes the Bible accepts at face value what the Bible says about the Virgin Birth.
 - b. Liberal-thinking people assert that whether we accept or reject the Virgin Birth there is no serious consequence. But some say we must reject what the Bible says about this subject before we can have a proper view of the Bible! It is even claimed that the passages concerning the virgin birth were inserted by uninspired writers and have no right to be in the Bible at all!
 - c. Controversy over the Virgin Birth came to a head with the publication of the Old Testament part of the Revised Standard Version [RSV] in 1952 with its infamous rendering of Isaiah 7:14 ["young woman" instead of "virgin"].
- B. Ancient UNinspired writers and writings assert the Virgin Birth of Christ.
1. Ignatus, who was an elder in the church at Antioch in Syria, and was martyred in 117 A.D., flatly affirmed: "The Son of God by the divine will and power was truly born of a virgin and baptized by John that all righteousness might be fulfilled by him" (Quoted in *Sound Doctrine*, by Rex Turner).
 2. Justin Martyr in 150 A.D. defended the Bible doctrine of the Virgin Birth.
 3. The "Apostles' Creed" (200 A.D.) taught the fact of the Virgin Birth.
 4. Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp who in turn was a disciple of the Apostle John (150-200 A.D.) wrote in defense of the Virgin Birth of Christ.
 5. Clement of Alexandria (Egypt); Tertullian (Carthage); Origen (Alexandria)—all wrote in support of the Virgin Birth.
- C. But the most reliable information on the subject is in the Bible affirmations.
1. Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - a. "Her seed"—a very curious term since begettal is almost always associated with the male of the species. Until modern times (the past 200-300 years) scientists thought that the woman was merely the incubator, and furnished nothing in the reproductive process. The fact is, the woman provides the ovum which is fertilized by the man. This is one of many pre-scientific statements in the Bible.
 - b. In the case at hand, the masculine child promised would be the product of the woman without the agency of a man. Hence, the child would be very special, able to deal a mortal blow to the devil while incurring only a minor injury.
 - c. This first prophecy speaks of the Virgin Birth of Christ! "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4).
 2. Isaiah 7:10-14,16: "Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel....For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."
 - a. In the chapter, Isaiah warned Ahaz, king of Judah, not to trust Assyria for any protection from his other enemies; he was to place his trust in God.
 - b. The prophet asked Ahaz to request any sign he wished that God would deliver Judah from the
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- present danger, and God would give it to him. When Ahaz rashly declined, Isaiah announced to Ahaz and all the house of David that the Lord himself would provide a sign.
- c. "Isaiah saw that son in prophetic vision as already born ('is with child, and beareth,' footnote in ASV), and he stated that before the son reached the age of maturity and discernment, the kingdoms that Ahaz feared would be without power" (Highers, Freed-Hardeman Lectures, 1973, p.507). In the time it would take for the child to reach a mature age, by that span of time, the threat posed by the nations of Syria and Ephraim (7:1-9) will be gone.
 - d. Some young woman of marriageable age bearing a son would have no sign value. This naturally happened daily, then and now. The word "sign" as used in the Bible describes supernatural activity.
 - 1) John 20:30: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book."
 - 2) Matthew 12:38-40: "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."
 - 3) Matthew 16:1-4: "The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? 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."
 - 4) Judges 6:11-22: "And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face."
 - 5) Judges 6:36-40: "And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and

it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.”

- 6) Isaiah 38:7-8: “And this shall be a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.”
- e. A virgin giving birth would be a notable sign!
- 1) Notice that the sign was not to be fulfilled for 750 years, when Christ was born of the virgin Mary. This is not strange, for the sign Jesus gave his enemies, was to be seen by them some time in the future, after his resurrection: "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" (Matt. 12:38-40).
 - 2) The certainty of the sign rested on the promise of God. When God wanted to assure Abraham of the reliability of his word, he swore by himself. So by two immutable things (God's promise and his oath), he conveyed this assurance of his word to Abraham (Heb. 6:13-18; Gen. 22:16-18). Similarly, God's promise to Ahaz and the whole house of David was positive assurance that Judah would not be destroyed. If the house of David were destroyed, then all the promises and plans of God to Abraham would have likewise perished. God's very promises was an immediate sign to Ahaz!
- f. Modernists and their lackeys assert that the Hebrew word *almah* does not mean "virgin." They claim that if a virgin was meant another word (*bethulah*) would have been used. But *bethulah* is used in Joel 1:8 in reference to a wife. *Almah* is used seven times in the Old Testament, and in every case a virgin is described (unless this passage is the exception). Those passages are:
- 1) Genesis 24:43: "Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw *water*, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink."
 - 2) Exodus 2:8: "And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother."
 - 3) Psalms 68:25: "The singers went before, the players on instruments *followed* after; among *them were* the damsels playing with timbrels."
 - 4) Proverbs 30:19: "The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid."
 - 5) Song of Songs 1:3: "Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee."
 - 6) Song of Songs 6:8: "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number."
 - 7) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
- g. Highers (p.509) raised some significant questions: Is the female contemplated chaste or unchaste? Pure or impure? If she is unmarried, unchaste, and impure then this is not a prophecy, nor is it even properly applicable to the virgin Mary and the birth of Christ. If the *almah* of the passage is pure,

- chaste, and unmarried, then the only way she could give birth to a son would be as a virgin. And that happened only once in all of history (Matt. 1:22-23). Since there was no virgin birth in Isaiah's day, we must look to the babe in Bethlehem as the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14.
- h. As further evidence of the correctness of this conclusion, notice the name which would be given the child: Immanuel ("God with us"). No one but Christ, the Son of God, could correctly wear this name.
 - 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. No ordinary child could be described by the words of these Old Testament texts:
 - a. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7).
 - b. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2).
 - c. What ordinary child could be described as the "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father?" According to the second, his goings forth have been from everlasting. How could one whose existence and works have been from eternity become flesh through the natural processes of birth!
 - d. Micah 5:2 is quoted in Matthew 2:5-6 as a prophecy relating to the birth of the promised Messiah: "And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."
 4. Jeremiah 31:22: "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man."
 - a. In the natural order of things, there is no new thing on the earth (Eccl. 1:9-10). But in the great event God was describing in this passage, he would be creating something entirely new, which had never been done before.
 - b. There would be nothing new if the prophecy was merely that a woman would enfold and embrace a man in her arms; there would be nothing new if it means that a woman would "house" a man (baby) in her womb. But there would be something new done if a woman should conceive a man-child without the agency of a man!
 5. Hebrews 10:5-8: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law."
 - a. This is given as fulfillment of David's prophetic utterance in Psalm 40:6-8: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart."
 - b. The person being described is Christ; he existed prior to the preparation of his physical body; by means of this physical body he entered into the world; he gave that body as a sacrifice for sin unto God since animal sacrifices were not able to take away the guilt of sin (Heb. 10:1-4). His perfect
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- sacrifice was able.
- c. The virgin birth explains how, where, and when God created that body for him.
6. Matthew and Luke report details of the Lord's birth.
- a. Matthew 1:18-25: "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. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 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. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
 - b. Luke 1:26-35: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women. And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."
 - c. Matthew's record describes the events from the point of view of Joseph; Luke gives it from Mary's. Matthew shows Joseph's inner turmoil over Mary's pregnancy; Luke reveals the inmost thoughts of Mary. The two narratives give a complete picture of the events.
 - d. Before Mary and Joseph came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18). Mary had conceived even though she had known no man (Luke 1:34-35). Joseph, her espoused husband, was unwilling to make her a public example so he was preparing to put her away (divorce her) privately (Mt. 1:19). Remember that under Jewish custom a couple were considered married during the betrothal period. Thus, Jesus was conceived within the married state. Compare: "Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God" (John 8:41). [This was evidently an allusion to their notion that Jesus was of doubtful parentage].
 - e. The angel of the Lord reassured Joseph that Mary had conceived by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20). The angel told Joseph that Mary would give birth to a son, that he would name the child Jesus, and that the child would save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21).
 - f. Matthew was guided also to record that "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" (1:22-23; Isa. 7:14). We are also told that Joseph "knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son" (Matt. 1:25). The plain implication of the statement is that he *knew* her after the birth of Jesus, but not before.
 - g. Mary spoke of herself as a virgin (Lk. 1:34). Matthew uses a Greek word which means "virgin"
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to describe Mary (1:23). In Luke's genealogy (3:23), he shows that many supposed that Jesus was the son of Joseph. Matthew's account (1:16) shows that Joseph was the husband of Mary "of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." These facts establish the truth that Mary was truly a virgin when Jesus was conceived, and that Joseph had nothing to do with it.

- h. Luke 1:32-34: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" "And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43). [This statement was made by Elizabeth]. The passage shows that this baby was more than a mere human, hence not the product of a natural father and mother, but by the Holy Spirit's miraculous dealings with Mary the virgin.
7. The Virgin Birth of Jesus is implied in many other verses.
- a. Matthew 22:41-45: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" The answer to the Lord's question lies in the Virgin Birth. He is the descendant of David through Mary, but he is the Son of God. In this way he could be spoken of both as David's son and David's Lord.
 - b. Mark 1:1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark does not directly address the subject of the Virgin Birth of Jesus, but it lies in the background of his book.
 - c. John does not directly discuss the Virgin Birth but implies it by his statements in 1:1-3, 14: The Word was God and the Word was made flesh.
 - d. Paul speaks by implication of the Virgin Birth.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Philippians 2:7-8: "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

D. The Significance and Consequences of the Virgin Birth.

1. If the Virgin Birth of Christ is removed from the divine Record:
 - a. The pregnancy of Mary is left unexplained.
 - b. The annunciation to Joseph is purely fictitious, and must also be removed.
 - c. The comment by Matthew indicating that this miraculous conception was the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 must be removed, and apostle is guilty of trying to deceive his readers by falsely claiming fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 in the birth of Jesus.
 - d. The kindness of Joseph in dealing with his espoused wife must also be deleted.
 - e. If the Virgin Birth is fictitious, the first chapter in the New Testament is erroneous, and we must admit that we know nothing of the Lord's birth. If the first chapter is wrong, we cannot trust the remainder.
2. If we deny the Virgin Birth of Christ, we have no reason to accept any of the other facets of his life: his sinlessness, miracles, resurrection, ascension, and authority.
3. If we deny the Virgin Birth of Christ, we have no reason to accept any of the Bible as inspired of God, fully trustworthy and authoritative, or as in any way able to give guidance and hope.
4. If there was no Virgin Birth, then the Deity of Christ is brought into question, for how could one who had a natural father and mother be Divine?
5. If there was no Virgin Birth, how can we accept the proposition that Jesus, a man born of human parentage, is able to save us?
 - a. Matthew 1:21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall

save his people from their sins."

- b. 1 Peter 1:19: "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
6. Generally, those who deny the Virgin Birth also deny other features of the gospel, and those who accept the Virgin Birth also accept all the others features of the gospel. Our attitude toward the Virgin Birth is indicative of our overall attitude toward the remainder of the Bible.
 7. The Virgin Birth of Christ is as natural and necessary to the beginning of the Lord's earthly sojourn as his resurrection is to the end of the same. The same authority that speaks of the latter, also speaks of the former.
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THE VICARIOUS SUFFERING AND DEATH OF CHRIST

Matthew 27:46; Romans 5:6-9; Isaiah 53

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Four of the distinctive features of Christianity are:

1. The Virgin Birth of Christ.
2. The Vicarious Suffering and Death of Christ.
3. The Blood Atonement of Christ's sacrifice.
4. The Resurrection of Christ.

B. We are now to consider the second of these four: His Vicarious Suffering and Death.

1. Vicarious means "serving in the place of, or instead of, someone; something done or suffered by one person to the benefit or advantage of another person."
2. Vicarious suffering is the case of one suffering himself so that a blessing or an advantage might be accrued to another. To suffer for personal advantage is not a case of vicarious suffering.
3. Christ suffered for the benefit of mankind; his suffering and death were vicarious.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. Unbelievers claim that the vicarious suffering of Christ is unreasonable and unjust.

1. They contend that this concept makes God less than infinite in power and justice.
 - a. That if God is omnipotent he could have found some other way to save. Since he chose the way of the cross, he is not all-powerful.
 - b. That it makes God unmerciful in that he required Christ to suffer when he had committed no crime.
 - c. That if God truly loves humanity and wants men to dwell in heaven for eternity, the atonement was unnecessary.
 - d. That it was unjust to require his Son to die for criminals.
2. In reply, the following observations need to be made:
 - a. If the death of Christ was unnecessary, or could have been avoided by finding some other means of saving man, God would have been unjust. But without the death of Christ, the demands of violated justice could not have been satisfied. Because the Almighty is infinite in righteousness and justice, he could not extend mercy to man without the death of his sinless Son.
 - b. If Christ had been an unwilling participant in the atonement process, God would have been unjust. But Christ was not an unwilling participant.
 - 1) John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
 - 2) 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."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:1-2: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
3. It was because God and his Son loved fallen man, including the basest of sinners and criminals, that the plan was developed by the Father and executed by the Son to redeem man. The vicarious suffering and death of Christ is an expression of love and mercy toward mankind, and shows no lack of concern on the part of God for his Son.

B. God's plan for nature includes the concept of vicarious suffering and death.

1. It is found in the plant kingdom. The death and decay of plants enrich the soil, and provide for the growth of future plants. Furthermore, plants grow to maturity and die, and in the process, produce seeds in order for the species to continue. They also provide food and shelter for insects, animals, and men.
 2. It is found in the animal kingdom.
 - a. Animals, particularly the female, suffer and sacrifice in order to bear and rear the young.
 - b. The instinct of many animals is such that they will fight and die in defense of their young.
 3. It is commonly found in the human race.
 - a. Mothers give of themselves in bearing and rearing their offspring. In so doing, they put their lives and health at risk, and endure considerable suffering.
 - b. Parents will willingly give their lives in supporting and defending their offspring.
 - c. Parents commonly wear themselves out in daily toil, and spend many anxious hours and days, in behalf of their children. "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children" (2 Cor. 12:14).
- C. The fall of man led to the interposition of Christ.
1. Adam, in his original composition, was just like men are today: possessing two natures. He had a mortal body and an eternal spirit (Gen. 2:7; Zech. 12:1; Eccl. 12:7). As long as he continued to have access to the tree of life he could live on and on. That special fruit provided him with perpetual life, possibly giving him an infallible protection against disease, and kept his body permanently youthful and healthy.
 - a. He had the choice of remaining obedient to God and continue his open access to the tree of life (and avoid death), or of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (and incurring God's wrath, losing access to the tree of life, and thus bring death upon himself).
 - b. How long Adam remained in that innocent state we are not told. The tragic fact is that Satan, in the guise of a serpent, beguiled Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. She encouraged Adam to partake also. He ate, perhaps not being able to bear being separated from his beautiful wife.
 2. By violating the will of their Creator, they forfeited their lives. But why did they not suffer a violent, immediate death? They did die in the sense that they were separated from God (Isa. 59:1-2). And they began to die physically as soon as they lost access to the tree of life.
 - a. But God, who is able to see into the future, developed a plan of redemption even before the Creation.
 - 1) 1 Peter 1:19-20: "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."
 - 2) Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
 - b. That plan of salvation directly involved the sending of Christ into the world to be a sacrifice for sinful man. But to prepare mankind for the coming of the Savior, God gave directions for animal sacrifices. As the skins of animals were intended to be a temporary covering for the nakedness of Adam and Eve, so the blood of animals was to be a temporary, limited covering for their sins.
 - c. God continued the edict of animal sacrifices down through the ages until the coming of his Son, whose blood would fully remove the guilt of sin for the obedient.
 3. Adam and Eve understood, in their starlight dispensation, that the Great One was coming. It is possible that they thought that their firstborn was to be the promised Seed.
 - a. Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - b. Genesis 4:1: "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD."
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- c. Genesis 4:25: "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."
 4. "Except for that divine interposition, there could have been no respite for Adam and Eve, and there could have been, therefore, no human race to inhabit the earth. Adam and Eve did not, as a direct result of that interposition, die a violent death; and while they did die spiritually—that is, they were separated from God spiritually until the interposition offer was made and accepted—the interposition of Christ, together with the blood of those animals that were slain, brought that rebellious pair again within the favor and reach of God's mercy. The disobedience of Adam and Eve, however, called for punitive punishment; and as a means of that punishment, they were thus separated from the fruit of the tree of life, which separation and punishment made their death, in time, inevitable" (Rex Turner, *Sound Doctrine*, May/June, 1976).
 5. The interposition of Christ was a pledge that He would sacrifice his life (when he came to earth in the bodily form of a man) for Adam and Eve and all their descendants (as each accepted the conditions involved). But he was to come only when the time was ripe (Gal. 4:4); until that time, the blood of animals was the only prescribed covering for sin, and that was temporary and limited.
- D. The origin of evil in the world.
1. Objectors and unbelievers have difficulty accepting the concept that the death of Christ has any efficacy to the salvation of man. "Why was his death necessary?" "Why did not God simply rid the world of evil and then there would be no sin?" This line of thought lies behind much of the unbelief in academic circles, and fosters a significant amount of unbelief in the world today.
 2. The questions require a consideration of the origin of evil: From where did it come and with whom did it originate? The Bible teaches that God is not the originator of evil.
 - a. James 1:13-14: "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."
 - b. Habakkuk 1:13: "*Thou art* [God] of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, *and* holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth *the man that is* more righteous than he?"
 - c. 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 seraphim...and one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."
 - d. Isaiah 5:16: "But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness."
 - e. Psalm 99:9: "Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy."
 - f. I John 1:5: "And this is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
 - g. 1 John 3:8: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."
 - h. 1 Peter 1:15-16: "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."
 3. These passages teach several things:
 - a. That God did not create evil.
 - b. That God cannot be tempted with evil.
 - c. That God tempts no man to do evil.
 - d. That God is perfectly and absolutely holy and righteous.
 - e. That God is light and in him is no darkness at all.
 - f. That God expects man to be holy as God is holy.
 4. God did not originate evil, and he cannot be charged with the responsibility of the harm which men choose to do against each other.
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- a. God gave man the ability to make choices; man does not always make the right choices; when he chooses wrongly, evil results.
 - b. God gave man a set of rules and principles by which to conduct himself; man does not always live by these "limitations" on his freedom; when man disregards God's law, sin is the result (I John 3:4; Rom. 3:23; 6:23).
5. God has placed certain limitations upon himself.
- a. He cannot do that which is contrary to his nature.
 - b. He cannot lie (Heb. 6:18).
 - c. He cannot look upon iniquity (Hab. 1:13).
 - d. He cannot commit sin (Jas. 1:13).
 - e. He cannot deny himself (2 Tim. 2:13).
 - f. He cannot do that which is absurd or self-contradictory.
 - g. He cannot make two mountains without a valley between.
 - h. He cannot make a square circle.
 - i. He cannot make a material spirit.
 - j. He cannot make a sensitive rock.
 - k. He cannot create a being whose very essence of character will be infinitely sinless and perfect (Turner, p.7).
 - 1) Angels and men are created rational beings; no such being is infinite but finite; all finite beings are capable of error. Only the members of the Godhead are infinite and incapable of any error (not considering Christ while he was in the flesh).
 - 2) Since men are created rational beings and are capable of wrong-doing (2 Pet. 2:4; Rom. 3:23), they will do so, and thus evil is produced.
 - l. He cannot arbitrarily force sinless perfection upon his created finite beings. Each is given free moral agency, with sufficient guidance to keep him on the way of righteousness, and with all the motivation needed to do so. The obedience of such a being brings glory to God; the "obedience" of a mere machine does not. He prefers to rule over rational beings who consciously and sincerely choose to do his will.
 - m. He cannot clear the guilty without any penalty; his infinite justice precludes it.
 - 1) Nahum 1:3: "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit [clear] the wicked [guilty]."
 - 2) Exodus 23:7: "I will not justify the wicked."
 - 3) Man must be active in the spiritual purification process (I Pet. 1:22; Acts 2:37-40; Mark 16:15-16; Tit. 2:11-12).
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) Acts 2:37-41: "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 you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
 - 6) 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."
 - 7) 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."

- 8) God is merciful but he is also just: he loves man and desires to pardon and bless him; but he cannot clear the guilty.

E. The Nature of Man.

1. Man is a complex being comprised of two different natures.
 - a. 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. 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."
 - c. Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."
2. He has a mortal, physical part which is akin to the animals.
3. But he has a spiritual part which is made in God's image, which includes the ability to reason, to act responsibly, to possess wisdom, to have and express emotions. The spirit is that part of man having the rational, emotional, decision-making ability, and conscience.
4. Man's predisposition to commit sin stems from the basic drives of the flesh: hunger, thirst, sex, and desire to achieve. Without these God-given drives, man would starve, die of thirst, fail to propagate, and die from want. But these appetites, while having proper outlets and means of satisfaction, can be misused; it is the misuses that lead to sin. God's law is given to control and guide these basic drives.
5. Man has a predisposition to do right which stems from his intellect, his emotions, and his conscience. "The spirit is willing." Every society of man of which there is any record has had some system of justice; the standard may not be based on the Bible, but there is a standard. The Bible is God's standard to which man is held accountable.

F. A Dilemma with respect to the Creation of Man.

1. To summarize the points made regarding the nature of God and the nature of man:
 - a. God could not create a rational mortal being that would continue to be absolutely sinless.
 - b. God cannot arbitrarily force infinite sinless perfection upon a rational finite being.
 - c. God, by his own righteous nature, cannot clear the guilty.
 - d. Man has a predisposition to sin as well as a predisposition to justice and righteousness.
2. Why did God create man so that he has the nature he has? Why did he not make him solely after the fashion of animals? Why did God give man an earthly existence which is subject to suffering and death? Why did God create a system which will result in most of the race spending eternity in torment? The answers to these questions are indeed complex, but we may be able to see some of the answers with a reasonable amount of clarity.
3. **God is a social Being.** He desires to shower his offspring with all the wonderful blessings his infinite powers permit him to give. Why do a husband and wife desire children? They want the pleasure of tending, guiding, shaping them as they grow and mature into responsible adults. They want to bless those children with whatever gifts they are able to give them. It is so with God.
4. **God seeks the fellowship of kindred spirits.** With whom do you derive the greatest pleasure? Is it not with those with whom you have most in common? We feel out of place with those who are alien to us. God cannot enter into fellowship with those who take pleasure in sin, and who have no respect for his will.
5. **The scheme of redemption involves human responsibility based on full freedom of choice.** There could be no true holiness if one is forced to thus live against his will. Only the body could be forcibly controlled; not the mind and heart. God wants our hearts, and all of them.
 - a. Mark 12:30: "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."
 - b. Romans 6:17: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the

- heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."
- c. 1 Timothy 2:4: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."
 - d. 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - e. Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - f. 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."
6. **God's people need hardships and trials to grow to spiritual maturity.** "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jas. 1:2-4; cf. Heb. 12:1-15).
7. **God conceived the plan for redeeming man even before he made man.** "Emphasis must be put on this fact. The plan for man before the creation of man was God's solution to the seeming dilemma of the justice of God on the one hand, and the certainty of the sin of man on the other hand" (Turner, p.9). "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?" (Rom. 8:28-31).
- a. God foreordained those whom he foreknew to be conformed to the image of his Son. Paul is not speaking of individuals but the type of individual. If God decided who would be saved and who would be lost he would be showing partiality, a practice he denies.
 - 1) Romans 2:11: "For there is no respect of persons with God."
 - 2) 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."
 - b. God foreknew a certain class of individuals, at the time still unborn, whose hearts would be characterized by humility and honesty so as to be receptive to God's will. God did not make certain ones this way, but they made themselves to be such by being true to their own consciences. This plan God made before the creation (Rev. 13:8; 1 Pet. 1:20). The plan called for the salvation of those who would be desirous of being transformed into the image of Christ (cf. Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18).
 - 1) Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:20: "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."
 - 3) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - c. God foreknew that man would fall; he conceived the proper plan to exalt those of the race who were willing to be conformed to the image of his Son. The end result was to be that Christ would be the firstborn among many brethren. Christ is the firstborn in point of rank of all those raised from the dead. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature....And he
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- 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. 1:15,18). Our gracious God wants his Son to have many followers.
- d. Those who were foreordained, these he also called. This call is issued by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14; Mark 16:15-16).
 - e. Those who are called are justified. God saves (justifies) all those who will answer the call of the gospel. Many are called but few are chosen, because few are willing to make the commitment.
 - f. Those who are justified are also destined for glorification. This glory is in heaven.
 - 1) Colossians 1:27: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."
 - 2) Colossians 3:4: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 4:17: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 2:14: "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 5) 2 Timothy 2:10: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."
 - g. "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" (Eph. 1:3-5). This passage says essentially the same thing as does Romans 9:29-30: "And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. God was willing to sacrifice his only begotten Son that the above might be possible.

1. Think of it: God wanted YOU to be in his eternal presence so much that Christ was sent to earth to suffer and die! What wondrous love is this! It is beyond our finite comprehension.
2. No one but Christ could meet the demands of a just and righteous God so that God could be both just and merciful. The death of Christ under the circumstances of the case made both of these things possible. "To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).
3. Mortal man cannot fully comprehend the awful suffering of both the Father and the Son during the dark hours of Cavary.

B. Some final observations:

1. The richer blessings and honors belong to the one who suffers vicariously.
 2. The suffering and death of Christ requited every demand of violated justice.
 3. He paid it all, and more fully than if the guilty had done so: he understood.
 4. We can have a closer relationship with God than otherwise was possible.
 5. His death provide the means of changing the disposition of sinful men.
 6. His death resulted in breaking the power of Satan. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).
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THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The doctrine of the Atoning Blood of Christ is one of the basics of Christianity.

1. Romans 3:24-26: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare...at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
2. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
3. Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
4. Hebrews 9:12,22: "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*....And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
5. 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. Despite these plain declarations, men reject the concept of a bloody religion.

1. A generation ago one prominent denomination removed all songs from their hymnal that had references to the blood of Christ.
2. Modern theologians decry the doctrine: "Is Christianity a bloody religion? Is God a sadist? Is he morbid?" These questions are intended to prejudice our minds against the truth that the blood of Christ was shed for our redemption.
3. If the blood of Christ was not essential, then he died in vain! And the Bible is no more trustworthy than any man-made book! If Satan can convince man that his blood is unimportant, he will have destroyed the power of the gospel.
4. But why were bloody sacrifices required throughout the Old Testament era? What is so important about the blood of Christ?

II. DISCUSSION.

A. One reason Christ's blood is an important Bible truth is that the life of the flesh is in the blood.

1. The Bible plainly asserts this truth and medical science has demonstrated its veracity.
 - a. Genesis 9:3-4: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."
 - 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. There are certain unique properties possessed by the blood of a living being.
 - a. The cells of the body are sustained by means of the blood which carries oxygen to each of them continually. If the blood supply to the brain is cut off the brain cells begin to die immediately. The blood cells are able to carry oxygen because, unlike other cells, they do not contain nuclei. If they had nuclei they would store up the oxygen instead of distributing it.
 - b. Blood contains three types of cells: red blood cells which distribute oxygen to the rest of the body; white blood cells which fight disease; and platelet blood cells which make the clotting process possible.
 - c. Blood is the means for supplying food to all parts of the body. It is also the medium by which hormones are carried to the right places in the body.
 - d. The essential relationship of blood to life itself is seen in the fact that only in a living body can blood be formed. And the very existence of living tissue is directly dependent on blood. The life
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of the flesh is in the blood!

B. Another reason is that God's justice demands life for life.

1. Life is in the blood: therefore the justice and righteousness of God demands the shedding of blood as a means of satisfying justice. God is a God of love and mercy, but he is also infinite in justice and righteousness: if he should pass over a single unrequited demand of justice, he would at that point cease to be a just God!
 - a. Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."
 - b. Leviticus 24:17-20: "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbor; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again."
 - c. Deuteronomy 19:21: "And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."
2. When Adam ate of the forbidden fruit he forfeited his right to live: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). He died spiritually at the moment because his sin built a separating wall between himself and his holy God (Isa. 59:1-2). He began to die physically because his sin caused God to remove him from Eden and the tree of life.
 - a. He would have died immediately, except for the fact that Jesus had already agreed to interpose his life (by shedding his blood) to make atonement for sin. To interpose means to come between for the purpose of preventing the intended effect or result; to make an insertion. Christ had already committed himself, even before the creation, to die in the stead man when man fell into sin. Animal sacrifices were given as a temporary measure.
 - b. Thus, Christ was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8; cf. 1 Pet. 1:18-20). He put forth his pledge of his own life and blood as a propitiation for fallen man.
 - c. This required that Jesus leave his majestic state in heaven and take upon himself the form of a man:
 - 1) "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" (Heb. 2:14-15).
 - 2) "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph. 2:8).
3. The shedding of the blood of the sinless Son of God was necessary to meet the demands of infinite justice and make it possible for God to "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

C. How may an alien sinner approach the blood of Christ?

1. This is a question of paramount importance! Christ died for all (Heb. 2:9) but not all men will be saved (Matt. 7:13-14).
 - a. The difference between salvation and condemnation is determined by whether or not the individual received the cleansing and pardon the blood offers.
 - b. We cannot be redeemed by the blood of animals (Heb. 10:4); nor by material wealth (1 Pet. 1:18); only by the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).
2. In order to approach the blood of Christ, he must first come into the death of Christ, where his blood was shed.
 - a. John 19:33-34: "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."
 - b. 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 God, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
- c. In the wisdom of God, baptism (an immersion in water) is the means and the time where the alien sinner contacts the saving blood of Christ. It was in the Lord's death that blood and water flowed from the pierced body of Jesus.
 - 1) 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."
 - 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) 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."
 - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 3. In order for a Christian to stay in contact with this blood, he must live a faithful, obedient life: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 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" (1 John 1:5-10).
 - a. A perfect sinless life is not required—such is impossible. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak" (Matt. 26:41).
 - b. But faithfulness to the fullest extent possible is required.
 - 1) 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."
 - 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) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
 - 4) Luke 13:24: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."
 - 5) Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 6) 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."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. Faithfulness to Christ requires many things.

1. We must worship in accordance with the New Testament—John 4:24 (Lord's Supper, giving, singing,

- praying, studying).
- a. John 4:23-24: "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."
 - b. Mark 7:7: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men."
 - c. Hebrews 10:23-25: "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."
2. We must be pure in heart and life.
 - a. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - b. 1 Peter 1:15-16: "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."
 - c. 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."
 3. We must be zealous in work.
 - a. Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - 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. 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 4:12: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."
 4. We must develop the Christian graces: "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." (2 Pet. 1:5-7).
 5. We must cultivate the fruit of the Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).
- B. Great blessings are derived from the Blood of Christ.
1. Revelation 1:5-6: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."
 2. 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."
 3. 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."
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THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Christ performed many miracles while he was on earth.

1. That he did perform miracles is established by virtue of the following:
 - a. His disciples and his friends said he did.
 - b. Even his enemies admitted that he performed miracles and that his miracles were genuine.
 - 1) Matthew 12:24: "But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."
 - 2) John 11:47-48: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation."
 - 3) Acts 4:16: "Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*."
2. People who were neutral toward Christ admitted his miracles: "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2).

B. The New Testament, which itself can be proved to be inspired, says that his miracles were genuine.

1. Matthew 4:23: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."
2. Matthew 9:8: "But when the multitude saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men."
3. John 20:30-31: "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."
4. Acts 4:16: "Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*."

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The miracles he performed were of a wide variety.

1. He healed people of various diseases:
 - a. Matthew 8:1-4: "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."
 - b. Matthew 9:1-6: "And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."
 - c. Matthew 9:20-22: "And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said,

- Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour."
2. He opened the eyes of the blind:
 - a. Matthew 9:27-31: "And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See *that* no man know *it*. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country."
 - b. Matthew 20:30-34: "And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him."
 - c. Mark 8:22: "And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him."
 - d. See also John 9.
 3. He gave hearing to the deaf.
 - a. Matthew 11:5: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."
 - b. Mark 7:31-37: "And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it*; And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."
 4. He loosed dumb tongues.
 - a. Matthew 15:30-31: "And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."
 - b. Mark 7:31-37: "And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it*; And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."
 5. He caused the lame to walk.
 - a. Matthew 11:5: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."
 - b. Matthew 15:30-31: "And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame,
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- blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."
6. He fed the hungry miraculously.
 - a. Matthew 14:15-21: "And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children."
 - b. Matthew 15:32-39: "Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala."
 7. He calmed a raging storm.
 - a. Matthew 8:23-27: "And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"
 - b. Mark 4:35-41: "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"
 8. He cast out demons.
 - a. Mark 1:23-27: "And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him."
 - b. Mark 3:10-12: "For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried,
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saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known."

9. Other cases.

a. He restored withered hands: "And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mark 3:1-5).

b. He caused those who were stooped to stand erect: "And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*. And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him" (Luke 13:11-17).

c. He raised the dead.

1) Matthew 11:5: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

2) Luke 7:11-18: "And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about. And the disciples of John showed him of all these things."

3) Luke 8:49-50: "While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole."

4) John 11:43-44: "And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."

d. Jesus performed miracles publicly, before both friend and foe, and on many occasions. Thousands examined his miracles closely; they could not dispute their reality and power. His miracles were done openly, and were obvious to all.

B. If Christ did not perform miracles, then some awesome consequences result.

1. His character and integrity are destroyed. He is shown to be an imposter. Since he claimed to work miracles, then he is also a liar (if he did not perform any).
2. The New Testament is discredited. It repeatedly says that Christ did miracles. If it is wrong on this, we have no reason to respect anything else it reports.

3. We cannot accept the teachings of Christ for he taught that he worked miracles. If he was wrong on that matter, we cannot trust his other teachings.
- C. The purpose of Christ's miracles.
1. His miracles proved his Deity.
 2. His miracles were to convince people that he was the Christ: "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).
 3. His miracles convinced many people of his Deity.
 - a. John 2:23: "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did."
 - b. John 3:2: "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."
 - c. John 4:46-54: "So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee."
 - d. John 6:14: "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."
 - e. John 11:47-48: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation."
 - f. John 12:11-19 "Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus. On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him. The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him."
 - g. John 20:8: "Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed."
- D. Miracles confirmed his message as being the word of God.
1. Jesus combined miracles with his teaching so as to convince people that he came from God: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt. 4:23).
 2. When the apostles went forth preaching, they confirmed the word by miracles.
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- a. Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
- b. Hebrews 2:2-4: "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*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
3. Why did God's word need confirming? The gospel was not yet revealed; it had to be authenticated to gain committed converts. If you had been living at the time, and Jesus had come to you with the story that he was the Messiah, you would need evidence that what he said was true. Miracles filled that need.

III. CONCLUSION.

A. His miracles revealed the character of Christ.

1. In his miracles, we see the compassion, tenderness, concern, love, sympathy, and consideration for humanity. Jesus was touched by the plight of the unfortunate.
2. In his teaching, he spoke of what he was; in his miracles he showed what he was.

B. His miracles illustrated his unlimited power.

1. When we see Christ cast out demons, we know he can wash away the demon of sin.
 2. When we see Christ feed the multitudes, we know he can feed our hungry souls on the bread of life.
 3. When we see him open the eyes of the blind, we know he can give spiritual sight.
 4. When we see him heal the sick, we know he is the Great Physician of the soul.
 5. When we see him heal the cripple, we know he can make us whole again.
 6. When we see him cleanse lepers, we know he can cleanse us from sin.
 7. When we see him calm the storm, we know he can calm the tempests in our lives.
 8. When we see Christ raise the dead, we know he can and will raise us.
 9. Christ's miracles are pledges and illustrations of what he can do for us!
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JESUS, THE MASTER TEACHER

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. Christ took advantage of all opportunities to teach.

1. He was always teaching people: truth and salvation are important!
2. He taught daily in the temple (Luke 19:47).
3. He went about all Galilee teaching (Matt. 4:23).
4. Never man spake like this man (John 7:46).
5. "Thou art a teacher come from God..." (John 3:2).

B. He taught in all places and under all circumstances.

1. At a well side (John 4).
2. On a mountainside (Matt. 5:1-12).
3. While passing through a grain field (Mark 2:23-28).
4. In desert places (Mark 6:34; Luke 9:10-11).
5. In the temple and in synagogues (Luke 19:47; Matt. 4:23; Luke 4:16).
6. In private homes (John 3:1-2).
7. In boats (Matt. 8:23).
8. He taught when and where there were people who would listen.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Christ employed every known method of teaching.

1. The various methods he used:

- a. He taught by lecture [sermon] (Matt. 5-7; Luke 6:20-49).
- b. By parables (Matt. 13:34-35)..
- c. He taught by asking questions: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*" (Matt. 22:41-46).
- d. By answering questions.

1) Matthew 21:23-27: "And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."

2) Matthew 22:15-22 "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and

went their way."

- e. By telling stories, such as the report of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
 - f. By posing problems: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" (Luke 7:40-42).
 - g. By using illustrations: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 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. 18:1-3).
 - h. By alluding to contemporary events: "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:1-5).
2. Various other methods:
- a. By referring to traditional practices (Mark 7:1-13).
 - b. By referring to familiar things: "And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head" (Matt. 8:20).
 - c. By allusions to history.
 - 1) Matthew 11:20-24: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."
 - 2) Matthew 12:40-42: "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."
 - d. He taught by using the paradox.
 - 1) Matthew 10:39: "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."
 - 2) Matthew 16:25: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."
 - 3) Matthew 19:30: "But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first."
 - 4) Matthew 20:16: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."
 - e. He used irony and satire.
 - 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) Luke 15:7: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."
 - f. He used the hyperbole.

- 1) Matthew 23:24: "*Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."
 - 2) Mark 10:25: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."
- g. He used metaphors.
- 1) Matthew 10:6: "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
 - 2) Matthew 16:6,11: "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees....How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?"
- h. He taught by using beatitudes: "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matt. 5:3-11).
- B. He adapted the method to the individual and the situation.
1. He exposed, condemned, and denounced hypocrisy (Matt. 23:1-33).
 2. He strongly denounced false doctrine.
 - a. Matthew 23:27: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness."
 - b. Luke 13:31-33: "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem."
 3. He used kindness and compassion: "And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things" (Mark 6:34).
 4. He taught as people were able to learn.
 - a. Mark 4:33: "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it."
 - b. John 16:12: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."
 5. He employed tact: "Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly" (John 4:16-18).
 6. He taught by comparison: "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment" (Luke 7:44-46).
 7. To the thirsty, he spoke of the Water of Life (John 4:7-15).
 8. To the hungry, he talked of the Bread of Life (John 6:35).
 9. To those with a sense of morality and religion, he used the proper approach:
 - a. To a good moral man, he introduced the New Birth (John 3:1-8).
 - b. To the Pharisees, he emphasized hypocrisy (Luke 14:1-5; 15:1-9).
 - c. To Publicans, he spoke on penitence and mercy: "And he spake this parable unto certain which
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trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:9-14).

- d. To the covetous, he spoke of the dangers of riches: "And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:13-21).
- e. In his teaching, he always told people what they needed to know, and not what they wanted to hear. He always spoke the truth in a way most appropriate to the person and occasion.

C. The nature of Christ's teachings.

1. His teaching was simple.
 - a. If one failed to see the point, it was because he did not open his mind.
 - b. He used simple words, short sentences, and familiar illustrations.
 - c. Even his enemies understood him.
 - 1) Matthew 21:45: "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them."
 - 2) Luke 20:19: "And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them."
 - d. If you want to feed all the animals, you would put the food on the ground where it would be accessible to all!
2. His teaching was with authority.
 - a. Matthew 7:28-29: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes."
 - b. Mark 1:22: "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."
 - c. Luke 4:32: "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power."
 - d. When we teach the Bible, our words are with authority and power! Sectarian preachers and modern compromisers in the Lord's church are often unwilling to announce straightforwardly what God has said about a matter. "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16).
3. His teaching was always consistent.
 - a. He did not contradict on Monday what he had taught on Sunday!
 - b. If one always preaches the truth he will never have to worry about any inconsistency in what he has taught.

D. His teaching was always truthful.

1. His messages were never based on human wisdom, but revealed God's truth.

2. Only truth can sanctify and save.
 - a. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - c. 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."
 3. He never compromised the truth out of fear or respect of persons.
- E. The effect of Christ's teaching.
1. It astonished the people.
 - a. Matthew 7:28-29: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes."
 - b. Luke 20:26: "And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace."
 2. The simple truths of the gospel still astonish people for they have been fed on sectarian theories and perversions.
- F. It held their attention.
1. Those who thirsted for truth drank deeply at his well of truth.
 - a. Mark 12:37: "David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly."
 - b. Luke 19:48: "And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him."
 2. His enemies listened carefully to catch him in some inconsistency, but there was nothing inconsistent in his teaching, nor was there any inconsistency between his teachings and his practice. "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (John 8:46).
 3. It silenced his critics.
 - a. He put the Sadducees to silence: "But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together" (Matt. 22:34).
 - b. They could not take hold of his words: "And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace" (Luke 20:26).
 - c. No man was able to answer him: "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*" (Matt. 22:46).
 - d. They asked him no more questions (Luke 20:40; Matt. 22:46).
 - e. Many are willing to freely engage in philosophical discussions, but when the Bible truths are introduced, they often become strangely silent!

III. CONCLUSION:

- A. It drew reluctant praise from his critics.
1. Matthew 13:54: "And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works?"
 2. Mark 12:28: "And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?"
 3. Luke 20:39: "Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said."
 4. John 7:15: "And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"
- B. It offered salvation to those who were out of the way.
1. Hebrews 5:1-2: "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." [What this passage says about the Levitical high priest being compassionate on the ignorant and toward those who

are in sin, is also true of our great High Priest].

2. Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."
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CHRIST IN PROPHECY

A. The Old Testament foretold the coming of Christ.

1. Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
 2. Abraham foresaw him.
 - a. John 8:56-57: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"
 - b. Acts 3:25: "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."
 - c. Galatians 3:8: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed."
 3. Moses foresaw him.
 - a. Deuteronomy 18:5: "For the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever."
 - b. Acts 3:22: "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."
 - c. Luke 24:44-47: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - d. John 5:46: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."
 - e. Acts 26:22-23: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."
 4. Samuel prophesied of Christ. "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days" (Acts 3:24).
 5. David prophesied of him.
 - a. Psalms 16:8-10: "I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
 - b. Psalms 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."
 - c. John 19:36: "For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."
 - d. Acts 2:25-28: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."
 6. Isaiah prophesied of him (cf. Isaiah 53).
 - a. John 12:41: "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."
 - b. Acts 8:32-34: "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation
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his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?"

7. Zechariah prophesied of Christ.
 - a. Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn."
 - b. Zechariah 13:7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."
 - c. Matthew 26:31: "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."
 - d. John 19:37: "And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."
8. Many things said of him ahead of time.
 - a. Many prophets desired to see the days of Christ, thus they knew beforehand of his coming.
 - 1) Matthew 13:16-17: "But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:10-12: "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."
 - b. Many prophets prophesied of him.
 - 1) Acts 3:18: "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."
 - 2) Acts 3:24: "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."
 - 3) Acts 10:43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."
 - c. Old Testament Scriptures spoke beforehand of Christ.
 - 1) Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
 - 2) John 5:39: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."
 - 3) Acts 17:2-3: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."
 - 4) Acts 17:11-12: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not few."

B. The Messianic Passages of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New Testament.

1. Jesus said so.

- a. Luke 18:31-33: "Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again."
 - b. Luke 22:37: "For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end."
 - c. Luke 24:27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."
 - d. Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
 - e. Luke 24:46: "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."
2. John the Baptizer affirmed it: "He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias" (John 1:23).
 3. Philip taught it: "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).
 4. Peter was guided to affirm it.
 - a. Acts 2:25-28: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."
 - b. Acts 3:18: "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."
 - c. Acts 3:24: "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."
 - d. 1 Peter 1:10-11: "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."
 5. Paul taught it.
 - a. Acts 13:27-29: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre."
 - b. Acts 17:2-3: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."
 - c. Acts 26:22-23: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."
 - d. Acts 28:23: "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening."

C. Specific Prophecies and their Fulfillment.

1. The Birth of Christ.

a. The place of his birth.

- 1) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
- 2) Matthew 2:1-6 "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

b. The manner of his birth.

- 1) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
- 2) Matthew 1:18-25: "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. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 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. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."

2. The Ancestry of Christ.

a. The seed of woman.

- 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
- 2) 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. The seed of Abraham.

- 1) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
- 2) Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
- 3) Galatians 3:8,16: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.... Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

c. The seed of Isaac.

- 1) Genesis 21:12: "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her
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- voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."
- 2) Romans 9:7: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called."
 - 3) Hebrews 11:18: "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called."
- d. The seed of Jacob.
- 1) Genesis 28:14: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."
 - 2) Romans 9:13: "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."
- e. The seed of Judah.
- 1) Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - 2) Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - 3) Revelation 5:8: "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."
- f. The seed of David.
- 1) 2 Samuel 7:12-14: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."
 - 2) Psalms 89:3-4: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah."
 - 3) Matthew 22:41: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them."
 - 4) John 7:42: "Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"
3. The Incarnation of Christ.
- a. He would be Divine: Isaiah 9:6 ("The mighty God, the Everlasting Father").
 - b. He would be human: Isaiah 9:6 ("A child...a son").
 - 1) Romans 1:3-4: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
 - 2) Romans 8:4: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
4. The Offices of Christ.
- a. He would be a Prophet.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 18:15-18: "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; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
 - 2) Acts 3:22: "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."
 - 3) Acts 7:37: "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord
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your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear."

- b. He would be a Priest.
 - 1) Psalms 110:4: "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."
 - 2) Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 - 3) Hebrews 5:6: "As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
 - 4) Hebrews 7:24: "But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."
 - 5) Hebrews 8:4: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law."
- c. He would be a King.
 - 1) Psalms 2:5-6: "Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."
 - 2) Psalms 110:1: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."
 - 3) 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."
 - 4) Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 - 5) John 18:36-37: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."
 - 6) Acts 2:34-35: "For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool."
 - 7) Revelation 1:6: "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
5. The Parables and Miracles of Christ were predicted.
 - a. The parables.
 - 1) Psalms 78:2: "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old."
 - 2) Matthew 13:10-14: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive."
 - 3) Matthew 13:34-35: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

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- b. The Miracles.
- 1) Isaiah 35:3-5: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."
 - 2) Micah 7:15: "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous *things*."
 - 3) Matthew 11:4-6: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me."
 - 4) John 20:30-31: "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."
- c. The Triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
- 1) Zechariah 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."
 - 2) Matthew 21:1-11: "And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me. And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed *them* in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."
6. The Death of Christ.
- a. He would be a vicarious sacrifice for sin: "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 8:32; cf. Isa. 53).
 - b. He would be betrayed by a friend.
 - 1) Psalms 41:9: "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up *his* heel against me."
 - 2) John 13:18: "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."
 - c. He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.
 - 1) Zechariah 11:12: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give *me* my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty *pieces* of silver."
 - 2) Matthew 27:3: "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders."
 - d. This silver would be used to purchase a potter's field.
 - 1) Zechariah 11:13: "And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house
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- of the LORD."
- 2) Matthew 27:5-10: "And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."
- e. He would be reviled, insulted, and spat upon.
 - 1) Isaiah 50:6: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."
 - 2) Matthew 26:67: "Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands."
 - f. He would be crucified with the wicked.
 - 1) Isaiah 53:9: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth."
 - 2) Luke 23:32-33: "And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left."
 - g. He would be taunted and jeered.
 - 1) Psalms 22:7-8: "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."
 - 2) Matthew 27:39-43: "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God."
 - h. He would be forsaken in his death.
 - 1) Psalms 22:1: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so* far from helping me, *and from* the words of my roaring?"
 - 2) Matthew 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
 - i. He would be given gall and vinegar.
 - 1) Psalms 69:21: "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."
 - 2) Matthew 27:34: "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink."
 - 3) John 19:39: "And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*."
 - j. They would cast lots for his clothes.
 - 1) Psalms 22:18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."
 - 2) Matthew 27:35: "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots."
 - k. No bones would be broken in his body.
 - 1) Psalms 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."
 - 2) John 19:31-36: "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not
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remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 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. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."

1. His side would be pierced.
 - 1) Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn."
 - 2) John 19:34-37: "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."
7. The Resurrection of Christ.
 - a. Psalms 16:8-10: "I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
 - b. Acts 2:24-29: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."
 - c. Acts 13:32-37: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption."
8. The Ascension of Christ.
 - a. He would ascend to heaven.
 - 1) Psalms 68:18: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, *for* the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell *among them*."
 - 2) Ephesians 4:8-10: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)"
 - 3) He would pass through the heavenly gates.
 - 4) Psalms 24:7: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."

- 5) 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."
- b. Complete picture of his ascension given.
- 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) Psalms 24:7-10: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah."
 - 3) 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."
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THE ARREST AND TRIALS OF JESUS

- A. To appreciate the gross miscarriage of Justice, look at the Hebrew trial of Jesus.
1. Two legal systems were involved in his trials.
 - a. First, he was tried and convicted under the system of Hebrew Jurisprudence, and secondly, the Roman system of jurisprudence.
 - b. Especially the Hebrew system was perverted so that the Lord would be convicted.
 2. The Hebrew legal system stood on two foundations:
 - a. The Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. God included in it many religious and civil ordinances by which his Old Testament people were to be ruled.
 - b. The Talmud, which was supplied of the traditions, interpretations and case holdings, and the necessary practical rules for determining justice.
 3. The Talmud was itself comprised of two major divisions.
 - a. The Mishna, which was the so-called oral law handed down by tradition; and the Gemara, a commentary on the text of the law.
 - b. The Talmud is usually divided into 12-20 volumes, but if translated fully it would make a library of 400 volumes with 360 pages each (Mendelsohn, Turner).
 4. The Hebrew court system consisted of three tribunals.
 - a. The Lower Tribunal: this was made up of three judges two of which were selected by the litigants, while the third was selected by the two previously chosen. This was a local court, comparable to our Justice of Peace Courts, and ruled in petty civil and criminal matters.
 - b. The Minor Sanhedrin: this court had jurisdiction over most criminal cases, civil suits, over local government, taxation, etc.
 - c. The Great Sanhedrin: this was the august court before which Jesus was tried.
 5. The Great Sanhedrin.
 - a. This unique court had the supreme judicial authority, as well as the legislative and executive authority.
 - b. It was made up of 71 members who were divided into 3 chambers: the chamber of priests, the chamber of scribes, and the chamber of elders (Mark 14:53). These three groups represented the religious, the legal, and the political sections.
 - c. Theoretically each chamber had 23 members, plus two men who were the presiding officers.
 - d. Each member of this body had to meet several demanding qualifications (See Turner, p.11).
 - e. The Mishna said that in a criminal trial a majority of one vote was sufficient for acquittal; but a majority of two votes was necessary for conviction. The Hebrew law also provided that "a simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilty rendered on the day of trial, had the effect of an acquittal." Turner says that the "foundation of this peculiar rule was that such a unanimous verdict would be lacking in mercy and would stem therefore, from a spirit of conspiracy and violence rather than from mature judicial deliberation. Mark says of Christ, 'they all condemned him to be worthy of death' (Mark 14:64)..."
 - f. The sessions of this court were limited to the time between the morning sacrifice and the evening sacrifice; they were also required to convene in the temple.
 6. Legal principles by which the Sanhedrin operated.
 - a. The Law of the Court.
 - 1) There was no government prosecuting attorney.
 - 2) The court could not originate charges against a criminal.
 - 3) A private preliminary examination of the accused person was not allowed.
 - 4) Neither the defendant nor the plaintiff was allowed to employ legal counsel.
 - 5) The judges were the defenders as well as the judges of the accused.
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- 6) The high priest was not allowed to uncover his head or rend his clothes.
 - 7) The Hebrew law provided that "A simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilt rendered on the day of trial has the effect of an acquittal."
 - b. Rules of Court Procedure.
 - 1) The court could not convene before the morning sacrifice.
 - 2) The court was required to convene in the temple, in the Lishpath Laggazith, or the Hall of Hewn Stones.
 - 3) All proceedings were to be public.
 - 4) All proceedings at night were prohibited.
 - 5) No proceedings were allowed on a day preceding a Jewish Sabbath or a religious holiday.
 - 6) No conviction of a death sentence could be concluded within one day.
 7. The Rights of the Defendant.
 - a. No person could be convicted of crime without an impartial hearing before a court of justice.
 - b. The defendant was presumed to be innocent.
 - c. He was not placed under oath.
 - d. He was not required to testify against himself.
 8. The Requirements of the Witnesses.
 - a. They were the only prosecutors in the case.
 - b. They were required to give testimony separately and in the presence of the defendant.
 - c. They were required to agree (in their testimony) in all essential details.
- B. Some events leading to the arrest and trial of our Lord.
1. Through his teaching, miracles, and compassion, Jesus had touched and changed the lives of thousands of people in Palestine. His influence was widely known and felt.
 - a. The Passover was at hand, and Jesus was enroute to Jerusalem to observe it in accordance with the Old Testament Law. The people are said to have been discussing whether Jesus would come. When he raised Lazarus from the tomb at Bethany, the excitement intensified, especially when the religious leaders demanded that anyone knowing of his whereabouts to make it known (John 11:55-57). The resurrection of Lazarus shortly before the Passover filled the Jews with wonder and awe, and had precipitated a hurried convening of Sanhedrin to decide how to handle the challenge Jesus presented (John 11:47-54).
 - 1) John 11:55-57: "And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him."
 - 2) John 11:47-54: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples."
 - b. The opposition to Jesus was based primarily on jealousy, but they rationalized that if a tumult occurred, the Romans would destroy "both our place and nation" (11:48). Their "place" included their positions of prominence and wealth.
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2. Caiaphas, the high priest during this momentous year, derided their ignorance; he said that the solution was simple: let Jesus die for the nation. His words were prophetic for God, having already determined the death of Christ, put the words in the mouth of this corrupted official (John 11:49-51). John adds his inspired comment in verse 52 that the death of Jesus would be for all men.
 - a. Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany where the supper of John 12:1-9 occurred. He probably arrived in the afternoon on Friday, just before the start of the Sabbath at sundown on Friday. He would not have violated the restrictions of traveling on the Sabbath. Bethany was located only about two miles from Jerusalem. The presence of Jesus, and the sudden popularity of Lazarus, enraged the rulers, so that they consulted how they might kill Lazarus also (John 12:9-11).
 - 1) The events we are now studying occurred during the last week of Jesus' life prior to the crucifixion. Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany (John 12:1). "If the passover began on Friday, which is certain, though it has been questioned by a few writers, then six days before the passover fixes the arrival of Jesus at Bethany on Sunday. This follows from the universal custom of the Jews, in stating the number of a series of days or years, to include in the aggregate both the first and the last, even when only a small part of either was actually included. According to this method, a count of six days ending Friday must begin with Sunday" (McGarvey, *Biblical Criticism*, pp.405f).
 - 2) On the day of his arrival at Bethany, a supper was made for him (John 12:1-2); this was on Sunday, in view of the statement by McGarvey above. It was during this supper that Mary anointed the Lord's feet with the expensive ointment (John 12:3-8). "Though not explicitly stated, the presumption is that this supper was given on the evening after his arrival" (McGarvey, *ibid.*, p.406).
 - 3) The next morning (John 12:12), Jesus made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when great multitudes spread palm branches and garments before him (Mt. 21:8). "It is palm Monday, if it is palm anything. Thus one of the Roman Catholic traditions, which is without foundation in fact, passes away" (*ibid.*).
 - 4) McGarvey gives these insightful comments:
 - a) "While Mark, like the other synoptics, says nothing about the day of the week, he makes a series of chronological statements, extending from the day of the public entry to the first day of the passover, which corroborate perfectly the six days of John. To show this let us suppose Monday to be the day of public entry, and make the count. He says, at the conclusion of his account of the ride, that Jesus 'entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out to Bethany with the twelve' (11:11). This brings us to the close of Monday; and it shows, by and by, that the public entry took place in the afternoon.
 - b) "Mark next says that 'on the morrow, when they were come out from Bethany, he hungered,' and then comes the incident of the barren fig-tree (12-14). This now is Tuesday. They go into the city, he casts out the traders whom he had seen there the evening before, and the statement follows that 'every evening he went forth out of the city' (19).
 - c) "Then comes the statement that 'as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig-tree withered away from the roots' (20). This was Wednesday. They pass on into the city (27), and the discussions follow which occupy the rest of the eleventh chapter and all of the twelfth. Then he goes out to the mount of Olives, and delivers the discourse about the destruction of Jerusalem and his second coming (13:1-37).
 - d) "At the close of this discourse, still Wednesday, Mark says, 'Now after two days was the feast of the passover and the unleavened bread' (14:1). But 'after two days' from Wednesday, in Jewish count, would be Friday.
 - e) "So we have counted in Mark five consecutive days—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; and if we add to these the sixth day previously mentioned by John, but

- omitted by the synoptics, we have John's account reproduced" (McGarvey, *ibid.*, pp.407f).
- b. On the next day, Jesus entered Jerusalem with a mighty welcome from the great multitude (John 12:12-19; Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:8-11). A great number of people were on the way into the city, and an even greater number was in Jerusalem; they knew about his miracles, and gave him a hero's welcome. The rulers perceived that the people saw him as the Messiah, and feared that they would cause a tumult by setting him forth as King over Israel; they were fearful that the Romans would then come to squash this uprising, taking away their positions and destroying the freedom presently enjoyed by Israel under the Romans. Only the fear of the multitude kept the Sanhedrin from arresting Jesus and killing him forthwith.
 - c. The chagrin of the rulers further intensified when Jesus entered the temple on Monday, casting out the money-changers and other merchants. Joseph Caiaphas was high priest, having been installed in that office by the Roman Governor, Valerious Gratus, replacing Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas.
 - d. The Talmud reports that the house of Annas was the keeper of the Treasury; hence, it appears that this family benefited directly and greatly from the merchandising taking place in the temple. The shutting down of this operation would surely disturb the "powers that be!"
 - e. This occasioned the demand they made of Jesus reported in Matthew 21:23-27: "And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."
3. Jesus taught publicly in the temple during this final week; although the scribes and chief priests sought eagerly to destroy him, they were fearful of the people. (Luke 20:19-20,45-47). They vainly tried to entrap Jesus by their devious questions, but he turned the tables on each of them.
 - a. The Pharisees and Herodians sought to entangle him by their question about the matter of paying tribute to Caesar.
 - 1) Matthew 22:15-22: "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way."
 - 2) Luke 20:21-26: "And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God truly: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's. And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace."
 - b. The Sadducees came with their question about the resurrection (Matt. 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-38).
 - c. A lawyer was sent with a question regarding the greatest commandment of the Law (Matt. 22:34-
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40; Mark 12:28-34). They had made an unfortunate selection for the lawyer declared, "Thou hast well said." Jesus pronounced that he was not "far from the kingdom."

4. He had so thoroughly vanquished his foes that no one dared ask him any further questions. In no instance did he speak any word which needed to be retracted or clarified. While his enemies stood in confused silence, he took the offensive, striking at the very heart of their perversity (Matt. 23). He addresses the remarks of Matthew 23:1-12 to the multitude and his disciples; he speaks to his enemies in Matthew 23:13-39, giving them the most severe indictment ever to fall from his lips.

C. The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus.

1. The Sanhedrin convened to discuss how they might destroy Jesus (Luke 22:1-2). It was at this point that they received an unexpected offer from Judas (Luke 22:3-6). They were elated over this pleasant surprise!
 - a. Matthew 26:14-16: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him." The price agreed upon was the going price of a common slave.
 - b. They had earlier decided to wait until after the Passover before arresting Jesus since they feared that that would cause a riot. "After two days was *the feast of the passover*, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death. But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people" (Mark 14:1-2). But if they could arrest him privately, when he was away from the multitude, they could bring him before the Sanhedrin, condemn him, and carry out the sentence. However, there was no legal charge they could bring against him. They were able to manufacture one after his arrest.
2. Judas continued his hypocritical pose as a loyal disciple, but sought opportunity to deliver him to the rulers in the absence of the multitude. On Thursday, Jesus gave instructions to Peter and John (Luke 22:7-13). After sunset (Mark 14:17), the beginning of Friday for the Jews, (it was still Thursday by our modern reckoning), Jesus and the twelve met in the upper room to eat the Passover.
3. Jesus became troubled in spirit (John 13:21) and announced that one of them was to betray him. The Lord let it be known that the betrayer would be Judas, but the other disciples, except John (John 13:22-30) did not fully comprehend who it would be. Judas immediately left the group, to make the final arrangements for his evil deed.
 - a. Following the supper, Jesus gave to the eleven apostles the discourse recorded in John 14-16, and apparently offered the prayer found in John 17. After this, he and the eleven went forth from Jerusalem to spend the night in the garden of Gethsemane (John 18:1; Matt. 26:30, 36) located in the Mount of Olives, a place known to Judas (John 18:2).
 - b. It was in this garden where Jesus prayed fervently to the Father, and rebuked the disciples because they were unable to watch with him while he prayed (Matt. 26:36-46).
4. Judas, knowing this place which was often used by the Lord and his disciples, came at this point, bringing with him a great multitude of men who carried swords and staves (wooden cudgels or staffs). The time was likely past midnight.
 - a. The large number of men and the weapons suggest that they feared the miraculous power possessed by the Lord.
 - b. Judas greeted Jesus with a kiss which was intended as a means of identifying him to the soldiers (Mark 14:44). It was dark and the men might not have known what the Lord looked like; the kiss revealed to the men which one was Jesus (Matt. 26:48-49).
 - c. Jesus spoke to Judas in a stinging satire: "Friend, wherefore art thou come?"(Matt. 26:50). "But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48).
 - d. In the process of being identified to the mob, Jesus asked them, "Whom seek ye?"(John 18:4-5). They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." As soon as he replied, the men went backward and fell to the ground—apparently expecting some supernatural power to be directed against them. They were

in a state of shock, so he asked his question again. Peter tried vainly to defend his Lord but was rebuked for the effort.

- 1) Luke 22:50-51: "And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him."
- 2) John 18:10-11: "Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

e. Recovering from their panic, the posse bound Jesus and led him away into the city.

D. He was first taken before Annas, a former high priest.

1. John 18:13, 19-23: "And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year....The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"
2. The Hebrew legal system prohibited a private examination of an accused person lest the accused should become confused and give damaging testimony against himself.
 - a. They ignored this principle, thus the perversion of justice was continued.
 - b. Annas had been the high priest until he was deposed by Roman authority; in the eyes of the Jews, he was still the real high priest since that office was held for life (Num. 20:28; 35:25). The Romans had given Caiaphas the position.
 - 1) Numbers 20:28: "And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount."
 - 2) Numbers 35:25: "And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil."
3. Annas first asked Jesus of his disciples and his doctrine.
 - a. Christ gave a proper answer: I have taught publicly in the synagogue and temple; ask any of those many people who heard me what my teachings are. Annas was trying to find some cause with which to make an accusation. This was another violation of the legal system.
 - b. One of the officers standing nearby struck and rebuked Jesus (John 18:22). This was also a violation of the system for a man was presumed innocent until guilt had been properly established. The Lord made a fair request in response to this unwarranted attack: If I have done wrongly, accuse me; or if not, why have you struck me? This is the only time in the course of his several trials that he made such a reply, and in this case he was pointing out their violation of the duly constituted legal procedure.
4. Following this exchange, Annas saw fit to send Jesus before someone else.

E. He was now taken before Caiaphas.

1. Passages:
 - a. John 18:24: "Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest."
 - b. Matthew 26:57-68: "And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 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. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?"

- c. Mark 14:53-56: "And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."
2. The Great Sanhedrin had already hurriedly assembled in the palace of Caiaphas (Mk. 14:53). John reports that it was still "very early" when this trial was over (John 18:28), so this was also a violation of the legal system since it was held before the morning sacrifice. It was held in the palace of Caiaphas, a place not authorized for the Sanhedrin to convene.
 - a. The members of this august court were to be defenders of the accused as well as judges, and under no circumstances could they originate charges against the defendant. Yet these men acted more the part of prosecuting attorneys than judges: "The chief priests and the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put him to death" (Mark 14:55; Matt. 26:59).
 - b. There were many who came to bear witness against Jesus, but their testimony did not agree (Mark 14:56; Matt. 26:60).
 - c. Finally, two false witnesses were found who twisted the Lord's statement concerning the destruction of the temple, which he would raise up in three days (Mark 14:57-58). John 2:18-22 reports the statement and shows he was not speaking of the literal temple, but of his physical body.
 - d. But even the witness of these two men did not agree so could not be used. Caiaphas tried to bluff Jesus by railing on him, saying, "Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee?" The chief judge was acting like a prosecutor.
 - 1) Mark 14:61: "But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus wisely refused to respond to these questions. To have answered would have been to give up his legal rights.
 - 2) The Hebrew legal system said a man could not be required to give evidence against himself.
 3. The high priest then demanded whether Jesus were the "Christ, the Son of the Blessed" (Mark 14:61-62). "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 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" (Matt. 26:63-64).
 - a. To adjure meant "to strongly demand an oath." If he had remained silent he would be admitting to being an imposter. But to confess the truth would mean being condemned to death. The Lord courageously confessed the truth.
 - b. And what a show the high priest put on! He claims to be utterly shocked and dismayed over the claim Jesus made, but actually he was delighted to hear the Savior say it.
 - c. Nothing was said or done about the Lord's claim; he could have fully vindicated his statement, but these men had no interest in Truth; they had already been given more than ample evidence to prove that Jesus is the Christ, which they had rejected out of hand. By this time in the Lord's ministry, even his avowed enemies did not deny the reality of his miracles; they simply ignored the evidence! They have many kinsmen in our generation!
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4. The high priest quickly changed the charge from sedition (destroying the temple, taking over as king, uprooting the established order) to blasphemy. "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death" (Matt. 26:65-66). "Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death" (Mark 14:63-64).
 - a. There was immediate, unanimous agreement that he be put to death. They were perverting justice by going against the legal principle. The Talmud provided that a "simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilty, rendered on the day of trial, had the effect of an acquittal."
 - b. They had also originated the charge of blasphemy, and had compelled the Lord to offer testimony that was self-incriminating, both of which violated the Hebrew Law of Jurisprudence. This was not a court of justice, but of injustice!
 5. Their behavior now degenerated to show their true condition of heart: They began to spit upon him, to mock him, and to strike him. What a disgrace by the highest court in the land! To appreciate just how perverse these men were we need only to imagine such conduct by our own U.S. Supreme Court.
 6. To give a semblance of proper procedure, the Sanhedrin held another session in the morning before sending the Lord to Pilate for their sentence to be executed. This was the official pronouncement of their verdict, but they did not have authority to execute anyone.
 - a. Matthew 27:1-2: "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor."
 - b. Mark 15:1: "And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate."
 - c. Luke 22:66-71: "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth."
- F. Christ was now delivered to Pilate for the death penalty to be applied.
1. Passages:
 - a. Matthew 27:2, 11-14: "And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor....And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly."
 - b. Mark 15:2-5: "And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest *it*. And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled."
 - c. Luke 23:1-5: "And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place."
 - d. John 18:29-38: "Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this
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man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*."

2. These self-righteous men would not deign to enter the Judgment Hall of Pilate lest they be defiled and thus made unfit to eat the Passover (John 18:28), but they were fully able to condemn an innocent man to death, and violate many principles of their legal system to bring about his death.
 - a. Since they would not enter Pilate's judgment hall, the governor went out to speak with these Jewish dignitaries (John 18:29).
 - b. They tried to get Pilate to agree to execute Jesus without the governor examining him. "Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee" (John 18:29-30).
 - c. Pilate asked why they did not condemn him according to their law, to which they replied that they did not have authority to put anyone to death (John 18:31). The charge brought against him was based on Jewish law, not Roman.
 - d. They had judged him worthy of death, and since they had authority only to administer scourging and excommunication, they had to get Pilate to agree to their death sentence.
 - e. John assigns another reason, unknown to the Jews and Pilate, why Jesus was brought before Pilate: "That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die" (John 18:32). The method of execution administered by the Jews was stoning; the method employed by the Romans was crucifixion; and Jesus had earlier predicted the manner of his death.
 - 1) Matthew 20:19: "And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*: and the third day he shall rise again."
 - 2) John 12:31-33: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."
3. They had made a charge against him which the Romans would not recognize, so they changed to a charge of sedition: "And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King" (Luke 23:1-2). However it was not for sedition, but blasphemy, that the Sanhedrin had found him guilty, and even then they had not examined the Lord's claim to be the Messiah; in fact, they had knowledge of plenty of evidence to prove that he was the Christ.
 - a. On hearing these charges, Pilate entered the judgment hall where Jesus was being kept and made inquiry of him (John 18:33; Luke 23:3).
 - 1) Luke 23:3: "And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*."
 - 2) John 18:33-35: "Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said

unto him, Art **thou** the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?"

- b. He asked, "Are you King of the Jews?" Jesus gave an affirmative reply, after first asking Pilate if this was his own question or had the Jews said this about him. It was vitally important that the record be set straight as to the originator of this charge: if the Jews had made the charge, he must answer affirmatively for he was the regal head of the spiritual kingdom; if Pilate (as a Roman authority) originated the charge, his answer would be in the negative for his kingdom "was not of this world," hence of no threat to the throne of Caesar.
 - c. "Thou" is in emphatic position in the Greek text (John 18:33), thus signifying, "Thou, one so humbled, the king of the Jews?" Such a lowly person being thought of as king was not worthy of serious consideration!
 - d. It was at this point that the famous exchange between Pilate and Jesus occurred: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*" (John 18:36-38). In his statement, Jesus announced that his kingdom was not a temporal sort, but spiritual, hence, his kingship was of no threat to Caesar.
4. The Governor then went back out to the Jewish leaders and reported that he had found no fault in Jesus. "Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place" (Luke 23:4-5).
 5. They responded by asserting that Jesus had stirred up the Jews from Galilee to Jerusalem. When Pilate heard this claim involving Galilee, he thought he saw a way to evade the whole issue: Was not Galilee in the territory over which Herod ruled? Let Herod take care of this volatile situation: "When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time" (Luke 23:6-7).
- G. Jesus is now brought before Herod.
1. Luke 23:8-12: "And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves."
 2. This pleased Herod greatly for he had for a long time desired to see Jesus; he wanted to see him perform some miracle.
 - a. Luke 9:9: "And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him."
 - b. Luke 23:8: "And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him."
 3. But Jesus gave no reply. The chief priests and scribes "vehemently" accused him.
 4. King Herod, with his soldiers, mocked him, arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him back to Pilate. To "set at nought" means "to treat with utter contempt, to despise." "He is despised and rejected
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of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isa. 53:3).

H. Jesus is brought a second time before Pilate.

1. Luke 23:13-26: "And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*. (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas: (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will. And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus."
2. Pilate spoke with the chief priests and scribes again, announcing that neither he nor Herod had found any fault in him regarding the charges they had brought; he was not worthy of death, therefore he would chastise him and release him (23:13-16). This chastisement was a grievous penalty of itself. He thought this would satisfy their lust for his blood. This attempt to release Jesus failed.
3. The custom of the Roman authorities releasing a Jewish prisoner at this season was broached, and he suggested that under this provision, he would release Jesus. Thus he inquired whether they would that he release Jesus, a man who had not been found worthy of death by Pilate, or Barabbas, a man convicted of sedition, robbery, insurrection, and murder (Matt. 27:15-21; Mark 15:7; Luke 23:19; John 18:40). His notion was that surely they would agree to release Jesus since this other man had been convicted of heinous crimes.
4. His accusers still demanded that Jesus be crucified, and called on Pilate to release this criminal. "Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him" (Luke 23:20-21).
5. The Governor demanded to know: "Why, what evil hath he done?" (Luke 23:22).
6. The chief priests and scribes had done their work among the people; perhaps only few or none of Jesus' friends were among the multitude. His enemies "moved the people, that he should release Barabbas unto them" (Mark 15:11). He asked what they wanted him to do with Jesus. They began a chant which carried through the multitude: "Crucify him, crucify him!" (Luke 23:23). Earlier in this same week, the multitudes had given Jesus a glorious welcome to Jerusalem, but now the cry had changed. This illustrates to us the fickleness of people and the power of false teachers.
7. John's account furnishes some additional details which show that Pilate attempted a last-minute release of Jesus: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *him*. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man!" (19:1-5).
 - a. This scourging was a horrible ordeal, often causing the death of the victim. "The scourge was a whip with leather thongs, the ends fastened to lead balls or sharp spikes. The victim was usually bound to a stake naked and made to bend over thus tightening the skin which usually split open at the first blow. When it was over often the sufferer was unconscious, a bleeding mass of torn flesh. It is quite possible that the reason Jesus was unable to bear up under the weight of his cross was

- due to the terrible beating he had but recently suffered" (Woods, *Commentary On John*, p.391).
- b. After the soldiers had further afflicted and mocked him, and placed a crown of thorns on his head, Pilate set him forth before the people with this introduction: "Behold the man!" (verse 5). He was making an appeal to their sense of sympathy: Just look at this man; has he not suffered enough? Isaiah 52:14 was probably a prophetic prophecy of his present condition: "As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." The Jews felt no pang of conscience; no sympathetic chord was struck in their hearts; they remained filled with bitter hatred toward Jesus.
 - 1) John 19:6-11: "When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."
 - 2) They continued to shout their demands that Pilate crucify this beaten and bleeding man; again Pilate asserted that he had done nothing amiss. Now the Jews reveal the true reason for their hatred for Jesus: "He made himself the son of God" (vs. 7). All the other charges against Jesus were overruled; he was ultimately condemned to die because he claimed to be the Son of God! He was not guilty of the other charges; he was condemned for the truth that he is Deity. He was crucified for blasphemy but it was the Jewish leaders themselves who were guilty of this sin because they denied his messiahship.
 8. This information raised terror in Pilate's heart and he went again into the judgment hall and asked Jesus, *Where did you come from?* (John 19:8-9). Pilate realized that this was no ordinary prisoner! He had already heard Jesus say that he had a kingdom "not of this world." Associated with this point, the governor's wife had made a strange statement to him: "Have thou nothing to do with this just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him" (Matt. 27:19).
 - a. When Jesus did not reply, Pilate pressed him with the assertion that he had the power to crucify him (John 19:10). Christ replied to this by saying that the Governor would have no power at all except by God's will (John 19:11; cf. Rom. 13:1). Pilate's efforts were more in his own interest than in freeing Jesus, so the Lord made no reply to the first question; he had all the information at hand to determine justice; indeed, he had already pronounced Jesus innocent of any wrongdoing which was punishable by death: he simply lacked the courage to turn down the demands of the Jewish leaders. Jesus did not absolve Pilate of sin but ascribed greater sin (guilt) to those who had accused him.
 - b. John 19:12-16: "And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away."
 - c. He sought to get the Jews to agree to a release of Jesus but they said, "If you release him you are not a friend to Caesar!" They pretended to object to Jesus again on the grounds that he tried to usurp Caesar's authority by making himself a king. Pilate saw that a riot was in the offing, and that he could not prevail in his present attempt to release Jesus; so he conceded to release Jesus (Matt.

- 27:24; Mark 15:15). He feebly tried to absolve himself of any wrongdoing by washing his hands in the sight of the people.
- d. In their ignorance and stupidity, the Jews agreed to take upon themselves and on their children the blood of this enemy: "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children" (Matt. 27:25).
 - 1) Luke 23:34: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
 - 2) Acts 3:17: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers."
 - 3) Acts 13:27: "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 2:8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
 - e. Many of these same people would later regret their part: "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 you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:36-42).
9. "Jesus was tried before the greatest court of justice of the then known world—the Great Sanhedrin of the Hebrew System of Jurisprudence. The court was constituted of men who believed in God, of men who worshipped God, of men who had high spiritual and moral qualifications. The court procedure and the outcome of the trial was incredible, and it remains so today. The fact is that the trial and conviction of Jesus the Christ by the Great Sanhedrin Court was the greatest miscarriage of justice in all of the annals of history" (Turner, *Sound Doctrine*, 1978).
- I. The illegalities of the Lord's Jewish trials include the following (ibid., p.18):
1. The arrest of Jesus was illegal—it was arranged by Judas, an accomplice and traitor, and not as the result of a legal mandate of the court.
 2. The private examination of Jesus by Annas was illegal—a private preliminary examination of an accused person was not allowed lest he should become perplexed and give damaging testimony against himself.
 3. The proceeding of the Court was illegal—it convened at night, and a specific and inflexible rule of the Hebrew law was that proceedings in capital trials could not be heard at night.
 4. The place where the trial was held (the palace of Caiaphas) was illegal—the court was required to convene in the temple and within the Hall of Hewn Stones.
 5. The indictments were illegal—they were several and without the certainty that the law required. The first clear indictment was the charge of sedition, and before that indictment was disposed of in proper legal order, another—the charge of blasphemy—was laid.
 6. The indictment of blasphemy was illegal—it was made by Caiaphas, the high priest, and a member of the court. Such action by a member of the court was strictly against the law of the court. The members of the court were the defenders of the accused until the proper evidence showed him to be guilty. A court trial could formerly proceed only when there were witnesses to testify before the court against the accused.
 7. The personal conduct of the high priest Caiaphas was illegal—he rent his clothes and such conduct was
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strictly against the Mosaic law, as well as the law of the Hebrew court.

- a. Leviticus 21:10: "And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes."
 - b. Matthew 26:65: "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy."
 - c. Mark 14:63: "Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?"
8. The simultaneous and unanimous vote of the Sanhedrin Court was illegal—the court in simultaneous action condemned Christ to death; whereas, the law of the court required that the youngest judge—in terms of service on the bench—cast the first vote. The balloting was to continue in this manner from the youngest to the high priest in order that the junior judges might not be unduly influenced by the examples of their seniors by reason of years of experience and authority. Further, Hebrew law provided that "a simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilt rendered on the first day of trial indicative of extreme malice and prejudice—should have the effect of an acquittal."
9. Other items:
- a. The nature of the testimony on which the death sentence was passed was illegal—it was the uncorroborated testimony of Jesus, himself, that he was the Christ the Son of God. One provision of the "law of evidence" in the Hebrew System of Jurisprudence was that an uncorroborated confession made by the accused was not sufficient evidence for his conviction.
 - b. The convening of the Sanhedrin Court before the morning sacrifice was illegal—the Hebrew law required that in the case of conviction, the court should proceed the next day in the nature of an appeal and a rehearsing, but the Sanhedrin Court in its rush to have sufficient time to crucify Christ before the feast of the passover met before the morning sacrifice. The rehearing and rehearsing was a farce. They asked Christ: "Art thou then the Son of God?" Christ answered: "Ye say that I am"—meaning I am and ye ask because I am." They then bound Christ and brought him before Pilate (Luke 22:66-71; 23:1.)
 - c. The fact that the trial of Jesus was concluded in one day was illegal—the trial began after midnight and was concluded before the morning sacrifice. The Hebrew law allowed no death penalty conviction to be concluded in one day's time.
 - d. The fact that the trial was conducted on the day preceding a Jewish Sabbath was illegal—the Hebrew law prohibited court proceedings on a day preceding a Jewish Sabbath or a religious holy day.
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THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST

- A. The New Testament gives the following background and events which preceded the Crucifixion.
1. During the night before, he had instructed the apostles (John 13-16), prayed (John 17), suffered the ordeal of Gethsemane, was betrayed by Judas, arrested by his enemies, and had faced an illegal trial before the Jewish authorities.
 2. Early in the morning, after being condemned by the Sanhedrin on the false charge of blasphemy, he was taken before Pilate, who was pressured to condemn Jesus to crucifixion.
 3. The execution of this sentence began immediately: "Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away" (John 19:16).
 4. "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha" (John 19:17). He was compelled to bear his own cross, as was customary. In virtually the same location, about two-thousand years earlier, Isaac had borne the wood intended for use by Abraham in sacrificing his son of promise.
 5. Due to the weakened condition of our Lord, he possibly stumbled under the heavy weight of the cross, or else he was unable to go fast enough to suit the Roman guard. The Roman soldiers, wishing to expedite the proceedings, seized a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, and forced him to carry the cross.
 - a. Matthew 27:32: "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross."
 - b. Mark 15:21: "And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross."
 - c. Luke 23:26: "And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus."
 6. A great multitude of people followed him, and a company of women lamented him: "And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:27-31).
 7. Two thieves were also led out with him to be crucified: "And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death" (Luke 23:32).
- B. The procession reached the site, where they crucified him.
1. John 19:17-18: "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."
 2. The place of our Lord's crucifixion was a place called Golgotha in the Hebrew tongue, meaning "the place of a skull." *Calvaria* is the Latin equivalent, and gives us our English word "Calvary" (Luke 23:33).
 - a. The exact location of this place and why it is called "the place of a skull" is uncertain. A religious edifice is erected over the supposed location, but this site is also thought to have been located within the walls of Jerusalem. Another site which vaguely resembles a skull is thought by many to be Golgotha.
 - b. The location was outside the gates of the city (Heb. 13:12), since the Law of Moses forbade execution within the city gate (1 Kings 21:13; Acts 7:58; Lev. 24:14; Num. 15:35).
 3. The Jewish religious and civil leaders were the instigators of his crucifixion.
 - a. John 19:15-18: "But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then
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delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."

- b. A modern pope "forgave" the Jews for murdering Jesus. No Jew living today was directly responsible for killing the Lord. There were many in the Jewish hierarchy who were directly responsible; they made definite plans and exerted direct efforts to that end. No American living today has ever been a slave-owner, and no American living today has ever been a slave to another American. Those who were guilty of slavery have long since died; and all those who were once slaves have long since died. The authorities among the Jews and Romans were responsible for his death.
 - 1) Acts 3:17: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
- c. The Lord had come to the Jewish nation, but had been largely rejected by them, especially by their leaders: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). The majority of the Jewish people of his time rejected the Lord, and many of these pushed for his crucifixion. A large number of Jews welcomed Christ into Jerusalem for his triumphant entry; later in the same week, a large number of Jews demanded his death. The chief priest has swayed the people: "But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them" (Mark 15:11). There were a significant number in the great audience on Pentecost who bore guilt in the Lord's death.
 - 1) Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."
 - 2) Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
- d. The Romans bore responsibility in this dark deed: Pilate for putting politics before truth and principle; the soldiers in doing their gruesome part.
- e. We all had a part indirectly, for it was because of sin that the Savior endured the cross.
 - 1) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:3: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."
 - 3) 1 John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*."

C. Crucifixion was the terrible means of execution practiced by the Romans.

1. Bible dictionaries and Encyclopedias give many details regarding crucifixion, including the following information.
 - a. It was unanimously considered the most horrible form of death, even worse than burning. Aside from the physical agony, it denoted an awful shame. One prominent reason the Jewish leaders sought crucifixion for Jesus was to destroy his influence among the Jews, for a curse and shame was pronounced upon one who was executed on a tree—in the thinking of the Jews. The Gentiles reserved crucifixion for slaves and criminals. The Jews had a revulsion for it since the Law placed a curse on one who was thus executed.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 21:23: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance."
 - 2) Galatians 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree."
 - b. Crucifixion usually began with scourging, a terrible ordeal of itself. This scourging was a horrible

affliction, often causing the death of the victim. "The scourge was a whip with leather thongs, the ends fastened to lead balls or sharp spikes. The victim was usually bound to a stake naked and made to bend over thus tightening the skin which usually split open at the first blow. When it was over often the sufferer was unconscious, a bleeding mass of torn flesh. It is quite possible that the reason Jesus was unable to bear up under the weight of his cross was due to the terrible beating he had but recently suffered" (Woods, *Commentary On John*, p.391). Jesus underwent this dreaded punishment. Pilate's intent in the scourging inflicted upon Jesus was an attempt to evoke sympathy in his accusers toward him so that they might agree to his release.

- 1) Luke 23:22 "And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go."
 - 2) Isaiah 52:14 "As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."
 - 3) John 19:1-5 "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *him*. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, **Behold the man!**"
2. The victim was usually forced to carry his cross, and sometimes even goaded and beaten on the way. The execution site was in some public place, often along a prominent road, or on a hill where the victim could be easily seen. The victim was stripped naked, with perhaps a loin cloth being allowed.
 3. The cross was in the usual shape we envision, or formed as a "T", or in the form of an "X." The victim was laid upon the cross and nails were driven through his hands and feet. Sometimes thongs were also used to prevent the body slipping from the cross if the flesh should tear. The cross was erected so that the feet of the subject was only a foot or two above the ground.
 4. A large nail was driven through each hand, and another through each foot or one nail through both feet. A wooden rod was sometimes inserted between the legs as support for the sagging body to prevent the nails from tearing from the hands and feet.
 - a. Psalms 22:16: "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet."
 - 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 20:24-28: "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."
 5. One of the very few acts of mercy attendant to crucifixion was the practice of giving the subject a drink of medication, wine mingled with myrrh and gall, which would induce grogginess, and deaden the pain. Christ refused to accept this drink so that he might fully taste death (Mark 15:23; Matt. 27:23; Heb. 2:9). He later was offered a drink of vinegar in a sponge, which the Lord accepted (John 19:28-30). This was a mixture of sour wine and water which was used by the soldiers. The hyssop stalk (reed) grew from one and a half to three feet in length.
 6. The wounds of crucifixion did not result in a great loss of blood, and were not directly fatal. The cause of death is given as follows:
 - a. The unnatural position and violent tension of the body caused great pain from even a small

- movement.
- b. The nails were driven through the hands and feet where a great number of nerves are located, hence great pain ensued.
 - c. The exposure of the many wounds and lacerations, including those from the scourging, brings on inflammation which tends to become gangrene; the pain thus increases moment by moment. The injuries caused by scourging to the back would cause further pain when the back was pressed against the cross.
 - d. "In the distended parts of the body more blood flows through the arteries than can be carried back into the veins: hence too much blood finds its way from the aorta into the head and stomach, and the blood-vessels of the head become pressed and swollen. The general obstruction of circulation which ensues causes an internal excitement, exertion, and anxiety, more intolerable than death itself" (*Smith's Dictionary of The Bible*, p.514).
 - e. The gradually increasing and lingering agony, and unbearable thirst, and the difficulty in breathing, eventually brought about death. Depending on the constitution and condition of the subject, death might be several days in coming. McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia reports the case of a young Turkish slave named Mameluke who lasted from Friday to Sunday during his crucifixion, and he was noted for being an exceptionally rugged individual.
 - f. Woods described the process of crucifixion with these words: "As unspeakably inhuman as this mode of execution was, it stopped just short of producing merciful death and delivery from its agony and those thus executed often lingered for days on the cross unable to live, unable to die. The wretched position made every movement one of agony; the pierced hands and feet soon became inflamed and then infected, arteries were distended and blocked, fever shot upward, intolerable headaches often drove those thus being put to death into insanity. It was to such a death that our Lord was condemned, and this by men who affected to be the guardians of the truth and the favored of Jehovah!" (*Commentary on John*, p.402).
7. The Romans often left the body hanging on the cross until it decomposed or was devoured by birds. The Jews besought Pilate that the legs of Jesus and the two robbers might be broken to hasten death so that their bodies might be removed before the Sabbath day (John 19:31; cf. Deut. 21:23; Josh. 8:29). The breaking of the legs would hasten death, according to some scholars, because it would make it impossible for the victim to push himself upward in order to breathe. The legs were broken by a strong blow with a hammer or mallet.
- a. Deuteronomy 21:23: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance."
 - b. Joshua 8:29: "And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, *that remaineth* unto this day."
 - c. John 19:31: "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away."
8. The soldiers found Jesus already dead. This quick death amazed Pilate: "Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph" (Mark 15:43-45). What caused the relatively early death of Jesus?
- a. Some have suggested that Jesus willed his own death, basing the theory on the supposition that this is the meaning of the statement, "He bowed his head and gave up the ghost (John 19:30). But the
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same statement is made of other men: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people" (Gen. 25:8).

- b. Finding Jesus already dead, the soldier pierced his side with a spear; from this wound flowed blood and water, a seeming unlikely occurrence. The word "pierced" translates a Greek work meaning "to gash, to stab." It was a violent thrust which itself would have caused death if he were still alive.
- c. Assertions have been made that the presence of blood and water indicates (1) that he died of a ruptured heart, or (2) that this phenomenon resulted from the total exhaustion which the Lord experienced during his last hours. There are difficulties with each of these views, and since the Holy Spirit did not see fit to reveal the cause, we ought to be cautious in being dogmatic about doing so (Woods, p.411). "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken" (John 19:34-36).
- d. An important symbolism is evident from the fact that blood and water flowed from the Lord's side: We are saved by the blood of Christ; we contact the saving power of that blood when we obey the Lord's command in baptism.
 - 1) 1 John 5:6: "This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."
 - 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) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:18-19, 22-23: "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....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) Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."
 - 6) 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."
 - 7) 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."
 - 8) 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."
 - 9) Romans 6:16-18: "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 the servants of righteousness."

D. The one being crucified was none other than the Son of God, the second person of the Godhead.

1. He was entirely innocent. Several witnesses during his last earthly hours attest his innocence.
 - a. Judas (Matt. 27:3), Pilate's wife (Matt. 29:19), the Roman soldiers (Matt. 27:54), and the placard (John 19:19) declared his innocence and his true identity.
 - 1) Matthew 27:4: "Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*."

- 2) Matthew 27:19: "When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."
 - 3) Matthew 27:22-24: "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see *ye to it*."
 - 4) Matthew 27:54: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."
 - 5) John 19:19-20: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin."
- b. Other plain Biblical statements also declare his innocence.
- 1) Hebrews 4:15: "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."
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:22: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
2. He was the best friend man ever had on earth.
- a. Acts 10:38: "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."
 - b. Romans 5:8: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
 - c. Luke 7:34: "The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!"
3. He was the Son of God.
- a. John 1:29: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."
 - b. Matthew 26:63-66: "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 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. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death." Compare Mark 14:62.
 - c. Acts 3:17: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 2:8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
- E. There were certain incidents of great importance which took place around the cross.
1. He was crucified between two thieves.
 - a. This was intended as a further insult to the Lord. His cross was placed in between theirs, suggesting that he was the chief criminal. "Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst" (John 19:18).
 - b. But this fulfilled an ancient prophecy.
 - 1) Isaiah 53:9-12: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall

- see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."
- 2) Mark 15:27-28:"And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors."
2. An inscription was posted on the cross: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin" (John 19:19-20).
- a. It was recorded in Hebrew (the language of the Jews), in Greek (the language of the educated), and in Latin (the language of the Romans). All who could read would be able to decipher the message.
- b. The message was intended as irony. The Jewish leaders attempted to get Pilate to change its wording but were refused (John 19:21-22).
- c. The message was truthful: Jesus was/is King:
- 1) Matthew 2:2: "Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."
- 2) Luke 1:32-33: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."
- 3) John 12:13: "Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."
- 4) John 18:36-37: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."
3. The soldiers cast lots for his garment. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did" (John 19:23-24).
- a. Each crucified person was under the control of four Roman soldiers who in turn were supervised by a centurion. The soldiers divided the Lord's smaller garments among themselves in keeping with custom. The articles of clothing commonly worn were the sandals, the girdle, the outer robe, the headdress. The tunic, or undergarment, made of linen or wool, was without seam, being wholly woven and thus not of parts sewed together, a rule the priests followed. (Woods, p.405). They cast lots to see who would get this seamless coat.
- b. All this was in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy made a 1000 years before: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (Ps. 22:18).
4. While the Lord suffered, his enemies passed by, reviling and mocking him.
- a. Psalms 22:7-8: "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."
- b. Mark 15:29-32: "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the
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- cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him."
- c. Luke 23:35: "And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God."
 - d. Luke 23:36-37: "And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself."
5. The Lord was not entirely bereft of sympathetic friends for certain faithful and godly women maintained a vigil near the cross (John 19:25; Mark 15:40-41). These had previously ministered to him (Matt. 27:55).
- a. Mark 15:40-41: "There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem."
 - b. John 19:25: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene."
 - c. Matthew 27:55: "And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him."
6. There was a period of unnatural darkness upon the earth: "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour" (Matt. 27:45: cf. Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44).
- a. This was significant and miraculous. It was at a time of a full moon because the Jews' lunar month started with the new moon, and the Passover was observed on the 14th (Num. 9:3). An eclipse at high noon cannot occur when the moon is full; and an eclipse cannot last three hours! (Hamilton, p.191).
 - b. This apparently fulfills Amos 8:2-9. It signified a dark day for Israel for she had been judged and found wanting, and her Law was taken away. "And he said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A basket of summer fruit. Then said the LORD unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord GOD: *there shall be* many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast *them* forth with silence. Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; *yea*, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as *by* the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos 8:2-9).
 - c. It signified the sadness felt in heaven in the suffering of its Prince.
 - d. It signified sadness to humanity for the pure One was suffering for the sinful.
7. At the Lord's death, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, the earth quaked, rocks were torn, and certain saints were raised (after his resurrection). The rending of the veil signified that the way into heaven was now open.
- a. Matthew 27:50-53: "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; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."
 - b. 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; 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."

8. A remarkable statement was made in the Lord's behalf by the pagan Roman centurion: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

F. Jesus uttered seven statements while he suffered on the cross.

1. **Luke 23:34: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."**

- a. We may be sure that God heard all the prayers offered by his holy Son. How many went unanswered? None. How many requests did he make that were turned down? Perhaps just one: "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*" (Matt. 26:39).
- b. Hebrews 5:7: "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."
- c. This prayer was answered but, not immediately, not without conditions, and not for everyone involved. Only some of the guilty ones obeyed the gospel. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain....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 you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost....Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:23,37-38,41).

2. **Luke 23:43: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."**

- a. The attitude of the two thieves is shown in Luke 23:39-43: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
- b. The statement was addressed to only one of the thieves. It *may* be that this man was a backslider since he knew somewhat about Jesus and his kingdom.
 - 1) Mark 1:4-5: "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."
 - 2) Luke 3:7: "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"
 - 3) Luke 3:21: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened."
 - 4) Luke 7:30: "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."
 - 5) Acts 13:24: "When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel."
- c. Whether he had or had not been baptized is of no significance to us: the law of the gospel did not take effect until Jesus had died; and prior to the effective date of a will, the testator may dispose of his blessings as he sees fit, but after his death, the conditions of the will are then imposed.
 - 1) Galatians 3:15: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto."

- 2) Hebrews 9:15-17: "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."
- d. Therefore, the conversion of this thief is no example for us since his pardon was given prior to the death of Christ, and we live on this side of the cross.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:9-10: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
3. **John 19:26-27: "Woman, behold thy son...behold thy mother."**
 - a. It is to be expected that his mother was present. "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:35).
 - b. The Lord demands that children honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-2), even after they are grown (cf. Mark 7:10-13). He never commanded us to do what he was unwilling to do himself.
 - 1) Luke 2:51: "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart."
 - 2) Acts 1:1: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." Our Lord lived up to what he taught.
 - c. This exchange shows the Lord's great compassion: he made arrangements for his mother's welfare. It also implies that Joseph was dead.
 - d. It shows his methods: he uses other people to provide for his own: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me" (Matt. 25:40).
4. **Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"**
 - a. Matthew 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
 - 1) At about the ninth hour, the Lord cried out with a loud voice, raising the wonderful question, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Some have thought that the Lord was merely quoting from Psalm 22:1, which is a Messianic prophecy. But if so, why did he speak the line in such a loud voice? Perhaps so that those who heard him could know that he is the Messiah. But it is more likely that he was actually living out the anguish of which the statement speaks.
 - 2) "The depth of meaning contained in this bitter outcry can never, we suppose, be fathomed by human thought, yet the word 'forsaken' directs our thought in the right channel. If a good man who has long trusted in God and delighted in his favor could suddenly realize that God had *forsaken* him, he would enter, at least partly, into the Savior's feeling. But the peculiar relation which Jesus sustained to the Father rendered this feeling more intense than human hearts can experience, and at the same time it renders most mysterious to us the forsaking itself. It is enough to know that in it lay the chief bitterness of the Savior's death" (McGarvey, p.246).
 - b. Isaiah 53:12 predicted that Christ would pour "out his soul unto death." The word "soul" might be used in the sense of "life"—that he gave his life for us. But in view of the statement from the cross, much more is doubtless involved.
 - 1) Death means "separation." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works

is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). When the human spirit is separated from the human body, death is the result; the physical body without the spirit is dead.

- 2) One is spiritually dead if he is separated from God. "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins....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: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."
 - 3) The second death is the eternal separation those who die in sin will experience; they are forever separated from God: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:11; cf. Rev. 20:12-15; 21:8).
 - 4) During the time our Lord hang on the cross, bearing the sins of the world, he was separated from God; God can have no communion with sin; while Christ bore our sins (though he was entirely guiltless), he had no fellowship with God.
 - 5) As awful as crucifixion is, there is one thing that is worse—being separated from God!
 - c. Although Christ was utterly sinless, yet he suffered as a sinner—separated from God. But this statement is beyond human comprehension; it enters into the eternal, and has to do with such deep considerations that we are not able to fathom them. This is the only statement of the seven statements from the cross, recorded by more than one writer.
 - d. "The cry is the result not only of His suffering body, but also from the fact that Jesus is the sin-bearer of the world. God in his holiness could not have fellowship with sin and therefore is removed from the Son (Ex. 33:3; Josh. 7:11-12; Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:1-2; Isa. 64:7; Hos. 5:6). The Greek verb translated in English translation '*forsaken*,' is in the aorist tense. Therefore, indicating the forsaken state had taken place in that time period in the past (the three hours of darkness), and had now reached its climax, thus the Lord's loud outcry. Paul states that Jesus, by His death had redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13). Jesus was our sin offering (II Cor. 5:21). Therefore, Jesus died in our place, that He might bring us near to God" (Laws, *The Book of Matthew*, p.685).
5. **John 19:28: "I thirst."**
- a. Thirst is one of the natural consequences of death by crucifixion.
 - b. He could have miraculously provided water for himself. He did for Israel (I Cor. 10:4); he made the world (John 1:3). But he died without divine help.
 - c. He died that we might never thirst.
 - 1) John 4:14: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."
 - 2) Revelation 7:16: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat."
 - d. This is the only one of the seven statements in which he sought something for himself. He was offered a mixture of sour wine and water (vinegar) which the soldiers had provided for themselves: "Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (John 19:29-30).
6. **John 19:30: "It is finished."**
- a. All that he had come to do had been done: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).
 - b. The pertinent prophecies had been fulfilled; the atonement had been made; the law was fulfilled (Matt. 5:17); his sufferings were now over!
 - c. This is a statement of victory.
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7. **Luke 23:46: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit."**
 - a. He had served the Father well, in fact, perfectly.
 - b. Hebrews 12:1-4: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."
 - c. He died for you and me; let us resolve that we will live for him, and thence be permitted to live and reign with him in that eternal abode he prepared!
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THE BURIAL OF CHRIST

A. The Burial of Jesus is one of the fundamental facts of the Gospel.

1. I 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."
2. Rarely is the burial of Christ the subject of an entire sermon; many of its details are often overlooked.
3. The characters, the incidents, and the circumstances involved in his burial are profitable and interesting.

B. John 19:31-37 gives important background information preparatory to his burial.

1. The Jews were in a hurry to get the bodies off the crosses: "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away" (John 19:31).
2. The Romans customarily left the victims on the cross until the bodies were eaten by birds or disintegrated by decay. The Old Testament forbade leaving the bodies unburied over night: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance" (Deut. 21:23). They requested that Pilate order the legs of Jesus and the two thieves be broken to hasten death, and thus enabling their bodies to be removed and buried.
3. The reason for this request: they did not want the bodies to remain on the crosses during the Sabbath. The "Preparation" was on Friday, the day prior to the Sabbath; this Sabbath was the first day of the week of unleavened bread, an important Jewish feast. This Sabbath was a "high day" because of its double significance: the Sabbath plus the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
4. These Jewish religious leaders were not above lying and conniving in order to kill an innocent man, but the rituals and rites must be carefully observed! "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel" (Matt. 23:23-24).

C. They were positive that Jesus was dead.

1. John 19:32-37: "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 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. And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."
2. To break a crucifixion victim's legs would hasten death: some say it would make it impossible to breathe since they had to push and pull themselves up against the nails to inhale and exhale; and the shock of having two major bones harshly broken, especially in addition to the horrible agony the victim had already endured, would certainly hasten death.
3. They found Jesus already dead, and did not break his legs; this fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy.
 - a. Psalms 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."
 - b. John 19:35-36: "And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."
4. Jesus fulfilled all the types and prophecies of the Old Testament which pertained to him. He was

typified by the Passover Lamb which was was not to have any of his bones broken.

- a. Exodus 12:46: "In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."
 - b. John 1:29: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 5:7: "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."
5. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus with his spear. This wound would have killed him had he not already been dead. The fact that blood and water came out shows that he was dead. This piercing of his side also fulfilled prophecy.
- a. Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn."
 - b. John 19:37: "And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."
6. The soldiers were competent witnesses of death; since they affirmed that Jesus was dead, we may know that he truly was dead: "And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph" (Mark 15:44-45).

D. Certain Preparations for the Lord's Burial were made.

1. The body of Jesus was requested by Joseph of Arimathaea.
 - a. Matthew 27:57: "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple."
 - b. Mark 15:43: "Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus."
 - c. Luke 23:50-52: "And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus."
 - d. John 19:38: "And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus."
2. Joseph was a rich man; a good man; just and honorable; a counsellor; he waited for the kingdom; he had not consented to the death of Jesus; he was a secret disciple of the Lord (John 19:38).
 - a. Arimathaea was a city of the Jews (Luke 23:51), but its location is unknown. That he was a rich man is plainly affirmed in the text.
 - b. This man went boldly (Mark 15:44) before Pilate to beg (crave) the body of Jesus for burial. The apostles had forsaken the Lord in Gethsamene and fled; Joseph had not openly revealed his faith before, but now his faith shines brilliantly!
 - c. On the surface, it appears that he alone removed the Lord's body from the cross: "And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid" (Luke 23:53).
 - 1) Matthew 27:57: "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple."
 - 2) Mark 15:43: "Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus."
 - 3) Luke 23:50-52: "And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This *man*

went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus."

- d. We shall next see that he had an important helper, Nicodemus, who was also a notable person, a ruler of the Jews (John 3:1). By their action they kept Jesus from being buried in some unknown location; it also fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9 ("With the rich in his death").
 3. Nicodemus came with a hundred-pound weight of myrrh and aloes with which to use in the Lord's burial (John 19:39).
 - a. He had approached Jesus by night (John 3:1ff), and is mentioned as defending the Lord in John 7:50-52: "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge *any* man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."
 - b. This great amount of material was used in the embalming process then practiced; it was placed next to the body and wrapped with a linen cloth; possible a layer of the spices was also put under the body, on the resting place.
 4. The faithful women attended the burial: "And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23:53-56). Because of the nearness of the beginning of the Sabbath, these women returned home to prepare additional spices and ointments for the completion of the burial process.
 5. These faithful friends still loved the Lord, still believed him to be a great one, but their hope had turned into despair.
- E. The Place of his Burial is Important.
1. "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation *day*; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:41-42). "And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in" (John 20:5).
 2. The tomb was hewn out of solid rock; the opening was low; a great stone was rolled into place at the entrance as a means of securing the tomb.
 3. It was conveniently located near the crucifixion site, in a garden (John 19:41). This doubtless was arranged by God's providence.
 4. It was a **new** tomb (John 19:41).
 - a. No one had been buried in it before the Lord. It was new in the sense that it had never been used (Greek "kainon"), not necessarily that it had only recently been hewn.
 - b. Also, lest anyone think that the body of Jesus had come into contact with some great one's body, and raised by its power, as was the case in 2 Kings 13:21, the tomb had to be an unused one. "And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men*; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet" (2 Kings 13:21).
- F. There were certain Precautions taken in his burial.
1. The chief priests and Pharisees were still concerned about Jesus. "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matt. 27:62-66).
 2. They likely broke their own Sabbath day rules by going to Pilate, for it was the Sabbath, the day after the crucifixion, that they approached the governor.

3. They feared the resurrection, but by their actions here they made belief in the resurrection even more believable.
 4. They requested and received a band of Roman soldiers to guard the tomb, ostensibly to keep the disciples from stealing the body. The Roman military code is said to have been very severe: one sleeping on guard duty could be executed! And the Roman soldiers are said to have been greatly feared. Only the foolish would attempt to enter the tomb; this would be asking for Roman retribution.
 5. The Roman seal was placed on the tomb. This seal was of wax with the imprint of the Roman Seal impressed into it. To break this seal without proper authority was a capital offense.
 6. The fact that the sepulchre was guarded by Roman soldiers, and had the Roman seal attached, provided the perfect situation for positive proof of the resurrection!
- G. It is important that we see the Purpose of the Burial.
1. He could have arisen without being buried, as were the daughter of Jarius and the son of the widow of Nain, but that would have made it more difficult to prove his resurrection.
 2. That he was buried and secured in the tomb for three days, also proves that he was indeed dead, and not in some kind of coma. Many today foolishly deny that he was dead, claiming he had merely swooned, and later slipped from the tomb after he had revived. The fact that he was in the grave three days, after undergoing all the terrible things during his last day, precludes the notion that he was not dead!
 3. It was necessary that he be buried in order to fulfill prophecy (Isa. 53:9). It was highly unlikely that he would have been buried in a rich man's unused tomb had not the power of God guided the affairs as they developed. God can find the people and things which are necessary to carry out his purposes.
 4. There is another value which reveals another purpose for the burial, and this has great meaning to us.
 - a. Jesus conquered the grave; this gives us assurance of our own resurrection.
 - 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) 1 Corinthians 15:55: "O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?"
 - b. His rising from the grave gives us great comfort when we bury our righteous dead in the earth: "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" (I Thess. 4:16-18).
 5. The burial of Jesus also gives meaning to the gospel command for baptism.
 - a. Baptism is in the likeness of Christ's burial.
 - 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) Romans 6:16-18: "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 the servants of righteousness."
 - 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."
 - b. Baptism is a fundamental part of the gospel plan of salvation, just as the burial of our Lord's body is a fundamental part of the gospel story.
 - 1) 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."

- 2) Romans 6:16-18: "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 the servants of righteousness."

H. The story of the Burial of Jesus is important.

1. But the story of Jesus does not end with him in the grave. We serve a risen Lord!
 2. It was not possible that death should hold him! "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:22-24).
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THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Resurrection of Christ is the crowning miracle of his great life.

1. It is the most significant miracle to us for without it he would remain a dead man, powerless to do anything for mankind. His birth, life, miracles, messages, and death would all be without meaning.
2. But his resurrection from the dead proves his divine Sonship: "And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4).
3. It became the centerpiece of the gospel.
 - a. Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - 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."
4. It is the basis of our hope beyond this life: "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. 15:17-20).

B. There are certain facts about Christ believed by his friends, and conceded by his foes.

1. That a man named Jesus lived, was prominent in ancient society, and was popular with the common people.
2. That he was crucified on a Roman cross, was thought to be dead, was buried in a tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, that the tomb was closed with a stone, sealed by the Roman seal and guarded by Roman soldiers, a band numbering between 15 and 60.
3. That his body was missing on the third day of his burial.
4. That his disciples had an unshakable conviction that he had been raised from the dead, and were willing to undergo any amount or kind of suffering in defense of this firm belief, even to the point of dying.

II. THE FACTS OF THE RESURRECTION STORY ARE RELATED BY THE GOSPEL WRITERS.

A. Several faithful women came to the tomb early on the first day of the week.

1. This company included Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of James the Less; Salome, the mother of James and John; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; and others who are not named (Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:1-4; Luke 23:49,55-56; 24:1-3,10; 8:3; John 20:1).
2. These came to further anoint the body of Jesus; they did not have time to do so following the Lord's death, and could not do so on the Sabbath: "And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23:55-56).
3. They left home while it was still dark (John 20:1) and arrived at the tomb as the sun arose on Sunday, the first day of the week (Mark 16:2).
4. As they made their way toward the tomb, they wondered how they would be able to move the great stone to gain access to the tomb. Obviously, they did not know about the band of soldiers guarding the tomb or the Roman seal with which the tomb had been secured. "And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" (Mark 16:3).
5. On their arrival, they discovered much to their surprise that the stone had been moved already. An angel had been dispatched from heaven to remove the stone; and after doing so, he sat on it, causing great fear among the soldiers: "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of

the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*" (Matt. 28:1-4).

6. The body of the Lord was not in the tomb! The women naturally supposed that the Lord's enemies had removed the body and hidden it elsewhere:
 - a. "Then she [Mary Magdalene] runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him" (John 20:2). Mary ran back into the city to give this report to Peter; the other women entered the tomb in Mary's absence. Mary Magdalene may have reached the tomb ahead of these other women, and seeing the empty tomb, and supposing the body had been stolen, she ran to tell Peter.
 - b. In the meantime, the other women arrive and meet the angels. Peter and John ran to the garden, with John reaching it first but allowing Peter to enter first. (John 20:3-10). On seeing that the tomb was indeed empty, they returned to Jerusalem. Peter left "wondering" (Luke 24:12), while John "saw and believed" (John 20:8). Mary came back to the tomb after Peter and John, and her conversation with the angel takes place (John 20:1-13).
- B. The angels announced to the women the resurrection of Christ.
 1. Matthew and Mark mention only one angel; Luke and John speak of two. The former simply describe the spokesman, which does not contradict the fact that two angels were present. These angels are clothed in long white, shining garments.
 - a. Mark 16:5: "And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted."
 - b. Luke 24:4: "And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments."
 - c. John 20:12: "And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."
 2. The women are asked: "Why seek ye the living among the dead" (Luke 24:5); and are told, "I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified" (Matt. 28:5); and still further, "He is not here: for he is risen...Come see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. 28:6). The angels also reminded them that Jesus had told them before the crucifixion that he was to be crucified but that he would rise again on the third day (Luke 24:6-8), which the women now remembered.
 3. The women are told to go quickly and report the Lord's resurrection to his disciples, and that he would meet them in Galilee (Matt. 28:7-8; Mark 16:7-8). These women hastened to obey.
 4. While these women were gone on this mission, Mary, who had already gone back to tell Peter about the Lord's empty tomb, preceded by Peter and John, returned to the tomb. These two apostles saw the empty grave, and went back to the city. Mary stood outside the sepulchre weeping before looking into the tomb. It seems that she had not paused long enough to look into it when she first came (John 20:1-2). She encounters the two angels; one was standing at the head and the other at the foot of the place where Jesus had lain: "But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him" (John 20:11-13).
 5. The women brought word to the apostles: "And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles" (Luke 24:9-10). These men did not believe the story at first: "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Luke 24:11). Luke seems to say that the report to the apostles was given by the

whole group of women at the same time, but from the additional information given by John it appears more likely that Mary Magdalene brought the initial report, and the rest of the women gave another report soon afterwards. This view fits the overall facts better.

III. ESSENTIAL TO THE RESURRECTION IS THE FACT THAT JESUS ACTUALLY WAS DEAD.

A. Before there can be a resurrection from the dead, the individual involved must truly be dead.

1. Many modernists deny that Jesus died on the cross; this do they for the purpose of explaining away his resurrection. The Bible, God's word, says he was dead.
 - a. Old Testament prophecies predicted that he would be dead: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth....Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:9,12).
 - b. New Testament statements declare he was dead.
 - 1) Matthew 27:50: "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."
 - 2) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 3) 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."
 - 4) 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."
2. The Roman soldiers knew that he was dead. These were men who were acquainted with death; they could know whether a man was dead or not.
 - a. Matthew 27:54: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was [notice the past tense] the Son of God."
 - b. Mark 15:44-45: "And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph."
 - c. John 19:32-34: "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 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."
3. Pilate was satisfied that he was dead: "And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph" (Mark 15:44-45).
4. The Jewish leaders who had brought about the Lord's condemnation were satisfied that he was dead: "And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre. Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matt. 27:61-66).

5. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus knew he was dead: "And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation *day*; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:38-42). Great tributes of praise are given by the scriptures about Joseph—good, just, honorable.
 6. The godly women who watched the Lord's crucifixion and followed those who buried him knew he was dead; they prepared expensive spices and ointments for the purpose of anointing his body after the Sabbath was past. "And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things....And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23:49,55-56).
 7. The apostles who saw his empty tomb and his resurrected body knew he had been dead.
 8. The angels of God stated plainly that he was dead but had been raised to life again.
- B. Jesus predicted his death by crucifixion and stated afterward that he had actually been dead.
1. If we cannot believe the Savior's words on this subject, he cannot be believed in anything he said!
 2. Matthew 20:17-19: "And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*: and the third day he shall rise again."
 3. Revelation 1:18; "I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

IV. **MANY UNBELIEVERS HAVE TRIED TO EXPLAIN AWAY THE EMPTY TOMB.**

- A. Quite simply, those who reject the resurrection of Jesus do not believe the Bible.
1. These include rank infidels, modernist religious unbelievers, and many compromisers of spiritual truth.
 2. Those who believe the Bible will fully accept the fact of his resurrection!
- B. Some who reject his resurrection claim that the gardener removed the Lord's body.
1. This was Mary Magdalene's thought for a time: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away" (John 20:15).
 2. But this could not be, for the tomb was sealed and guarded; and his grave clothes were left in the tomb. Matthew 27:62-66: "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."
 - a. John 19:39-40: "And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury."
 - b. John 20:6-7: "Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself."
- C. Some thought his body was removed by his enemies.
1. But his enemies did not want his body removed, hence they asked Pilate to supply a guard. They had

no motive for taking the body away.

2. After the apostles began preaching the resurrected Lord, why did not the enemies produce his body in response to their announcement, if they had stolen it? In fact, they had not removed his body!

D. Many have claimed that his body was taken away by his friends.

1. This was alleged by his enemies: "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (Matt. 28:11-15).
2. The soldiers were never punished for sleeping, although the punishment for such was very severe under the Roman military code. A later case shows the severity with which Roman authorities punished such offenses: "And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judaea to Caesarea, and *there* abode" (Acts 12:19). If they were asleep, how could they know the disciples had stolen the body?
3. Stealing his body required breaking the Roman seal; why were not the disciples charged by the Roman authorities for that crime? The Romans knew the disciples had not done so.
4. The disciples had neither reason, motive, nor desire to steal the body of Jesus. They did not believe he would rise from the dead for they were amazed when they heard the first reports: "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Luke 24:11). They had scattered, Peter went back to fishing, and the women went to anoint the body.
5. It was impossible for them to remove the body since the guard was posted at the tomb, a band numbering from fifteen to sixty trained soldiers. Some authorities say the guard may have numbered from sixty to one hundred and twenty men.
6. There was a great change which came over the apostles following the resurrection: they were no longer cowardly; they began to boldly proclaim the resurrected Lord! Beforehand, they had fled when the enemy came to arrest Jesus.
 - a. If they had stolen the body, how can this great change be accounted for?
 - b. Eleven of the twelve died for their faith in the resurrection. If they had stolen the body and concealed it, why were they willing to die for what they knew was falsehood? People do not endure persecution and death for what they know is a lie.

E. Others claim he was not really dead, but had "swooned" while on the cross.

1. Later, they allege, he revived after resting in the tomb, and rolled the stone away from the entrance enough to slip out, escaping the notice of the soldiers.
2. Another variation of this theory has the Roman soldiers who crucified him in on a plot. This theory says that the drink Jesus accepted at the last was a strong narcotic which made it appear that he was dead. It also claims that the plot succeeded, up to the time another soldier thrust his spear into the Lord's side, which resulted in his death later, after he had been removed from the cross and taken to a secret place by his disciples.
3. The "swoon" theory could not be correct for the Lord had undergone some horrible experiences in the hours preceding his death. He had not slept or eaten for many hours; there was the emotional drain of the trials; the scourging was enough to result in death for many who underwent it; the beatings he received from various people; the crucifixion itself; the pierced side. One who was thus treated could not, under any circumstances, have endured them, and still have the strength to roll aside the great stone sealing the tomb. Four or more women knew that they did not have the strength to move it; it is certain that Jesus could not have done so, especially from the inside of the tomb!
4. Schonfield's "Passover Plot" theory fails because it is totally lacking in any supporting evidence. That Jesus was dead is evident from earlier material presented in this study; that his body was interred in

the tomb, sealed and guarded, is also evident from the facts of the case already given. The dead body of Jesus was placed in the tomb, and the tomb was found empty on the third day. The missing body is not explained by this unbeliever's theory!

- F. Others assert that the witnesses were hallucinating when they thought they had seen the risen Jesus.
1. But this theory does not explain the empty tomb! What happened to the body?
 2. The ones who saw him were not neurotics, but fishermen, *etc.* When they first saw the risen Lord, they did not think it was the Lord: objective proof had to be given. Thomas declared that he would not believe unless he could put his finger in the nail prints in his hands and put his hand into his side; the Lord called this to his attention when he met Thomas, with the effect that he was firmly and fully convinced: "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed" (John 20:24-29).
 3. The "hallucination" theory does not account for the fact that more than 500 saw him on the same occasion (I Cor. 15:6). It does not account for the fact that Saul of Tarsus, who hated Jesus, was convinced of the truth. "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:1-6).
 4. It does not account for the various individuals who saw him, at different times and in other places. These were all competent and reliable men and women, whose testimony would be accepted by any impartial court. "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: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (1 Cor. 15:1-8).

V. THE EYEWITNESSES OF THE RESURRECTED LORD.

- A. Mary Magdalene was the first to see the risen Lord.
1. She was the lady from whom the Lord had cast seven demons.
 2. Mark 16:9: "Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."
 3. John 20:14-18: "And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended

to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her."

B. The other women saw the Lord.

1. "And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (Matt. 28:9-10).
2. These had been with the Lord for quite some time, assisting in his ministry (Luke 23:49,55-56; 24:1ff).

C. Peter saw the risen Lord.

1. Certainly this apostle would know whether it really was Jesus.
2. Luke 24:34: "Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (Luke 24:34).
3. 1 Corinthians 15:5: "And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve."

D. The two disciples traveling to Emmaus.

1. Mark 16:12 "After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country."
2. Luke 24:13-32: "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

E. The twelve, including Matthias.

1. Mark 16:14: "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen."
2. Luke 24:36-41: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 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. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands and *his* feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?"
3. John 20:19-29: "Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were

shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed."

4. Acts 1:21-26: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all *men*, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."
5. 1 Corinthians 15:5: "And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve."

F. Others who saw the risen Savior:

1. More than 500 brethren at one time (1 Cor. 15:6). At the time that Paul wrote the First Corinthian letter, most of these were still alive.
2. He was seen by James, then by all of the apostles: "After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:7).
3. Lastly, he was seen by Saul of Tarsus, hardly an impartial witness since he had dedicated his life to opposing the cause of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:8; Acts 9:1ff; 26:9ff).
4. The Lord picked the apostles to be his special witnesses, but all of these men and women were proper witnesses of the fact that he had been raised.

G. The qualifications of a witness includes three basic matters:

1. Honest.
 - a. A man will be a false witness for three reasons: out of fear, through greed, or because of ambition.
 - b. These witnesses had no reason to fear if they said nothing about the Lord's resurrection (if he had not been raised); and there was no means of obtaining material wealth or advantage by saying he arose (in fact, they lost out materially by preaching the resurrection); and there was no earthly ambition to be gratified by proclaiming his resurrection.
 2. Competent.
 - a. The competency of a witness is determined by his mental capacity to observe and remember facts, and repeat the details correctly. Several of the apostles were seamen, Matthew was a tax collector, Paul was a scholar.
 - b. There is every reason to believe them all to be competent, and no reason to think otherwise.
 3. Sufficient in number. The number of individuals who saw the risen Savior is more than enough to establish the truth of their testimony.
 4. The honesty, the competency, and the number of witnesses meet every requirement of a fair and honest court. Their testimony may be safely trusted.
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H. Other compelling evidence that Christ was actually raised from the dead.

1. The wounds of his crucifixion were plainly evident. Thomas doubted the reality of the resurrection reports until he saw these wounds.
 - a. John 20:19-29: "Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them....But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed."
 - b. Luke 24:36-40: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 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. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands and *his* feet."
2. The fact that Jesus was still using the physical body in which he had died shows he had been raised, a body which still could eat: "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. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands and *his* feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took *it*, and did eat before them" (Luke 24:39-43).
3. The great stone with which the tomb was closed offers testimony of his resurrection. The Greek text describes this stone with the words *lithon megan* (Matt. 27:60) which is the source of our English word "megalith" (a huge stone). Several women knew they could not move it, thus no beaten, crucified man who had been severely wounded in the side by a spear, could do so. The stones used to close ancient tombs usually were set in a sloping groove, a runway, with the lowest point being in front of the tomb entrance. It would require far more strength to remove the stone than to roll it into place. The stone was round with the front and back being flat, like a great stone wheel. When it was moved, it was not merely pushed a little to the side so that Jesus could squeeze through, but was moved completely away from the tomb opening (John 20:1). The angel of God removed this stone, and sat upon it; it is no wonder why the pagan soldiers shook in fear and became as dead men (Matt. 28:4). The stone was not moved to allow Jesus to get out of the tomb, but to allow the witnesses to see into the tomb.
4. The tomb itself offers evidence.
 - a. There are no back doors or escape hatches in our modern caskets or in those ancient tombs, which were carved from solid rock (Mt. 27:60). It was a new tomb (John 19:41), so there was no possibility of 2 Kings 13:21 being repeated. It was closed with the great stone, sealed by the Roman seal, and guarded by soldiers.
 - b. This tomb did not contain the body of Jesus after the dawning of Sunday. That the tomb was empty is shown by several reliable facts:
 - 1) It was seen to be empty by at least six of the disciples (Matt. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:10; John 20:2-8).
 - 2) It was seen to be empty by at least some of the Roman guards (Matt. 28:2,11-15).
 - 3) The Jews did not deny the fact that it was empty; they merely tried to explain why it was empty.
 - 4) The fact of the empty tomb was publicly proclaimed on Pentecost day in the very presence of

many would know the truth about it, and nothing was said in rebuttal.

I. Evidence of his resurrection is seen in the grave clothes left in the tomb.

1. John 20:4-7: "So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." Greek scholars report that the text says the linen cloth was lying in folds, that they were in a cocoon shape as if Jesus had simply passed through them without disturbing their arrangement. When Lazarus was raised, he had to have assistance to be loosed from the tightly wound grave clothes (Jn. 11:44). Jesus was bound the same way, hence could not unwrap the clothes or travel any distance in that binding.
2. The spices used in the burial customs of the Jews were sticky. These were placed on the body and the linen cloth was wrapped around the body, from neck to foot. "Who unwrapped Jesus, in unhurried manner rolled up the face napkin, then painstakingly, and with the skill of an artist, re-wrapped those sticky grave cloths back into their original shape so perfectly that they appeared as if they had not been tampered with?" (Ed. Wharton, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ Historical ...Or Mythological?").
3. The evident conclusion seems to be therefore that Jesus passed through these grave cloths in the same way he passed through the walls of the tomb and also into the room where the disciples waited behind locked doors. "Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you....And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you" (John 20:19,26).

J. Again, there is the report of many eyewitnesses.

1. As we have seen, these were honest, competent, and sufficient in number. They had nothing in this world to gain by their report if that testimony were false. They knowingly faced terrible persecution on account of their report.
2. Even these eyewitnesses were very skeptical at first, and only after positive proof was given did they accept the truth that Jesus had in truth been raised.

K. Other items.

1. The great impact of the story of Jesus on the ancient world, even before the gospel narratives were written, offers evidence for the resurrection of Christ. When the story of the resurrection was told, great numbers believed the whole story; only later was the account set forth in written form for succeeding generations.
2. The New Testament itself, being inspired of God, gives final proof of the resurrection of our Lord. It presents all the details, including fulfilled prophecy which related to the subject, and concludes that Jesus was indeed raised from the dead.
 - a. John 20:30-31: "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."
 - b. Acts 2:29-32: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."
 - c. Acts 2:36-37: "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?" The evidence presented by the apostles convinced three thousand people that Jesus had been raised from the dead! (Acts 2:41).

VI. THERE IS GREAT SIGNIFICANCE IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

A. It shows that the promises of God can be relied upon.

1. Acts 2:22-24: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."
2. Acts 2:27-35: "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 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. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool."

B. It offers proof positive that he is the Son of God.

1. Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
2. Romans 1:4: "And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"

C. It means that he is alive and sits on David's spiritual throne at the right hand of the Almighty in heaven.

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. Acts 2:32-33: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 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."
 3. Acts 15:14-17: "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 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."
 4. Ephesians 4:8: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."
 5. Philippians 2:10-11: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
 6. Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 7. 1 Peter 3:22: "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."
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D. The entire gospel system depends on it.

1. "And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain....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" (1Cor. 15:14,17-19).
2. His resurrection is the basis of our own salvation and resurrection: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25; cf. 1 Cor. 15:12ff; 1 Pet. 3:21).
3. It is the basis for observing every first day of the week.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 11:26,29: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come....For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."
 - c. 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."
4. Our hope of heaven depends on it.
 - a. "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..." (1 Pet. 1:3-5).
 - b. "Life and immortality" have been made possible for us through the gospel which includes the resurrection of Christ (2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:4; John 14:19).

E. What does the resurrection mean to *you*?

1. Nothing—if you do not personally act in obedience: "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" (Heb. 5:8-9).
 2. Nothing—if you try to gain salvation or heaven in some other way.
 - a. John 6:68: "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 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. Nothing—if you are a lukewarm Christian, or otherwise fall away, or if you are uncommitted to the cause of Christ with your whole heart.
 - a. Revelation 3:15-17: "I know thy works, that thou are neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked..."
 - b. Luke 13:24: "Strive {literally, agonize} to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."
 - c. 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."
 4. Everything—if you obey the gospel.
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- a. John 20:29-31 "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed. 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."
 - b. 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. Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - d. Matthew 10:32 "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."
 - e. 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."
 - f. 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."
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THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

I. THE ASCENSION IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT PART OF THE STORY OF CHRIST.

A. It was foretold by Old Testament prophets.

1. Psalm 68:18: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men...." Compare: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things)" [Eph. 4:8-10].
2. Psalm 110:1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Acts 2:33-36 gives the fulfillment: "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. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

B. Even before his death, Christ taught that he would ascend back to heaven.

1. John 6:62: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"
2. John 7:33: "...Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me."
3. John 14:2,12: "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...I go unto my Father."
4. John 16:28: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."
5. John 17:5: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

C. It was preached by the apostles.

1. Acts 2:33-36: "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. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
2. 1 Peter 3:22: "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

D. The facts of the ascension as reported by the Bible.

1. After his resurrection, Christ met with the apostles on several occasions.
2. Following the last meeting, he ascended heavenward out of their sight: "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" (Acts 1:9-11).
3. A prophetic picture of his approaching heaven's gate as he came back to his eternal home was given in the Old Testament: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory" (Ps. 24:7-10).
4. Daniel 7:13-14 gave a prophetic description of what happened when he approached the Heavenly

Father: "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."

5. His ascension is part of the basic truths of the Bible (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

II. EIGHT THINGS HE ACCOMPLISHED FOLLOWING HIS ASCENSION.

A. He resumed his pre-incarnate state.

1. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:4-5).
2. He was intended to dwell on earth in a fleshly body only for a little while. Although the Bible does not give the specific age of Jesus when he died, his age is computed to have been about 33.
 - a. John 7:33: "Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me."
 - b. Philippians 2:6-7: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."
 - c. 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."
 - d. Hebrews 10:5: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:"
3. When his earthly mission was completed, he ascended back to glory, and because flesh and blood cannot exist in heaven (I Cor. 15:50), he reacquired his eternal body in which he now lives.
 - a. Matthew 17:2: "And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." [Evidently, he took on briefly for the benefit of the apostles his eternal form at the transfiguration].
 - b. Philippians 3:21: "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."
 - c. Hebrews 1:3: "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."
 - d. 1 John 3:2: "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."

B. He completed the atonement for our sins.

1. In Old Testament days, the high priest offered the atonement sacrifice at the altar, then took the blood of the sacrifice into the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle/temple and sprinkled it on the Mercy Seat where God's presence was manifested (cf. Lev. 16).
2. After his sacrificial death on the cross, Christ, being both the sacrifice and the High Priest, entered Heaven and offered his blood at that great spiritual mercy seat which is the throne of the Almighty.
 - a. Hebrews 9:11-12: "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*."
 - b. Hebrews 9:24-28: "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: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in

the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 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."

C. He gave Christianity a universal and spiritual quality by his ascension.

1. If he had remained on earth, worship would have been limited to the place where Jesus was physically located. Everyone would want to be where he was. This would have made an intolerable situation.
2. If he had remained on earth, physical considerations would have been exalted, and the spiritual qualities would have lost their importance in our esteem. Man would have been overly concerned in 'relics,' and would be walking by sight; his interests would have been entirely materialistic.
3. But by ascending to heaven, all men where ever they may be, can see Jesus with an eye of faith; they are as close to him as prayer, and his word, and the worship assemblies.
 - a. John 4:20-24: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - b. 1 Peter 2:5: "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."
4. His ascension draws our attention to heaven, and establishes our affection on heaven and spiritual considerations: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:1-4).

D. His Lordship was established following his ascension.

1. His return to heaven was necessary before he could be made both Lord and Christ. "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. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:33-36).
2. His enemies would be subdued under his feet only if he returned to his eternal home.
 - a. Psalms 110:1-6: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries."
 - b. 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."
3. It was in God's eternal plan for the enemy to crucify Christ on earth; but where are his enemies now? And where will they all be following the Judgment?

E. He established his spiritual kingdom following his ascension to heaven.

1. God gave him the throne of the kingdom at that time. "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...shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).
2. The kingdom which had been prophesied by Daniel (2:44) was established on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2, which was ten days after his ascension.
 - a. Eighty-four preachers announced that the kingdom was at hand: John (Mt. 3:2); Jesus (Mt. 4:17); the twelve (Mt. 10:7); the seventy (Lk. 10:9).
 - b. The kingdom was spoken of in the future prior to Acts 2, but as being present following Acts 2.
 - 1) Colossians 1:13: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son."
 - 2) Hebrews 12:28: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."
 - 3) Revelation 1:9: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."
 - c. The kingdom was to come with power (Mark 9:1); the power was to come when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles (Acts 1:8); the Spirit gave that power to the apostles in Acts 2 (1ff); therefore, the kingdom was established on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2.
 3. It was after his ascension to heaven that his kingdom was established. The Lord appeared to the apostles and others over a period of forty days (Acts 1:3); and since Pentecost came fifty days after the Passover, the occasion of the Lord's crucifixion, his ascension took place ten days prior to Acts Two.
- F. He became head of the church, which is his spiritual body, following the ascension.
1. God set Christ at his own right hand by his infinite power: "And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*" (Eph. 1:19-20).
 2. This position is above all principality and power: "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:21). This verse makes the same point as does Daniel 7:14; since Daniel gives this status to Christ in describing his unending kingdom, and Paul here describes it in connection with Christ's church, then the kingdom and the church are identical!
 3. God gave Christ to be head over all things to the church: "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). Christ had promised to establish his church (Matt. 16:18); prior to Acts 2 the church is spoken of in the future tense, but following Acts 2 it is spoken of in the present tense (Acts 2:47; 8:3). The church came into existence on the Pentecost Day of Acts two, as was shown with regards to the establishment of the kingdom.
 4. Christ is head over all things TO the church. This means more than being head OF the church. It is one thing to be the mother OF a child and to be mother TO a child. And as the head is the ruler of the physical body, so Christ is ruler over the spiritual body, the church. His authority governs it: "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" (Col. 3:17).
- G. He sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles following his ascension.
1. He promised them the power and guidance which the Spirit would provide.
 - a. 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."
 - b. John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."
 - c. 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
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things to come."

2. But the Spirit could not come unless Christ ascended: "Nevertheless it 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" (John 16:7).
3. The Spirit brought back to the apostles full remembrance of the things Jesus had taught them personally; he showed them things to come; he guided them into the full revelation of truth; he empowered them to be ambassadors for Christ; he gave them power to perform various signs and wonders by which the veracity of their message would be confirmed for all time.
 - a. Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - b. Hebrews 2:3-4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
4. As a direct consequence of the ascension of Christ, therefore, the New Testament was given. His ascension is important to us!

H. He ascended to become our High Priest.

1. The work of the Old Testament high priest was to offer the atonement sacrifice; this was the greatest work he performed, which was done once each year.
 2. Jesus could not be a high priest on earth.
 - a. Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - b. Hebrews 8:4: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law."
 3. He ascended into heaven to become our High Priest.
 - a. Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 - b. Hebrews 4:14: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession."
 - c. Hebrews 7:15-16: "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."
 - d. Hebrews 9:24-25: "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: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others."
 - e. As High Priest, he is able to deliver man from past sins, and as we walk in the light, he offers continual cleansing: "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" (1 John 1:7).
 4. He becomes *your* High Priest only if *you* make the choice!
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THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

I. THE FACT OF THE LORD'S RETURN IS SET FORTH PLAINLY IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. The Savior himself declared it.

1. Matthew 24:36-44: "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. 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. 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."
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. Matthew 15:1-13.

B. The inspired apostle Paul affirmed it.

1. Colossians 3:4 "When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."
2. 1 Thessalonians 2:19: "For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"
3. 1 Thessalonians 3:13: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."
4. 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. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."
6. 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."

C. Peter and John, also inspired apostles, spoke of the Lord's return.

1. Peter wrote: "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 Pet. 3:10-14).
2. John wrote:
 - a. 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."
 - 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."

- c. Revelation 22:7,12,20: "Behold, I come quickly: blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book....And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be....He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

D. The angels declared it.

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. The divine stamp of inspiration attests to the accuracy and truthfulness of their promise.

II. THE **MANNER** OF HIS RETURN IS SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. He shall come as he went: It will be visible to all; it will be with clouds.

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. 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."

B. His coming will be audible.

1. "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" (1 The. 4:16).
2. It will be accompanied with a shout, a term used in the sense of a general shouting commands to his army.
3. It will be accompanied with the voice of the Archangel.
4. It will be accompanied with the trumpet of God: "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" (1 Cor. 15:52).
5. No one will need to be told that the Lord has returned! This spoils the theory that his coming would be secretive, known only to a few.
 - a. Matthew 24:27: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
 - 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."

C. His coming will be sudden and unexpected.

1. Matthew 24:44,50: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh....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."
2. Luke 21:34-36: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

D. His coming will be quickly accomplished.

1. Revelation 22:7: "Behold, I come quickly: blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."
2. Revelation 22:12: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."
3. Revelation 22:20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

E. He shall come in glory.

1. 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."
2. Matthew 25:31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

III. THE **TIME** OF CHRIST'S COMING IS UNKNOWN.

A. No man knows when that time will be.

1. Matthew 24:36-44: "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. 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. 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."
2. Mark 13:32: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

B. The angels of heaven do not know.

1. "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).
2. "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. 24:36-37).

C. Only God knows the time.

1. While Christ was on earth, he did not know, and may not know even now: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).
2. God knows the time: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:32-33).

D. The Bible does not give any clue as to the time of the Lord's second coming.

1. The Old Testament does not give any clue as to the time of his second coming. Christ knew the Old Testament Scriptures perfectly, and he did not know the time of the coming. Thus the Old Testament does not give that information!
2. Christ also knew the New Testament Scriptures perfectly; since he did not know the time of his coming, the New Testament does not provide that information!

IV. THE **EFFECTS** OF HIS COMING ARE SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. The resurrection of the dead will occur.

1. "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" (1 The. 4:16).
 2. "The dead in Christ shall rise first" does not teach that there will be two separate and distinct resurrections, one for the righteous dead and later one for the disobedient; this passage simply is not considering the wicked. It simply states that the dead in Christ will be raised from the grave before the living will be changed.
 3. Other passages show that at the Lord's coming the righteous and wicked dead will all be raised at the same time.
 - 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."
- B. The living will all be changed instantly.
1. "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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:51-53).
 2. The context here shows that physical bodies cannot enter heaven (vs. 50); and that these earthly bodies must all be changed into spiritual, incorruptible, and everlasting bodies. Without such bodies the righteous could not enjoy the blessings of heaven and the wicked could not suffer proper punishment for their evil lives.
 3. The faithful saints alive on the earth at the coming of Christ will be caught up along with the resurrected saints to meet the Lord in the air: "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" (1 The. 4:16-17).
 4. In the Bible picture of the second coming, there is no indication that Christ will set foot upon earth again. This is disastrous for the premillennial view.
- C. The end of the universe, the earth, and all physical affairs and things will then occur.
1. "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" (2 Pet. 3:10-11). The present physical order was never intended to remain for all eternity.
 2. God implied so in Genesis 8:22: "While the earth remaineth...." The plain implication is that the time is coming when the earth will not remain.
 3. Psalm 102:24-28 declared it: "I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days; thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 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: But thou art the same and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." Compare: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" (Heb.1:10-12).
 4. Matthew 24:35 announced the temporary status of the universe: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."
 5. I John 2:17: "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth
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for ever."

D. The Judgment will be held.

1. All people who have ever lived upon earth will be gathered before the judgment throne of Christ.
 - a. Matthew 25:31-32: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats."
 - 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. Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
2. The Bible teaches that each individual will know from the instant he dies what his eternal destiny will be (Luke 16:19-31). Both the rich man and Lazarus knew by virtue of their present state immediately after death the kind of eternal destiny they would have.
3. Therefore, the purpose of the Judgment is not to determine guilt or innocence, but to formally pass the sentence, either of eternal reward or of eternal punishment: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats....And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:31,32,46).
4. The standard by which the proper sentence is determined will be the Word of the Lord. Those who lived during the Patriarchal Age will be judged by the spoken will of God; those who lived under the Law of Moses are to be measured by that Law; those who lived on earth from the cross to the 2nd coming will be judged by the New Testament. Oh, how important the Bible will be to people then! The lost can only lament over their squandered opportunities; but the redeemed can glory in their faithful obedience!
 - a. 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."
 - b. Revelation 20:12: "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."
5. The eternal destinies will be formerly assigned: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

V. **THE ATTITUDE OF THE SAINTS TOWARD HIS COMING IS SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES.**

A. We should watch and pray.

1. The Lord stated the necessity of watchfulness (cf. Matt. 15:1-13).
 - a. Matthew 24:42-43: "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."
 - b. Luke 12:37: "Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."
2. He showed the importance of prayerfulness.
 - a. Mark 13:33: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."
 - b. Luke 21:36: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

B. We should always be ready.

1. Our Redeemer showed us the importance of this also: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 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" (Matt. 24:44-51).

2. We will have no excuse if we are caught unprepared.
 - a. Matthew 22:11-14: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober."

C. We should work diligently.

1. Each is given a talent (s) which he should use faithfully (Matt. 25:14-30).
2. If we fail to use our talents and opportunities, we will be cast forth from his presence as was the wicked and slothful servant of Matthew 25:14ff.

D. We should be charitable and benevolent.

1. As we have opportunity and ability, we ought to feed the hungry, visit the sick and other unfortunates, give water and clothing to those in need (Matt. 25:31ff).
2. To refuse to do this is to lose our souls!

E. We should be in a state of expectancy.

1. Our desire ought to be for the Lord's return.
 - a. Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - b. 2 Peter 3:12: "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"
 - c. Revelation 22:20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."
2. The eternal reward awaits those who "love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

F. We should be steadfast in living for Christ.

1. The Bible calls on us to be patient (steadfast) in all things.
 - a. 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."
 - b. James 5:7-8: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."
2. We ought to put forth every effort to remain faithful in Christ: "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn. 2:28).

G. We should live holy lives.

1. Ample reason for so doing is given in 2 Peter 3:11,14: "*Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness.... 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. Without holiness we will not see God in peace.
 - a. Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
 - b. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

H. We should have achieved full spiritual maturity.

1. Colossians 1:28-29: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."
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. 1 Peter 2:1-2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."
4. 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen."
5. Spiritual growth is called sanctification: "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" (1 Th. 5:23).

I. We should find comfort in this hope of his return.

1. His coming will bring us forth from the grave in the resurrection, or if we are still alive on earth at that time, we will be instantly changed into our glorified, eternal bodies.
 2. Christ's return will bring eternal blessings for the redeemed, including a grand reunion with our saved and beloved ones who went before: "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).
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THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST

I. GOD INTENDED FOR CHRIST TO HAVE PREEMINENCE IN ALL THINGS.

A. He must always come first in our priorities.

1. God has placed him in the most important position.
 - a. Ephesians 1:19-22 "And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church."
 - b. 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. He should be placed before and above even our loved ones.
 - a. Matthew 10:27-39: "What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops. 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. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. 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. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household. 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."
 - b. 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."
3. He should be more precious to us than our possessions:
 - a. Luke 12:15: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
 - b. Luke 14:33: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."
4. He should be dearer to each of us than our own lives:
 - a. Matthew 16:24-26: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 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?"
 - b. 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."

B. If he is that important to us, then his kingdom will come first in our thinking, activities and plans.

1. The kingdom should have precedence over our business: "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
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- excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come" (Luke 14:16-20).
2. His kingdom ought to be placed before our material necessities: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:19-21; cf. 6:24-34).
 3. Certainly, the kingdom must come before our pleasures:
 - a. 1 Timothy 4:7-8: "But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."
 - b. 1 Timothy 5:6: "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."
 - c. 2 Timothy 3:4: "Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."
 4. It must be above and before our selfish desires:
 - a. Matthew 16:24: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."
 - 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*."

II. CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN ALL IMPORTANT AFFAIRS.

A. He is above all others in rank.

1. He is at God's right hand in heaven: "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (I Pet. 3:22).
2. All powers, principalities, and dominions are subject to him: "And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:19-23).
3. His name is above all other names: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph. 2:9).
4. He is vastly superior to even the mighty angels of heaven (Heb. 1:4-13; 2:1-9).
5. He is superior to every man and all men.
6. He and the Father are one (John 10:30). But his authority is not superior to his Father's: "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" (1 Cor. 15:27).

B. He is above all others in position [he is greater than his followers and is under the authority of God].

1. He is the only begotten Son of God.
 - a. Matthew 16:16: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
 - b. 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."
 - c. John 11:27: "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."
 - d. 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."
2. He is the Lord, Master, and Messiah (Christ).
 - a. Matthew 23:10: "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ."
 - b. Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

- 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."
 3. He is the only Savior.
 - a. Matthew 1:21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 1 Timothy 1:15: "This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
 - d. God can be thought of as our Savior, since he originated the plan by which he saves us through his Son, Jesus Christ.
 4. He is our only Mediator with the Father: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:4-5).
 5. He is our Prophet
 - a. Deuteronomy 18:15-18: "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; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
 - b. 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."
 - c. Acts 7:37: "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear."
 6. He is one with the Father: "I and *my* Father are one" (John 10:30). They are of the same nature; they both are deity, as also is the Holy Spirit. They partake of the same nature, but they are separate individuals, and possess distinctive personalities.
 - a. Acts 5:3-4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." [This is said of the Holy Spirit].
 - b. Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." [This is said of Jesus].
 - C. He is above all others in authority.
 1. Christ has all authority in heaven and earth: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18).
 2. All our religious teachings and activities must be done only by his authority: "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" (Col. 3:17).
 3. In all things we must follow Christ.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ."
 - b. 1 Peter 2:21-22: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
 - D. He is above all in the church.
 1. He is the only head of the church.
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- a. 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."
- b. Ephesians 5:23: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body."
- c. 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. The church is to be subject to Christ in all things: "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" (Eph. 5:23-24).
3. Christ has never delegated the headship of his church to the pope or to any other man or group of men, living or dead. He alone is its head, and as head, he alone has the preeminence: "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).

III. CHRIST SHOULD HAVE THE PREEMINENCE IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

A. He must have the first place in our preaching.

1. Christ must be at the heart of our preaching.
 - a. Acts 5:42: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."
 - b. Acts 8:5: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them."
 - c. Acts 8:35: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."
 - d. Acts 9:20: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."
 - e. 1 Corinthians 1:1-2: "Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours."
 - f. 1 Corinthians 1:17-18,23: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God....But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness."
 - g. 2 Corinthians 4:5: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."
 - h. Philippians 1:15-18: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."
 - i. Colossians 1:27-28: "To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."
 2. Since Christ is our Savior, he must have the most exalted position in our message.
 - a. John 10:9: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."
 - b. 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."
 - c. Acts 10:43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."
 - d. Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is
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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."

- e. 2 Corinthians 5:19: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."
- f. Galatians 2:16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

B. He must have the first place in our worship.

1. It is to the Father that our worship is primarily directed, but it is only through Christ that we are able to offer acceptable worship.
2. We sing to and through Christ:
 - a. 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. Ephesians 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 14:15: "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."
3. We pray in the name of Christ [only by his authority are we able to approach the Father].
 - a. John 14:13-14: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*."
 - b. 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - c. Hebrews 4:16: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
 - d. Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."
4. We teach and study the gospel of Christ in our worship.
 - a. Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
 - b. 1 Timothy 4:13,16-17: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine... Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."
5. We commune with Christ, and remember his sacrifice, in eating his Supper.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 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 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."

6. We give to Christ by giving to his church, money which is used to further the cause of Christ.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7: "But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
 - c. 2 Corinthians 9:15: "Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift."

C. His will is preeminent in our work.

1. We belong to Christ.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 3:16,23: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?....And ye are Christ's; and Christ *is* God's." [Collectively, as the church].
 - b. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." [Individually].
2. We are laborers in his vineyard (Matt. 20:1-16).
3. We are to serve him: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:24).
4. We should abound in the work of Christ: "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" (1 Cor. 15:58).

D. He sets the pattern for the way we live.

1. We have died with Christ, being buried with him in baptism, and have risen to walk in newness of life. "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" (Rom. 6:1-6).
2. We should live for him.
 - a. Romans 14:7-8: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."
 - c. Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
3. We should live as Christ lived.
 - a. Acts 4:13: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - c. 1 Peter 2:21-23: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us

an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously."

4. Christ should live in us.
 - a. Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
 - b. Colossians 1:27: "To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."
 5. We should live for him: "For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain" (Ph. 1:21).
 6. We must devote our loyalty to him instead of to mere mortals.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:10-15: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 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. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; *15* Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name."
 - b. Galatians 1:10: "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."
- E. His will is to be the source of our aims.
1. We should plan and do all we can for Christ.
 2. We should expect great blessings and help from him.
 - a. Ephesians 3:20-21: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."
 - b. Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
 - c. Philippians 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
 3. All of our purposes should be subjected to the will of Christ.
 - a. Acts 18:21: "But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 16:7: "For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit."
 - c. James 4:13-15: "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 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. For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."
- F. He must be at the center of our preparations for and in facing death.
1. Our hope should be centered in Christ.
 - a. Proverbs 14:32: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:19-20: "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."
 2. At death, we should be willing and ready to depart and be with him: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph. 1:23).
 3. In heaven we shall be forever with the Lord: "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
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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" (1 The. 4:16-18).

A Study of the Holy Spirit

- A. A detailed study of the Holy Spirit is needed due to many misunderstandings.
1. Many people misunderstand his nature, thinking he is only some inanimate force.
 2. Many misunderstand the method by which he works in the conviction and conversion of alien sinners, thinking he saves individuals directly through supernatural means.
 3. There are various views, all of which cannot be right, concerning the means by which the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians.
 4. There are also misunderstandings regarding how the Holy Spirit operates in our world today, thinking it is through miraculous means.
 5. Since many religious doctrinal errors are sufficiently wrong to condemn the soul, it is extremely important that we know and understand the truth.
 - a. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - 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 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."
 - e. 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. A detailed study of the Holy Spirit is important since the Scriptures say much of him.
1. Man often swings from one extreme to another, often emphasizing one subject to the neglect of others. According to H. Leo Boles (*The Holy Spirit*, pp.12-14), this tendency is seen in the study of the Godhead during the past three hundred years.
 - a. During the 18th century, great emphasis was put on the study of God the Father, with little being studied and written on Christ and the Holy Spirit. This gave a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the Heavenly Father. A great deal of truth was brought to light, but doubtless a considerable amount of error, also.
 - b. During the 19th century, religious scholars placed much emphasis on the Son of God, which resulted in a greater appreciation for the Savior on the part of many. But many foolish questions were raised, and often error was espoused regarding the second member of the Godhead.
 - c. During the 20th century, religious teachers have placed a great emphasis on the Holy Spirit, resulting in some enlightenment and much error.
 2. We should always seek to present balanced views of Biblical information, and not lean toward any extremes. The nature, the personality, the work, and other aspects of the Godhead Three ought to be diligently studied and faithfully presented as these matters are given to us in the Scriptures.
 - a. 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."
 - 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."
 3. The all-sufficiency of the word of God has been believed among us with good, solid reason. This all-sufficiency is seen through many plain statements and strong warnings shown in the Scriptures.
 - a. 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."
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- b. 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."
 - c. 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. 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. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other" (New King James Version—NKJ).
 - f. Galatians 1:6-11: "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."
 - g. 2 Corinthians 2:17: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."
4. The Bible is the supreme court of appeal in all religious, spiritual, eternal, and moral matters.
- 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. 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." [Note: *the faith* is the gospel—Eph. 4:4-5; Acts 6:7; Gal. 1:23].
 - c. Acts 17:11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."
5. Therefore, the only way we can know the truth about the Holy Spirit (or any other spiritual subject) is through a diligent, comprehensive, and incisive study of the Bible. What we may think or feel about the subject may be wrong; what has been handed down to us from our parents or religious teachers may not be right; only by consulting the Bible, and letting it establish our beliefs, can we be sure of being right. Thus, it is to the Scriptures we turn for instruction on the vital topic!

C. The Scriptures connect the Holy Spirit with the Godhead.

1. The word "Godhead" literally means "Godhood." The suffix "hood" means "state, quality, condition" (Webster's New World Dictionary).
 - a. *Motherhood* is a term which describes the state, quality, or condition pertaining to being a mother. *Childhood* is a term describing the state, quality, or condition which pertains to being a child. So with *parenthood*, *priesthood*, and *brotherhood*.
 - b. "Godhood" describes the quality, state, or condition pertaining to being God, having divinity.
 - 1) The Father has this Godhood: "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" (Rom. 1:19-20).
 - 2) Christ has this Godhood: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

- 3) The Holy Spirit has this Godhood: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Notice that the Holy Spirit is called "God" (Acts 5:3-4).
2. The Holy Spirit has the divine characteristics.
 - a. The Holy Spirit is not a material being, but a spiritual being.
 - 1) 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." Christ contrasted his physical body with his divine being.
 - 2) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - 3) Acts 17:29: "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."
 - b. He is Eternal: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the **eternal** Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14).
 - c. He is Omniscient: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:10-11).
 - d. He is Omnipotent: "But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sin" (Micah 3:8).
 - e. He is Omnipresent: "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 [*Sheol*], thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139:7-10).
 - f. He can be Blasphemed. "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).
 - g. He was active in the Creation.
 - 1) Genesis 1:2: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
 - 2) Job 33:4: "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."
 - h. He is active in the Regeneration (New Birth). "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).
 - i. He was the source of miracles.
 - 1) Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."
 - 2) Matthew 12:28: "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 2:9,11: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.... 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."
 3. The Godhead is a term denoting the Divine Nature; it is comprised of three united, but separate Beings.
 - a. Matthew 3:16-17: "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."
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- 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. 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."
4. The Three Divine Beings.
- a. God the Father.
- 1) Matthew 6:9: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."
 - 2) Ephesians 4:6: "One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all."
- b. Christ the Son.
- 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) Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."
 - 3) Hebrews 1:2-8: "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; 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. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom."
 - 4) The Second Person of the Godhead (Christ) is spoken of as the "Son of God," but this does not imply that there was a time when Christ did not exist. If that were the case, he could not be deity; a divine person has no beginning or end. In what sense is Christ the "Son" of God?
 - a) In the sense that the Father has greater authority, as is also the case between an earthly father and his son. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him" (John 13:16). God sent Christ into the world (John 6:44); Christ sent the Holy Spirit (John 15:26). The only distinction between the members of the Godhead is in the realm of authority.
 - b) In the sense that he brought him forth into the world as a member of the human family. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, **this day have I begotten thee?** And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" (Heb. 1:5). God audibly declared him to be his beloved Son on two great occasions: at his baptism (Matt. 3:15-17) and as the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-5).
 - c) In the sense that he raised him up from the dead.
 - Psalms 2:7: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; **this day have I begotten thee.**"
 - Acts 13:33: "God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, **this day have I begotten thee.**"
- c. The Holy Spirit.
- 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) Job 26:13: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."

- 3) Psalms 104:30: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."
- 4) Acts 5:3-4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."
- 5) 2 Peter 1:21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost."

D. The Scriptures present the Holy Spirit as a Person.

1. There are some erroneous views of the nature of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The "Jehovah's Witness" denomination asserts that the Holy Spirit is merely the "active force" of God; a non-living power; a thing and not a Being.
 - b. Others think of the Holy Spirit as an element, like water; they understand Acts 2:16-17 as a literal statement, not in its true light as a figure of speech.
 - c. Still others seem to have the idea that the Holy Spirit is the Bible; he gave the Bible, but he is not the Bible.
2. The Bible presents the Holy Spirit as a real person with a distinct personality.
 - a. He is referred to by personal pronouns, masculine gender, singular in number: (he, him).
 - 1) John 14:16-17: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."
 - 2) 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. He possesses an individual personality, has all the attributes of a distinct personality, and demonstrates the power to act and speak: "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" (1 Tim. 4:1).

E. The Scriptures present him with attributes of personality.

1. He has the characteristics of a person.
 - a. He has a mind: "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*" (Rom. 8:27).
 - b. He possesses knowledge: "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" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - c. He has the capability to love: "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" (Rom. 15:30).
 - d. He has the power to will: "But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:10-11).
 - e. He has goodness: "Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst" (Neh. 9:20).
2. He suffers injuries and slights which can only be applied to a person.
 - a. He can be grieved: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).
 - b. He can be despised: "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?" (Heb. 10:29).

- c. He can be blasphemed: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).
 - d. He can be resisted: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye" (Acts 7:51).
 - e. He can be lied to: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3).
3. He has other capabilities which can only be ascribed to a person.
- a. He has the ability to teach: "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).
 - b. He can testify (bear witness): "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15:26).
 - c. He has the intelligence and power to guide into the truth: "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" (John 16:13).
 - d. He has the ability to lead: "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia" (Acts 16:6).
 - e. He can forbid: "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not" (Acts 16:6-7).
 - f. He possesses knowledge: "But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10).
 - g. He can search: "But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1Cor. 2:10).
 - h. He has the ability to speak: "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" (1 Tim. 4:1).
 - i. He speaks in the languages of men.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Acts 2:6-8,11: "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?....we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."
 - j. He can intercede for God's people: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).
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The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

A. God developed a wonderful, mysterious plan before time began.

1. 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."
2. He foresaw that his greatest creation would be unable to live a sinless life upon earth, even though his obligations to his Maker were not severe.
3. The nature of the plan was such that it was not possible for it to be immediately and fully revealed to mankind; they would not have appreciated it back then. Only after many centuries of experience would man be able to value its true worth, and a great deal of time was necessary to develop the background details of the plan.
4. Angels of heaven and great men of the Old Testament were unable to search out this plan before it was revealed.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:10-12: "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."
 - b. Matthew 13:17: "For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."
 - c. Compare Daniel 12:8-9: "And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end."
 - d. But this great "Scheme of Redemption" was not revealed until the time was right, and when that time came, it was fully revealed through the work of the Holy Spirit.
5. This great plan was developed by God's love, mercy, wisdom and power.
 - a. He sent Christ to execute the plan through his perfect life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and teachings.
 - b. He gave the Holy Spirit the task of revealing the completed plan to men.
 - c. Our study in this section is to see how the Holy Spirit fulfilled his work.

B. A preliminary, general promise was given through John the Baptizer.

1. Matthew 3:9-12: "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. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I,
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whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

2. This promise was not to everyone who was present, as Pentecostals claim.
 - a. The pronoun *you* is used as the means of announcing the baptism of the Holy Spirit; it was not intended to mean that everyone present would receive it. The pronoun is used in the epistles in reference to certain ones even though the letter was directed to a whole congregation.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:14: "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn *you*."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:7-8: "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves* to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren."
 - b. Several ungodly Pharisees and Sadducees were present; the promise was never meant for them.
 - c. The context shows that some of those present were to receive the baptism of fire, a reference to their eternal punishment for sin. The cloven tongues of Acts 2 are not meant, for there the historian says that these merely had the appearance of fire, and were not of fire at all. Not everyone present would receive the baptism of fire, and not everyone present would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. This is only a brief, preliminary promise relating to Holy Spirit baptism; we must look to the specific promises and to passages giving their fulfillment in order to learn how broad the promise of Holy Spirit baptism was.
3. But some people would receive this baptism of the Spirit.
 - a. Christ would be the administrator of this baptism and would have the final say as to who would receive it. The emphasis in the passage is that Christ would be the administrator of this baptism and that it would be given to some who are not identified in the statement.
 - b. John did not specify who would receive it, or how it would be accomplished, or when it would be done. His statement was a general promise which, as we shall see, was limited by later information given elsewhere.

C. The promises of Holy Spirit baptism was later limited to the apostles.

1. Luke 24:46-49: "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. 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." This was spoken only to the apostles (see 24:33-36; Mark 16:14).
 - a. They were to be **endued** with power. The word translated "endued" means "to be clothed with" (Vine, p.29). It is used as a figure of speech to describe their reception of the power indicated.
 - b. They would be clothed with **power**. Power means "might, or authority." They would receive this might and authority which would enable and authorize them to do certain prescribed things, including those things of Matthew 18:18 and John 20:23.
 - 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) John 20:23: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained."
 - c. This clothing with power would originate **from on high** (heaven). This would be the source of this might and authority; it would not be from some earthly source.
 - d. They were to **tarry in Jerusalem** until this power was received. They were to remain in the city, awaiting the coming of this heaven-sent power. This detail of the promise shows that it was intended only for those personally addressed, for it was only they who could wait in Jerusalem, not us.
 - e. Being clothed with power from on high and being baptized with the Holy Spirit are different descriptions of the same action. The word baptize means literally to dip, plunge, immerse; and metaphorically, to overwhelm. It is used in this later sense when the baptism of the Holy Spirit is

being discussed. "It was not the manner of the Holy Spirit's descent from heaven that constituted the baptism of the Spirit, but their being filled or *overwhelmed*, or *endued*, or *clothed*—it was the result, not the manner of descent, that defines the Holy Spirit baptism, which the apostles only received" (Foy Wallace, *The Gospel For Today*, p.697).

2. 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."
 - a. The apostles are the objects of the promise of verses 5 and 8. Notice the pronouns (whom, them, they, ye) from verses 2-8 and see that the promise of Holy Spirit baptism of verse 5 and the clothing with power of verse 8 are given only to the apostles.
 - b. The baptism of verse 5 and the clothing with power of verse 8 are identical.
 3. Further promises of the Holy Spirit's special work are given to the apostles in John 14-16, which will be discussed later.
 4. The promises of Matthew 3:11, Luke 24:49, and Acts 1:5,8 are fulfilled in Acts 1:26-2:1-4: "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven **apostles**. 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."
 - a. By following the pronouns from Acts 1:26 through Acts 2:4, the fact is clearly established that only the apostles received the operation described. A pronoun takes the place of a noun. The subject of the sentence is *apostles*; the pronouns used to identify those receiving the Holy Spirit's power (2:4) carry the reader back to the noun *apostles* in Acts 1:26.
 - b. The 120 other disciples of Acts 1:15 are not included, as is seen by the use of the pronouns in Acts 1:26-2:4. They are also excluded by virtue of the fact that they were not included in the promises of Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:5, 8. One of the most basic rules in interpreting any message is to identify those to whom the information is addressed. A love letter addressed to *Sally* is not intended for *Jane*.
 - c. Acts 1:26-2:4 shows that Matthias received the baptism of the Spirit since he met the requirements of becoming an apostle (Acts 1:20-26), and had been selected to take Judas' place.
 - d. It is obvious that Paul later received the baptism of the Holy Spirit since he was specially picked by Christ to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:14-18), and was equal to the other apostles in power and authority (2 Cor. 12:5, 11-12). The details of his reception of this are not recorded, only that after he was baptized into Christ (Acts 22:16) he began to preach the gospel with great effectiveness in Damascus (Acts 9:17-22).
 5. John chapters 14-16 were spoken only to the apostles at the last supper. Judas had left the room (13:29-30); only the eleven were present. Many details of what the Holy Spirit would do with the apostles are given in these chapters.
- D. The Holy Spirit empowered the apostles in several special ways.
1. He qualified them to be **ambassadors** of Christ.

- a. 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."
 - b. One who is appointed as an official ambassador has the authority to decide issues and act in the behalf of another. An ambassador to a sovereign country has the authority to act in behalf of its chief of state, and thus of the country itself.
 - c. The apostles were given authority to act in the Lord's stead as they did their work among men; they were given the guidance to fulfill their obligations without error; what they bound had already been bound in heaven and they were the means of announcing and implementing Christ's will.
 - 1) Matthew 16:19: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 2) 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."
 - 3) 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."
 - 4) John 20:23: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained."
 - d. Peter and the other apostles did not bind and loose according to their own designs; rather they were miraculously guided in revealing the law of Christ:
 - 1) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) John 16:12-14: "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 shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."
 - 3) John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) 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. The literal meaning of the Greek text in Matthew 16:19 is, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." From these considerations it is seen that the apostles did not arbitrarily bind and loose, but
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- God did the binding and loosing through them by directing their words.
- f. The Lord has no ambassadors on earth today; no preacher, no elder, no deacon, no teacher, and no Christian is an ambassador of Christ.
2. He qualified them to be **infallible witnesses of the Lord's resurrection**.
 - a. 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."
 - b. They were able to give their inspired testimony that Christ had truly been raised from the dead.
 - 1) Acts 4:33: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."
 - 2) Acts 10:39-42: "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 to 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."
 - c. We hear a great deal from our Biblically-ignorant contemporaries in the sectarian world, and unfortunately also from some unlearned brethren, about "witnessing." The idea is that when they talk to someone about the gospel they are doing what the apostles did, but what they do in fact is talk about what they suppose the Lord has done for them. Christians are not commanded to tell the world what Christ has done for them, but they are told to preach the gospel to the whole world (Mk. 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20). There is no such thing as a "substitute witness." Only one who has personally observed a crime can give testimony ("give witness to") regarding that act; his wife, children, brother, mother, or best friend cannot stand in for him in court and give **his** testimony!
 - d. John 15:26-27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you, from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."
 - e. No one on earth today has seen Christ; no one can give direct testimony of his resurrection from the dead; the only witnesses the Lord authorized were his hand-picked apostles, who were empowered to give inspired, infallible testimony. Their testimony was all that was needed, for their generation and for all of remaining history. Their testimony has been forevermore preserved in the inspired writings of the New Testament!
 3. He gave the apostles **infallible and complete remembrance** of all that Christ taught them.
 - a. 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."
 - b. John 16:12: "I have yet many things to say unto you, be ye cannot bear them now." Christ did not allow them to trust their natural memory; they might err.
 - c. John 12:16: "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him."
 - d. Because of the newness and strangeness of the information he was presenting to them, and because of the fallible nature of human memory, the Lord could not, and never intended to, reveal every truth to them prior to their being clothed with power by the Holy Spirit. And even then, every particle of truth was not given to them immediately (I Cor. 13:9); furthermore, they did not grasp the full significance of some of the truth they preached on that notable day.
 - 1) Acts 2:39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."
 - 2) 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: (cf. Acts.11:1-18).
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4. He **guided the apostles into all truth.**

- a. John 16:12-13: "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."
- b. 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...."
- c. 1 Corinthians 7:12 is an example of this: "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." Christ had not addressed this situation during his personal ministry; it fell to Paul to reveal this particle of truth. It is not his personal view that he was presenting for he wrote by inspiration: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).
- d. When all truth was revealed, confirmed, and recorded, the finished product was the "perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25). It is called "that which is perfect" in 1 Corinthians 13:10, and is described as "the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God" in Ephesians 4:13. When we read what the inspired apostles and prophets wrote, we learn and understand the truth which was revealed to them by the Spirit (Eph. 3:1-5).
- e. This revelation of all the truth is called "the faith which was once [for all time] revealed unto the saints" (Jude 3).
- f. This revelation is perfect; it is able to make us to be spiritual adults (1 Pet. 2:1-2; Heb. 5:12-14; 2 Pet. 3:18); it 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 goodworks" (2 Tim. 3:16-17); it provides us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). It is able to save our souls (Jas. 1:21) and prepare us to live in eternity with our holy God.
- g. After all the truth had been revealed, there was no need for this power any more. Since all truth was revealed to and through the apostles, there is no other truth yet to be revealed! We can know, therefore, when someone today announces that God spoke to him and gave him a message, that man is wrong! Since God gave all truth to the inspired apostles and prophets during the first century, there remains no new truth for our day. All modern so-called "revelations" such as the *Book of Mormon*, "Pentecostal pronouncements," Oral Roberts' "visions and messages," and other such modern "messages from God" are false doctrines of ignorant or deluded people!
 - 1) "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).
 - 2) "If and man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (1 Pet. 4:11). We are strictly warned against adding to, or taking from, the written word (Rev. 22:18-19; 1 Cor. 4:6, ASV; Gal. 1:6ff; 2 John 9-11).

5. He **showed them things to come** in the future.

- a. John 16:13-14: "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."
- b. Some examples of these future events are found in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, and 2 Timothy 3:1-7.
- c. Is there anyone on earth today who can predict the future? There are many who claim this power, but they are merely guessing, or are able to read the current situation and make prognostications about the probable developments, or who claim after the fact to have predicted some historical event. These are more often wrong than right; if they had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit they could unerringly predict the future. If one is wrong just once, the Bible says that proves he is a false prophet: "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in

thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:20-22).

- d. Predicting future events was one of the powers which resulted from receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. If one has received this power, he will be able to make accurate predictions. If not, why not?
6. He enabled the apostles **to confirm their spoken word with miraculous signs**.
- a. This was the primary purpose of miracles. "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20). "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will" (Heb. 2:3-4).
 - b. Anyone at any time could dream up a religious system, complete with teachings and practices. How could the ignorant and unlearned people of the first century know whether the message of gospel preachers was really from God? It was absolutely essential that those ancient proclaimers have a means of certifying the message they preached; that certification was the ability to perform supernatural acts.
 - c. The record of many of these miracles, together with the many internal and external evidences, show that the Bible is the inspired, authoritative word of God. There is no need for confirmatory miracles today!
 - d. If one has truly received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in our time, he will of necessity be thereby enabled to prove his claim by the performance of miraculous signs. "As goes the affirmation, so must be the demonstration!" If he has it, he must be able to demonstrate it!
7. He enabled the apostles **to impart spiritual, miraculous gifts** to other Christians.
- a. Only the apostles had this capability. After Philip had preached the gospel to the Samaritans and many of them had become Christians, it was necessary that one or more of the apostles to be present before they could receive any of the supernatural gifts; hence, Peter and John were sent down and laid hands on them that some of these gifts might be imparted (Acts 8:12-19). Philip could not impart the spiritual gifts; Simon could not obtain that ability to impart that gift to others (8:18-24).
 - b. Acts 19:6: "And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." The apostle Paul was able to lay hands on the 12 converts at Ephesus and thus impart to them certain of the spiritual gifts.
 - c. It was necessary for Paul to be personally in Rome in order to impart gifts to certain Christians there. "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. 1:11). If this could be imparted by any who had a spiritual gift, why did Paul say he had to be there before it could be imparted to them?
 - d. 2 Timothy 1:6 shows that Timothy received his spiritual gift through the laying on of the apostle Paul's hands. 1 Timothy 4:14 does not teach that the gift was given through the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, but that the prophecy relating to it had been thus given.
 - e. If anyone today has the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he could lay hands on another and confer a spiritual gift to him. If not, why not?
8. He gave the apostles **full inspiration to receive, deliver, confirm, and record God's revelation**.
- a. 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." Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:9-14; Acts 2:1-4, 11, 14-36.
 - b. Others, such as Mark, Luke, James, and Jude received the miraculous ability to do some of these things, but they obtained this supernatural power through having the hands of an apostle laid upon them. Only the apostles of Christ could do this important act.
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9. He **guided the apostles in defending the faith** before rulers and other powerful adversaries.
 - a. Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Luke 21:14-15: "Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."
 - c. Compare Luke 12:11: "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say."
 - d. The Jewish religious leaders were surprised to learn that Peter and John, whom they perceived as "ignorant and unlearned" men, were willing and able to speak so boldly and clearly to them (Acts 4:13).
 - e. Paul was able to speak with boldness and power before Roman governors and kings.
 - f. Again, while other inspired men who were not apostles were able to do similar things (e.g., Stephen in Acts 6 and 7), it was the apostles who possessed the primary power and ability to do this; others on whom they laid hands could receive one or another of the spiritual gifts, enabling them to defend and proclaim the truth.
 - E. All of these things are bound up in the promise of the Comforter.
 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. "Comforter" is from the Greek word "parakletos." Scholars say that we have no single English word that conveys the full meaning of this Greek term. Literally, the word means, "called to one's side, to one's aid; is primarily a verbal adjective, and suggests the capability or adaptability for giving aid. It is used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defence, an advocate; then, generally, one who pleads another's cause, an intercessor, advocate, as in I John 2:1, of the Lord Jesus" (Vine, p.208).
 3. John 14:16 describes the Holy Spirit as **another** Comforter; Christ was the first one they had; the Spirit would be the second. The second would be like the first but distinctive from him.
 4. "Comforter" is found four times in the context (John 14:16; 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). The same Greek word also is found in 1 John 2:1 where it refers to Christ and is translated as "Advocate."
 5. The promise of the Holy Spirit as Comforter was made only to the apostles; the promise was never extended to Christians in general. As Comforter, the Holy Spirit would do for the apostles all those things in the preceding nine points.
 6. The Holy Spirit's work was to reveal all truth to the apostles; and through the apostles by the laying-on of their hands upon certain other saints. He guided them in receiving, proclaiming, confirming, defending, and recording the revelation of the New Testament. When this work of revealing, confirming, proclaiming, defending, and recording the New Testament was completed, the Holy Spirit ended his work as "Comforter." Since then the world has been blessed with the results of his work: the written, inspired, infallible, and eternal word of God.
 - a. 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. 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. 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."
 7. Holy Spirit baptism was intended only for certain selected men, the apostles. No promise of it was ever made to believers in general.
 - a. By seeing what the baptism of the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to do, we can know that it was a special promise to them only.
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- b. Is there anyone on earth today who possesses the same power and authority as the apostles received?
Indeed there is not so much as one!
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The Miraculous Gift of Speaking in Tongues

A. Due to the current confusion over the issue, we need to be informed on the subject.

1. There are many different "brands" of Pentecostal-Holiness groups which claim to be able to speak in tongues.
2. The Neo-Pentecostal movement has crossed denominational lines, and many Protestant and Catholic groups claim to have received this ability.
3. In recent years, a goodly number in the Lord's church have also made this claim. The most noted of this group is Pat Boone. There was even a debate between a former gospel preacher (Benjamin Franklin) and Guy Woods on the issue of whether the miraculous gifts of the first century were intended for our time.
4. The ones claiming the "gift of tongues" today are very aggressive in pressing their claims; they can make some arguments which are transparent only to those who know the truth; they are very prideful and look down on anyone who does not claim to have received it.
5. Our aim is to study the subject as presented in the Bible; our honest intention is to learn what God has said about the subject; we do not intend to read into the text what any man teaches, but to study to see what the Bible contains. To do any less than this is to be dishonest! And to teach or practice error will condemn the soul.
 - a. Galatians 1:8: "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."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 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."

B. The phenomenon of tongue-speaking is strictly a New Testament practice.

1. It was unknown during the Old Testament dispensations (ages). The closest thing to it in the Old Testament was the occasion when God caused Balaam's donkey to speak with man's voice. It was an intelligent statement, spoken in an understandable language, and addressed a definite need. Numbers 22:22-35. Balaam was attempting to vilify God's people, thus the exchange was required.
 2. There was no need for the gift of tongues from Adam until the tower of Babel: everyone spoke the same language. When Noah tried to get the people of his generation to repent and amend their ways he could address them in their native language since only one language was current.
 3. From the time of the tower of Babel to the giving of the Law of Moses there was no need for the miraculous tongue-speaking ability. God dealt with man through the head of the family, and the family all spoke the same language. There was no written word from God during this time and no commandment had been given about spreading God's word to all mankind. God did that as he spoke with the various patriarchs; and those who were perverse were left alone.
 4. There was no need for the miraculous tongue-speaking ability during the Mosaic Age. God gave a written law to Israel but he did not compel them to spread this word among the Gentile nations. His people were to live in complete obedience to God's will, and thus by the influence of their godly lives and by virtue of the obvious blessings and protection God would give them, other people would be drawn to Israel's God.
 5. There was no need for this miraculous tongue-speaking during the Lord's personal ministry for he came only to the Jews, a people who spoke the language Jesus spoke.
 6. There was no need for miraculous tongue-speaking when the disciples carried out the limited com-
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mission. They were commanded to go only to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," the Jews in Palestine, who all spoke the same language. "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7).

7. But when the gospel was given, God had ordained that its message was to be carried to every person in every nation. By this time there were thousands of languages and dialects being spoken among the human family. There was no time for the Lord's first followers to learn these many languages so as to be able to properly instruct them in the will of Christ. Therefore, in his wisdom and by his power, God supplied each of the apostles and many of their converts with the ability to preach the gospel in the various languages of the day.

C. The truth of this conclusion is very obvious when the New Testament is consulted.

1. The prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 began to be fulfilled on the Pentecost day of Acts 2. Acts 2:16-17 shows that God intended to give miraculous gifts to "all flesh." This excluded all animals, but included Jews and Gentiles: These are the "all flesh" of the context. Miraculous gifts were given to some of the Jews (the 12 apostles) on Pentecost day; gifts were given to Gentiles beginning in Acts 10. These were the only two classes of people on earth, according to Old Testament arrangement. Women were included in the reception of miraculous gifts: "And the next *day* we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts 21:8-9).
 - a. Only the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but those on whom they laid hands could receive one of the nine spiritual gifts identified in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. It was only by this means that they could receive them.
 - 1) Acts 8:14-18: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money."
 - 2) Acts 19:6: "And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."
 - 3) Romans 1:11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 1:6: "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."
 - b. Nearly always there have been counterfeit miracles present. Paul calls them "lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). The Witch of Endor claimed to do such things (1 Sam. 28). Before his conversion, Simon the Sorcerer used sorcery to bewitch the people, causing them to think that he was the "great power of God" (Acts 8:9-10). There is a great deal of the same kind of hocus-pocus being passed off on ignorant and unsuspecting people today, but these are lying wonders; and the so-called tongues held up as proof of Holy Spirit baptism and as evidence God is with the advocates are nothing more than counterfeit miracles! This we shall demonstrate.
2. Mark 16:14-20: "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. 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. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."

- a. Five signs were given to enable them to successfully preach and confirm the spoken word. The gift of tongues served two functions: it gave the ability to communicate the gospel to others who were of a different language, and the fact that they could speak that foreign language without having learned it by the usual means would of itself be a sign to those who were thereby instructed.
 - b. The primary promise of these miraculous gifts was given to the apostles; but it later is shown that the apostles were able to lay hands on their converts and confer one or another of these gifts to them. Thus, we read of Philip performing certain miracles in Samaria after having the apostles lay hands on him (Acts 6:5-8; 8:5-13). But Philip was unable to confer the gifts to anyone else.
 - c. If one claims to have the ability to speak in tongues, consistency demands that also either he, or others of his tribe, be able to drink deadly poison or take up deadly snakes without any harm to himself, to cast out demons, and heal the sick of any kind and without a failure. But in virtually every instance the only thing they claim is the ability to "speak with tongues!" Mind you, what they have in mind by speaking in tongues is a kind of gibberish and jabber, meaningless sounds which they assert is an "ecstatic utterance" or "language of angels." In some cases they even claim to have those who can "interpret" their sounds. But when they send out "missionaries" to a foreign nationality, those who are sent will have to study to learn that unknown tongue just as everyone else must do!
3. Acts 2:1-13: "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. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine."
- a. The pronoun "they" of verse 1 has as its antecedent the noun "apostles" of chapter 1:26. Therefore, only the apostles were included in the miraculous gifts of 2:1-4. This is further shown by the fact that only men of Galilee were speaking with the tongues (verse 7), and all the apostles were Galileans. (cf. Acts 1:11). The ones speaking in the tongues were *men* (Acts 2:13); therefore, none of the women of 1:14 received the baptism of the Holy Spirit! Only men received it; only men of Galilee received it: only the apostles received it; the 120 did not receive it. Acts 2:14 reports that Peter stood up with the *eleven* (not with the 120; not with the multitude).
 - b. They were speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (vs. 4). The source of the tongues and the intelligent message spoken thereby was the Holy Spirit.
 - c. The tongues are called "languages" (vs. 6); each group having a different language heard the apostles speak in their own tongue "wherein we were born" (vs. 8). The apostles spoke to these people in the native languages of the people present.
 - d. There were as many as thirteen or fourteen different languages, although the same language may have been shared by one or more groups. It is likely that only twelve separate languages were being spoken, one by each of the twelve apostles.
 - e. The sounds that were being uttered were intelligent and intelligible words which expressed an important and understandable message. Those in the great audience heard the apostles as they spake concerning "the wonderful works of God" (vs. 11). If they had not understood the apostles' speech they could not have known what was being said: they could have thought God's name was being blasphemed! But they fully understood what the apostles were saying for they spoke in the people's
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- languages.
- f. The effect this tongue-speaking phenomenon had on the multitude was predictable: "They were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?" (vs. 12). The two-fold effect of this miraculous tongue-speaking is easily seen: The apostles were able to communicate the information God required, and the use of these foreign languages by the lowly and uneducated men of Galilee proved that they were operating under the supernatural power of God!
 - g. Furthermore, since the Spirit provided the ability and the words, their message was inspired, infallible, and authoritative—the word of God!
4. But someone might object: "The tongues of Acts 2 are languages; but we are speaking of the tongues of 1 Corinthians 12-14." However, the same Greek word (*glossa*) is used in Mark 16:17, Acts 2, and in 1 Corinthians.
 - a. The only times in these passages where a different Greek word is used are in (1) Acts 2:8: "And how hear we every man in our own *tongue* (**dialektos**), wherein we were born?" And (2) in 1 Corinthians 14:21 where a quotation is given from Deuteronomy 28:46-49: "In the law it is written, With men of *other tongues* (*eteroglossois*) and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord." In the former case, a *dialect* (a language) is meant, and in the latter it is still a language that is indicated. In neither case does the Bible have reference to an "ecstatic utterance" or "language of angels."
 - b. The term "unknown tongue" found often in 1 Corinthians does not contain the word *unknown* in the original—the translators added that word for the purpose of giving clarity to the statement; however, many have misconstrued the term to mean a language that is unknown to anyone but God. The languages spoken by the Holy Spirit-powered men were languages that they had never studied; languages which many people ordinarily spoke.
 - 1) The *new* tongues of Mark 16:17 are the *other* tongues of Acts 2:4. The *new* (*kainias*) tongues with which they would speak (Mark 16:17) "denotes new, or that which is unaccustomed or unused, not new in time, recent, but new as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old....These languages, however, were 'new' and 'different,' not in the sense that they had never been heard before, or that they were new to the hearers, for it is plain [from Acts 2:8] that this is not the case; they were new languages to the speakers, different from those in which they were accustomed to speak" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary*, p.109).
 - 2) When God spoke to men and women in the old times, he used the language that they understood. Compare: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). Thus, when he wanted to instruct people or edify the church he inspired men to use languages which could be understood by the recipients of the message given. There is no instruction or edification in the jabbering of modern "tongue-speakings!"
 5. The Great Commission required the saints to carry the gospel into all the world and present it to men of every nation.
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) 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 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) Luke 24:47-49: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. 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."
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- 4) 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."
 - 5) 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."
 - 6) Colossians 1:5-6: "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; 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."
 - 7) 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."
- b. They were able to have the great success they had only because they were able to address the message of the gospel to people in the native language of the various nations they taught. The Lord always provides what is necessary to accomplish the job he assigns his people to do; in this case, he gave them the miraculous ability to communicate the gospel in languages which they did not have the time or the ability to learn through the natural means. Remember that in those days, the average person was illiterate; there were few schools; the average person did not have access to education. And since the need for the gospel was so great and the time was so short, this miraculous aid was required. With the aid God gave them, they were able to accomplish in a few short years, even though they did not have the means of transportation and communication we have, and even without the great advantage of printing we have, or any of our other modern conveniences and inventions, things which we haven't been able to do with all these things. Why?
 - c. We have restored the pure doctrine of the New Testament. The Bible is available in nearly every language. In thousands of congregations around the world there are uncounted thousands of saints who know the truth and who have the ability to help others to learn it.
 - d. What is lacking in our day is willingness to apply the gospel to ourselves. We need the zeal, the love, the dedication, the joy, the sacrificial spirit which characterized our brethren in the first century. They possessed the knowledge of the truth of God's word; they had the zeal and the other spiritual qualities to serve the Lord properly. The Lord gave them the tongues to enable them to do the work. They needed the tongues (and the other spiritual gifts) to be successful. We do not need the miraculous gift of tongues, but we do need the degree of zeal, etc., which were common qualities in the early church.
 - e. We have a major problem on our hands: the problem of an ignorant church! Most of the brotherhood today does not know the Bible as well as the earlier generations knew it. Most do not know why we cannot speak in tongues today; there is a multitude of other significant things about which there is much general ignorance on the part of many of our members.
- D. To show the full story of the tongues of the New Testament, we now examine 1 Corinthians 12-14.
1. 1 Corinthians 12.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 12:1-3: "Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."
 - 1) Verse one shows that it is possible for one to be ignorant about spiritual gifts, and since Paul is writing to dispel that ignorance, the truth on the subject can be known and it is important that it
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- be known. The Corinthians had formerly been led to follow idols, which are dumb and powerless.
- 2) Paul points out that no one who is guided by the Spirit can call Jesus anathema; and that no man could know that he is the Lord except by the revelation of the Spirit.
- b. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."
- 1) In this passage Paul says that there are several different gifts but that each of these came by the Holy Spirit. There are different ministries but there is only one Lord (Jesus Christ) who is the author of each of these. The gifts have different operations, but there is only one God who gives power to each.
 - 2) He states in verse 7 that the design of the gifts is for the purpose of profiting the whole. Individual Christians received different spiritual gifts, but the aim of these was for the mutual profit of the whole church.
 - 3) The exercise of the gifts would convince the unbeliever that the speaker was presenting the truth; and the use of these gifts in the church was for the purpose of instructing and edifying the members
 - a) 1 Corinthians 14:12: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."
 - b) 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."
 - c) Ephesians 4:8-12: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."
 - 4) Just because one had a spiritual gift did not mean his eternal salvation was certain.
 - a) Paul had to exercise strict, personal control over his body: "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" (1 Cor. 9:27).
 - b) Peter fell victim to sin, even though he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Gal. 2:11-14).
- c. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." The same Spirit gave the different gifts; no one person (except the apostles) received all nine of these gifts (one gift was given one, and to another person a different gift was provided). They were dispensed according to the will of heaven (12:11; Heb. 2:3-4).
- 1) Wisdom—the wisdom of God which he chose to reveal (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15-16). This would likely include the insight the first inspired elders would need in conducting their work since they did not

- have the written word at the first (cf. Acts 14:23).
- 2) Knowledge—the revealed truth of the gospel. Possessors of this gift would have the inspired information which they would be able to communicate.
 - 3) Faith—this would be miraculous faith, and not the faith as in John 20:30-31 or Romans 10:17. It is the supernatural faith which could move mountains (cf. Acts 3:1-11).
 - a) 1 Corinthians 13:2: “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.”
 - b) Matthew 17:19-20: “Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”
 - c) James 5:15: “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”
 - d) Matthew 14:31: “And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”
 - e) Matthew 21:20-22: “And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree 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.”
 - 4) Healing—miraculous healing (Mk. 16:18; Jas. 5:14-15). There is no record in the New Testament of any case of healing being done by anyone other than Christ and his apostles, but obviously others had this ability, also. Philip worked miracles (Acts 8:6), but we are not told what kind they were; it is possible that some of these were healing miracles.
 - 5) Miracles—all of the gifts are miraculous, but there is some reason that this class is styled as "miracles." Since the other eight were used in instructing, edifying, and exhibiting mercy, it is possible that this gift included casting out demons, raising the dead, and bringing judgments of punishment on certain ones (such as Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5, and Elymas in Acts 13:8ff).
 - 6) Prophecy—the ability to speak by inspiration, revealing God's word; it might have to do with past events, instructions for the present, or predictions of future events.
 - a) Ephesians 4:1-5: “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 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) Acts 11:27-30: “And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.”
 - c) Acts 13:11: “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.”
 - d) Acts 21:9-11: “And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle,
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and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.”

- 7) Discerning of spirits—this was the ability to test teachers and preachers to determine whether they were true or false (1 John 4:1-3; 2:26-27). Peter could know that Ananias and Sapphira were lying, by this or another of the gifts.
 - a) 1 John 4:1-3: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”
 - b) 1 John 2:26-27: “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”
- 8) Tongues—the ability to speak in a language which the recipient had not learned in the ordinary ways.
- 9) Interpretation of tongues—the ability to interpret the speech given in a language which was not understood by all present. There would be no profit without an understanding of the message.
- d. 1 Corinthians 12:28-31: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."
 - 1) In this passage, the apostle states that God had placed in the church the various works (or offices) in the order of their importance. The apostles' function is listed first, after which the prophets and teachers are next named. Following these three greatest works are the gift of miracles, the gift of healings, helps (which likely included discerning of spirits, faith), governments, and lastly the diversities of tongues. Church membership is not the subject.
 - 2) Not everyone was selected to be an apostle; not everyone was a prophet; not all had the gift of miracles; neither did all have the ability to heal. All of the questions given are rhetorical, meaning that the answer is so obviously "no" that they do not need to be answered. Pentecostals demand: "God set these in the church; who took them out?" We reply, "The same God who put them in, took them out." "But they retort, "The same apostles are our apostles today." We reply, "And the ones who spoke in tongues then are our tongue-speakers today."
 - 3) The last questions are significant to this study: Do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? The answer is "no." But Pentecostalism says that "unless you speak with tongues there is something missing. You haven't received the second work of grace which is produced by Holy Spirit baptism and which is evidenced by speaking in tongues." But only selected saints in the first century received the gift of tongues. It was not intended for everyone!
 - 4) While the gifts were available for the church, Christians were to seek to obtain the best ones, but at the same time Paul says there is something which is more excellent—the exhibition and use of love, illustrated admirably by the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:17-20).
2. 1 Corinthians 13.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 13:1-7: "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. 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." [The essentiality of love is affirmed and illustrated, and its attributes are then delineated].
- b. 1 Corinthians 13:8: "Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away." [This shows that the gifts of prophecy, of tongues, and knowledge would cease].
- 1) Prophecies shall fail: This does not mean that prophetic utterance would not be fulfilled since that would reflect badly on God's power. Rather, it means that the prophetic office, the gift of prophecy (to teach, predict, etc., by the Holy Spirit) would not continue. This gift was a channel of revelation, and had to continue until God had fully revealed the New Testament. It would not be needed after its purpose had been accomplished. If a friend reveals a message to you over the telephone, you do not have to remain at the telephone with the receiver to your ear after the message has been delivered. The phone was merely the means by which the message was delivered; prophecy was the means by which God delivered his message to inspired men. He gave all truth to the apostles during their lifetime.
 - 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 shew you things to come."
 - b) 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."
 - c) Ephesians 3:5: "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."
 - 2) Tongues shall cease: The gift of tongues would not continue. Tongues were languages (Acts 2:1-14). Missionaries have to study foreign languages in order to speak those languages. Now there is ample time for men to prepare themselves to preach the gospel in foreign languages without supernatural aid, but during the first century this miraculous tool was necessary, since there were so many people in Jerusalem speaking different languages (Acts 2), and as the message was spread, other languages had to be used. The schools where these tongues could be naturally learned were not available to the Christians. Time was of the essence if the church was to be firmly established and spread. But the miraculous gift of tongues would not be always necessary.
 - 3) Knowledge would vanish away: This spiritual gift of miraculous knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8) would not always be needed. This is not a reference to common knowledge; he does not say that we would all have blank minds. Not everyone had this gift (note: "to another..."—vs. 8). The time was coming when this and the other gifts would be taken away. There would be ample opportunity for Christians to study the revealed, written word in order to know the will of God without receiving that knowledge directly (miraculously) from God. Verse 10 shows when these would be removed. That time is not in heaven for there supernatural knowledge will be vastly increased. No one today has received knowledge of God's will as Paul received it (Gal. 1:11-12). Those who claim to have this kind of knowledge have to study to learn the Bible, and what they teach is often contradictory to what the Bible says.
 - 4) What Paul writes in regards to these three gifts of necessity applies also to all of the other gifts as well. They all would cease to be practiced. It was unnecessary for Paul to go through the entire list of nine gifts, one by one, and say the same thing about each. Where is the proof that the other six gifts are still being received? What need would they serve? No new truth could be revealed (Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19; Jude 3). Any new "revelation" could be set under one of three headings: (1) already in the Bible, (2) another "gospel" (Gal. 1:6-8), or (3) discerned by human reason.
- c. 1 Corinthians 13:9: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part."
- 1) The gifts represent imperfection. The Christians having them had to depend on each other—one

- person did not have all the revelation. God's will was made known through inspired men *as the need arose*, part by part. It was only after the entirety of the New Testament had been revealed that anyone had unlimited access to the will of Christ.
- 2) That which is in part (vs. 9) is placed in contrast with that which is perfect (vs. 10). Thus, the gifts represent a time and condition of imperfection, and the time when the gifts were no longer needed represents a time and condition of perfection (completeness, maturity, full strength).
- d. 1 Corinthians 13:10: "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."
- 1) Prophecies, tongues and knowledge would fail, cease, vanish away; that which is in part will be done away; that which is in part and the gifts of prophecies, tongues, and knowledge are identical; thus, these will be done away, ended, caused to cease. But when? When that which is *perfect* is come.
 - 2) That which is perfect is placed in contrast with that which is in part. When we determine what is meant by "that which is in part" we shall have learned the meaning of "that which is perfect."
 - 3) Notice that Paul does not say "when HE WHO is perfect is come," but "when THAT WHICH is perfect is come." Therefore, he does not mean "when Christ has come," since he used the neuter gender pronoun ("that"). Also, the subject being discussed in the context is the use of spiritual gifts; Paul is not discussing Christ at all. A pronoun takes the place of a noun, and for a pronoun to be meaningful and make sense, it must have an antecedent (the noun it replaces). No reference is made to Christ in the context.
 - 4) The reference ("that which is perfect") is not love, since love is already here and was present at Corinth during the same time "that which is in part" was present. That which is in part and that which is perfect would not be present at the same time; the former would give way to the latter. The only antecedent given for the pronoun "that" (in "that which is in part") is in verse 8 (the various spiritual gifts). But love is always present (13:8a; 13:13).
 - 5) The reference ("that which is perfect") is not to heaven for the same reason: the subject of heaven is not even remotely mentioned in the context. To try to justify that assertion requires us to read into the passage a thought which was not included by the Holy Spirit.
 - 6) The word "perfect" contains the clue we need to understand the passage. It is translated from the Greek *teleios* which means "completeness." The phrase in the Greek text is *to teleion* which literally means "the complete thing" (Jackson, *Christian Courier*, Jan., 1982, p.37). The "complete thing" stands in opposition to "that which is in part" (incomplete). At the time Paul wrote this passage, only a part of the revelation of the New Testament had been given; prior to the close of the first century, the New Testament had been fully revealed. This was done during the lifetime of the apostles since the Lord promised they would receive "all truth" (John 16:13). The finished revelation is called "the perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25), and "the perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2). In this completed revelation is found "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3), and everything necessary 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 Tim. 3:16-17). It is called "the faith which was once [*once for all time*] delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Therefore, "that which is perfect" is simply the completed revelation of the New Testament, the New Covenant which God had promised (Jer. 31:31-34).
 - 7) In the context we are studying, Paul shows that the full revelation of God's will was being made known, part by part, through the use of the spiritual gifts. Each of the three gifts which are named in the context (verse 8) were supernatural gifts directly related to the revealing of God's will to man. When one prophesied, or spoke in a tongue, or interpreted a tongue, or exercised the gift of knowledge, he was making known God's will. The other gifts (12:8-10) were primarily to confirm that the message presented was truly from God, and was not the invention of human wisdom.
- e. 1 Corinthians 13:11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a

child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

- 1) When Paul was a child, he spoke with a child's language and vocabulary, he thought as a child thinks, he occupied himself with things which children do. But when he grew to manhood, he ceased to speak an immature language, he stopped thinking as a child thinks, and he laid aside his toys.
 - 2) The statement of this verse is an illustration which contrasts the infancy of the church with the mature state of the church. When it becomes full-grown (received the completed New Testament), it puts away its childhood things (the spiritual gifts).
 - 3) Is the church still a child? The things which were in part belonged to its childhood state. Paul is not talking about the earthly state of the church in contrast to the heavenly state. He is showing those who possessed the spiritual gifts that there is a more excellent way. This more excellent way is the way of love, with faith and hope, which are present on earth. In heaven faith will be lost in sight, and hope in fulfillment. The full-grown state of the church would be when the full revelation had been given and the spiritual gifts had vanished away. As more and more of the truth was revealed, and accepted and applied by the saints, the church grew in knowledge of Christ until the faith was once for all delivered unto the saints in all its perfection (completeness). It was then that they attained unto the unity of the faith, and the need for the spiritual gifts ceased (Eph. 4:12,13).
- f. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."
- 1) Here Paul used another illustration to help us see the truth. The old mirrors were called glasses. They were not very efficient in giving a good reflection; they were often made of polished metal. Hence, the image reflected was only dimly, imperfectly seen. Still having the same two contrasting times and conditions in mind, he says that presently they saw only dimly, but in the latter case they would be able to see face to face. The illustration aptly describes the situation during the miraculous age. But now we have the entire revelation and can study for ourselves and can know all that God wants us to know on a given subject. We can see ourselves as God sees us; we can see the kind of persons God wants us to become.
 - 2) The word "now" refers to the period of childhood (of the previous verse). He says "now I know in part" which corresponds to the statement of verse 9, "we know in part." The time of that which is perfect in verse 10 is the time of verse 12 when Paul says we would no longer know in part but know fully. The context shows conclusively that the reference ("face to face," etc.) is not to heaven. This Greek word [for *know*] is also in the following passages:
 - a) Matthew 7:16: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"
 - b) Luke 1:3-4: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."
 - c) Romans 1:32: "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."
 - d) 1 Timothy 4:3: "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."
 - 3) It is significant that James uses the same illustration in connection with his statement about "the perfect law of liberty." "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" (Jas. 1:21-25).

- g. 1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity."
- 1) Faith, hope, and love will exist until the end of time. Faith will be then lost in sight in heaven; hope will be lost there in fulfillment; but love will continue on into heaven and eternity (although perhaps greatly increased).
 - 2) Neither of these three is miraculous. They each were present during the age of miracles, but would outlast that time of miracles.
3. 1 Corinthians 14.
- a. 1 Corinthians 14:1-5: "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy. For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying."
- 1) Paul returns to the thought he left in 12:31a, having digressed from the main thought to discuss the essentiality of love and its characteristics, and to show that the spiritual gifts were only a temporary part of God's plan. In 12:31 he encouraged the Corinthians to seek the best gifts; in 14:1 he states that the gift of prophecy is the most important of them all. Two reasons are given for this superiority in the next two verses.
 - 2) Unless the hearer understood the language the speaker used or someone having the gift interpreted the message, only God would understand what was being said. He would be speaking great mysteries (presenting great spiritual truths), but there would be no profit to the hearers unless they understood the language used. The word "unknown" is italicized because it was supplied by the translators; it is not in the original text. The tongue is unknown because it was not understood by some who were present (and unknown to the speaker prior to his receiving the gift of tongues); there is a great difference between an unknown tongue and an unknowable tongue!
 - 3) But it is different with prophecy: the thing spoken was understood and would provide edification, exhortation, and comfort. The use of a tongue unlearned by the speaker would benefit others only if they understood the truths being presented.
 - 4) No one was edified if the speaker used a tongue which no one present but himself was able to understand; but the whole church could be edified by the message given through the man having the spiritual gift of prophecy.
 - 5) Paul desired that they all have the gift of tongues. This teaches us that not all of them possessed that gift. But something more important than the gift of tongues was the gift of prophecy, for the reasons already stated and reiterated here. The use of the gift of tongues was beneficial only if the speaker (or someone else) interpreted for those who did not know the language being used. The benefit was had only if edification was the result; the edification (the building up) of the church (and individuals) was brought about by the message given.
 - 6) A modern case for this situation would be (if the spiritual gifts were still in operation) the following: Suppose a group of Christians came together in Miami, comprised of Americans, Cubans, and Haitians, with each group speaking only their native tongue. Suppose further that one, who spoke only German, came into their assembly, and had the miraculous gift of speaking the Spanish tongue. If that Christian delivered a discourse of truth to that congregation in Spanish, only the Cubans would be edified; the others would understand nothing and get no benefit from his speech. But suppose that he (or someone else present) was able to translate the message into the languages of the Americans and Haitians. All would thus be edified for they would understand. The apostle's point is that the one having the gift of a tongue which was not understood was to keep quiet unless his message was interpreted.
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- b. 1 Corinthians 14:6-9: "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."
- 1) Paul states here that if he spoke to them with tongues they could not understand he would bring them no profit. Only if he spoke by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by doctrine could they be benefited. If he did not teach them something he did them no good! How much profit is done when some ignorant, misguided person stands before an audience and spouts off an excited stream of gibberish and jabber? How much less when a large number of the audience begins to shout more gibberish and jabber!
 - 2) The Corinthians would not even have been Christians had Paul spoken the gospel to them in a language unknown to them. The basic reason for these gifts was to make known God's will (not necessarily for the first time). The four terms Paul named (revelation, knowledge, prophesying, and doctrine) all denote the process of making known God's will to people.
 - 3) Even instruments which produce sounds must give a distinctive sound or else they are of no profit. Lifeless instruments must speak in the language of music to be of use in affecting the feelings and passions of those who hear them; they must give a distinction in sounds. They must be subject to the laws of tone and rhythm, to the interval of scale and measure (Lipscomb, p.206). When used to signal the attack, retreat, etc., the sound must be plain and understandable in order for the command to be followed. This example is given to illustrate the apostle's point about using the gift of tongues.
 - 4) Verse nine is Paul's application of the illustration given in the previous two verses. It is an extremely important verse for it discredits modern "tongue-speaking!" He emphasizes the worthlessness of tongues that are not understood; no one is edified. Modern Pentecostal groups make mockery of God's word. They use their so-called "tongue-speaking" to stir up emotion, knowing that a man can be led anywhere once they have control of his feelings. They teach and practice a multitude of false doctrines, and their claims to speak in tongues is of itself a false doctrine! The Corinthians had the real gift of tongues, and could use them as they chose (vs. 32), but they chose to use their gifts for the wrong purpose (verses 26, 33, 40). When they used the gift to speak what could not be understood by the audience, they were merely speaking into the air! Only their own selfish ego would be gratified.
- c. 1 Corinthians 14:10-11: "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall be* a barbarian unto me."
- 1) There are many different kinds of voices (*phōnōn*) in the world, and each of these has significance. This Greek word (voice) is also used in the following verses:
 - a) Matthew 24:31: "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."
 - b) John 3:8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."
 - c) Acts 2:6: "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language."
 - d) Revelation 1:15: "And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."
 - e) Revelation 9:9: "And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle."
 - f) Revelation 18:22: "And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters,
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- shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee."
- 2) Paul's illustration here shows that to speak in a tongue is to speak a sensible language. To speak in a voice that is not understood is to make a profitless sound (vs. 11). If one does not know the language the speaker is using, the hearer and speaker are as foreigners to each other. The problem is not in the language but in the hearer's inability to understand it. All the languages in the world are for a practical purpose, and none is for the sake of mere display. So should it be for those in the church who had the gift of tongues.
- d. 1 Corinthians 14:12: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."
 - 1) The purpose of spiritual gifts, for the church, was that it might receive edification. The tongue-speaker should have this as his chief aim.
 - 2) Paul is showing them that they should be primarily concerned about building up the church, and therefore they should have no desire at all about being praised for their ability to exercise this gift of tongues. The object was not the exaltation of the speaker but the edification of the church.
 - e. 1 Corinthians 14:13-19: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue."
 - 1) In view of the foregoing information, they were to pray for the ability to interpret, knowing that the message was the important matter, not the manner in which the message was presented. The tongues could deliver soul-saving, faith-building, and church-edifying truths—but it was the message that gave the profit, not the mechanical method of its delivery! But to do any good, it must be understood. Thus, the one who had the gift of speaking in a language he had not naturally learned should pray that he might also be able to interpret the meaning of the information he gave, to those who did not understand the language he used. The means by which any of them could also obtain the gift of interpretation was in the same way any of the gifts were distributed: through the laying on of the hands of an apostle.
 - a) Acts 8:15-18: "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money."
 - b) Acts 19:6: "And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."
 - c) Romans 1:11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."
 - d) 2 Timothy 1:6: "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."
 - 2) If Paul (or anyone else) should pray in a tongue which he did not understand, he would not be profited by his own prayer since he did not comprehend what he said.
 - 3) Therefore, he was determined to pray and sing in such a way that he could be profited thereby—using words which he could comprehend, and he would put his spirit (heart) into it (he would be sincere in praying and singing). For us to be profited by our worship, we must

- participate in it sincerely, with meaning, and understand what we are praying and singing.
- 4) He broadens the scope of his statement in verses sixteen and seventeen to include others who are present. If one who does not understand your speech is in the audience, he cannot say "amen" to your prayers. And when you offer a wonderful prayer, it profits him not one whit unless he can understand what you have said. "To bless" means to "give thanks" (Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:19). One approves a prayer and makes it his own by saying "amen" (either silently or audibly). But one cannot give assent to what he does not understand; it does not matter how well-worded the prayer was, it is profitless to you if it is not understood.
 - 5) With no boast intended, Paul affirms that he was able to speak in more languages than all the Corinthians. But he had rather speak five words which he could understand than ten thousand words which he did not understand.
- f. 1 Corinthians 14:20-25: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. 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. If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth."
- 1) The Corinthians had been acting like children, somehow. Paul orders them to grow up. In malice they were to be as children, who do not hold grudges. But in their understanding, he admonishes them to be mature. Obviously, they had been misusing their gift of tongues; since they were prone to being puffed up with pride in some other things (4:6, 19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4), it is likely that they also gloried in their ability to speak with tongues. This is probably the reason Paul stated that prophesying was greater than tongue-speaking (vs. 5). Speaking in tongues would be a more "showy" gift than prophesying, for the latter merely gave forth the word of God (which is not highly esteemed by worldly-minded people), but speaking in tongues shows forth a special ability.
 - 2) The quotation of verse twenty-one is from Isaiah 28:11-12 (cf. Deut. 28:46-49). Isaiah was telling the drunken priests who mocked him that God would speak to them in a very different way: by the Assyrians, who spoke a language the Jews did not understand. Since the Jews refused to heed what the prophets spoke to them of God's will, God said punishment would be brought on them by those who spoke a tongue they did not know (strange tongues, lips of strangers). Being spoken to by this strange tongue was a mark of God's displeasure and punishment. From this quotation Paul was seeking to show them that it was not a mark of divine favor for them to have teachers whose language they could not understand. They were turning a blessing (the gift of tongues which was intended to edify them) into a curse (by misusing the gift they were not incurring God's favor or accruing any profit to themselves; when properly used, the gift of tongues was a blessing: it could teach, bring about a better understanding of God's will, and thus edify them); but to use it as a mere display was to misuse the gift and to invite God's displeasure.
 - 3) The use of the gift of tongues (cf. Acts 2:1ff) was a sign to the unbeliever that the speaker spoke by the power of God. While the use of tongues could instruct the believer, it showed the unbeliever that God was with the one exercising this gift. This was the only conclusion he could reach, since it is thus implied that he knew that the speaker had not learned the tongue through any natural means. When the unbeliever heard someone speak by prophecy, discussing such things as the Christian Graces (2 Pet. 1:5-7), he might not be much impressed. He would see no reason to hear and heed the information thus presented. But if he saw and heard one speak the unbeliever's native language, a tongue the speaker had not learned naturally, the unbeliever would have great
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- reason to be impressed. Thus, tongues were a sign to one group, and prophesying was profitable for the other.
- 4) In the church's assembly, when they all had come together, and an unbeliever was present, he would think that you were all mad if all of you were speaking in languages which few, if any, present understood. The assembly would be mass confusion; he could make no sense of it. The argument here is one growing out of common sense. Simple logic would therefore show that they ought to speak so as to be understood, and be orderly in conducting the worship services. Here, as in 11:20, a gathering is called for in which the whole congregation is to come together in one place. When a congregation divides the worship assembly into two or more groups (i.e., "Children Worship," "Junior Church," "Children's Bible Hour"), a violation of God's word takes place! Not only do they reject the example of having the whole church gather together in one place, they usually have women teaching and praying in the presence of men, a plain repudiation of 14:34 and I Timothy 2:8-15.
- a) 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."
- b) 1 Timothy 2:8-15: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."
- 5) 1 Corinthians 15:24-25: "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."
- a) If prophesying is exercised, the unbelievers present in the assembly could be taught what they needed to know, and those convicted could be led to become Christians. The "unlearned" man is one who does not know the truth. Thus, through the setting forth of the truth by the prophets, with the message properly confirmed by the appropriate signs, he could be taught his true condition and brought to salvation. Preaching lays bare the sinner's heart, seldom a painless experience.
- Acts 2:36-37: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?"
 - Acts 24:25: "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."
 - 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."
 - James 1:23-24: "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."
- b) This passage does not clash with verse twenty-two. The difference is the subject being taught. "There (vs. 22) the apostle is speaking of a sign to attract the attention of the unbeliever; here
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his attention is already attracted. He has come to the assembly of the church, and is listening to the words spoken there in the name of Jesus Christ. And as faith comes by hearing, there will be no need of signs to induce him to become a believer" (Lipscomb).

- c) Gibberish and jabbering have no instructional power; they have no ability to strip away a sinner's shell and lay his heart bare; there is no strength in such foolishness to convict and convert anyone, but a plain, straight-forward presentation of the word of God can do this! "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" (Jas. 1:18,21).
- g. 1 Corinthians 14:26-33: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."
- 1) Paul gives some inspired counsel regulating their conduct in worship. He begins this section by rebuking them for the confusion they had caused in these assemblies by the misuse of their tongue-speaking gifts. Everyone has a psalm, a tongue, a revelation, an interpretation. They were all trying to exercise these things at the same time (vs. 27). The result was confusion, with little or no edifying being accomplished. The visitors would go away thinking they were mad (vs. 23). Little that was good and much that was evil was being accomplished. This absurd condition must be changed for the good of precious souls! "For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (14:33).
 - 2) If there are those who have the gift of tongues, and they wish to speak, these are to be limited to two or three; and even then, they are to take turns ("by course"). This would eliminate the confusion and disorder that existed. This command repudiates the usual Pentecostal pattern which thrives on disorder and hysteria. These tongues are to be interpreted for those who do not know the languages being used. If no interpreter is present, then the tongue-speaker is to keep silence. He can worship privately, to himself. If a Frenchman comes into our assembly, and understands no English, he can do the best he can by worshipping privately, communing with God in his own heart, as the services progress. The tune of some of the songs will bring to his mind at least part of the words; he can follow along in his own language. He can likely make out some of the biblical references, and thus follow as much of that as he can in his Bible. And certainly he can eat the Lord's Supper with as much meaning as anyone present, and give of his means as we do. While we pray together, he can silently offer his own prayer to the God of heaven! In this same way, the man of this passage could "speak to himself and to God."
 - 3) The prophets who are minded to present some message from God are to be limited to two or three. If all the prophets spoke at once, or if too many of them tried to participate, confusion would reign. More than three was forbidden at one service; and following the pattern of verse 31, they were to take turns, with the other inspired men judging (discerning—12:10; 1 John 4:1; 2:26-27) whether the thing spoken was so. The service was to be edifying to the church; to accomplish this end, truth was to be presented; and for it be effective, the proceedings must be orderly and free of confusion.
 - 4) If a message is suddenly given by God to a prophet waiting his turn, the first is to hold his peace while this prophet delivers the message. Confusion is to be avoided. Speaking the truth, which was being "checked" by the other prophets, would provide learning and comfort to the hearers. It is imperative that the truth be delivered, otherwise there is no profit to the hearers and God is not

- glorified. What, then, about all those preachers who speak about everything except God's word when they address worship audiences?
- 5) The statement in verse 31 shows that those who were endowed with the spiritual gifts had control over their use. The plain statement here, plus the whole tenor of the passage, shows that they could determine when or if the gift was to be exercised. The influence was not such as to destroy self-control. If they could not restrain themselves then God was the author of confusion. The one speaking could stop when he pleased; the other could wait until the proper time. By following the instructions given here by Paul, their services would be orderly, confusion would be eliminated, and God would be glorified. God cannot be charged with causing the mass confusion with which their assemblies had been characterized; nor can God be accused of being the author of the confusion and error that prevail in the assemblies of sectarian churches. In all the assemblies of the saints the orderliness Paul outlined here prevails. There is a pattern for worship!
- a) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - b) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
 - c) 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."
 - d) 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."
 - e) 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."
 - f) 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."
- h. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."
- 1) He is not speaking of physical buildings. When assembled, all together, in one group (vs. 23), this prohibition was to be enforced. No instruction in the New Testament is more positive and clear and universal. However plausible may be the reasons which men may offer for disregarding this injunction, and for allowing women to take an active part in conducting public worship, the authority of God still forbids it. Keep silence; not permitted to speak—this is what God has said! This was also taught in the Old Testament law (Gen. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:5-6). It is further taught with
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- greater detail in 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Women are not permitted to usurp the authority God gave to men. This forbids them to present a public discourse or to offer a public prayer, in the presence of men. Women have no right to speak in the assembly and interrupt the proceedings with questions or comments. It is not their role in life to take an active part in the services. If she has a question about something, she is to ask her husband at home (or someone else privately). This was not merely dealing with a local situation in Corinth for the letter was also addressed to "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1:2).
- 2) It is shameful for women to speak in the assembly. Shame or shameful: "of that which is opposed to modesty or purity, is translated as a noun in 1 Cor. 11:6; 14:35, A.V. (R.V. 'shameful'); Eph. 5:12; in Tit. 1:11, 'filthy (lucre)', lit. 'shameful (gain)'" [Vine, p.16].
 - 3) Women had spiritual gifts (Acts 2:17; 21:8-9); they are told to teach younger women (Tit. 2:3-5); their spiritual gifts could be used in that setting and privately. Women are forbidden to give a "teaching discourse" (1 Tim. 2:12), but this does not prohibit them from making a comment or asking a question in a Bible class situation since it is not a case where "the whole church has come together."
- i. 1 Corinthians 14:36-40: "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."
- 1) They had been in violation of the foregoing principles. They had acted as if the word of God had originated with them or was meant only for them. It was not given initially at Corinth and then spread from there, but went forth from the Jewish city of Jerusalem and was brought by Paul to the Corinthians several years later. Apparently their pride caused them to think they were the only, or most important, congregation.
 - 2) He lays down the rule by which all claims to prophetic or spiritual powers were to be tested. Some in Corinth claimed to be inspired. If they denied what Paul said, they were opposing the Lord because Paul wrote by the inspiration of God. If they were truly inspired they would not contradict what Paul wrote. Anyone with spiritual gifts could know the things Paul wrote were inspired; and no one speaking by spiritual gift could deny what Paul said. The principle stated here is true of all his books. And the Spirit would not reveal one thing to one and a contradictory thing to someone else. "To accept and obey the commandments of God as revealed in the Scriptures is the rule for all at this day by which to test their claims to spirituality" (Lipscomb).
 - 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) Acts 17:11-12: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."
 - c) Ephesians 3:2-5: "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."
 - 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."
 - 3) There are those who willfully are ignorant. These cannot be helped for they have rejected God's truth. Jesus warned against casting pearls before swine; they would only turn on you and attack
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(Matt. 7:6). "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hos. 4:17).

- a) "But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:13-14).
 - b) "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. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Matt. 13:15-16).
- 4) Paul sets forth the superiority of prophecy. While the gifts were being given and exercised, they were to be sought and used. Prophecy was greater than tongues, but both had their proper function.
 - 5) They had abused spiritual gifts. They needed to be orderly and decent in the worship; it should be offered with the proper motives, not haphazardly. This verse summarizes all that he has said. The principle still applies.

E. How may we account for the modern phenomenon known as "tongue-speaking?"

1. The following paragraph is from Jimmy Jividen, who has written a book on the subject of tongue speaking. The quotation given here is from an article which appeared in *The Spiritual Sword*, October, 1972, p.23: "Tongue speaking is the contemporary psychological phenomenon of ecstatic utterances which is interpreted by its advocates as being a miraculous gift from God. It is common in all world religions, both ancient and modern. It is found in pagan religions, spiritualism and throughout the broad spectrum of Catholicism and Protestantism. Oftentimes it is found completely outside the religious context. One can learn so-called 'tongue speaking' through practice. It may also be induced through hypnotic suggestion. There is nothing divine or miraculous about it. It is purely a human phenomenon. There is nothing wrong with the phenomenon itself. It is the interpretation of it being a gift from God that is erroneous. The present phenomenon of so-called 'tongue speaking', like drugs, hypnosis and shock treatments, perhaps could be used under controlled situations by professionals to release anxiety and overcome inhibitions. It becomes error, however, when it is interpreted as being a special gift from God."
2. The following information is taken from an article written by Eugene Clevenger, *The Spiritual Sword*, April, 1974, pp.27-29: "The claims of modern-day religionists to speak in tongues are without any scriptural basis whatsoever, and they prove absolutely nothing as far as the speaker's relationship with God is concerned. The history of glossolalia furnishes clear and abundant evidence that tongue-speaking has not been confined to worshippers of God and servants of Christ, but pagans, unbelievers, and all kinds of people in religious error have made the same claim and demonstrated it to their own satisfaction.
 - a. "Pagan Tongue Speaking. J. Behm states that in Greek religion ecstatic glossolalia was practiced among the cult of the Thracian Dionysus as well as the Delphic Phrygia, the Bacides, the Sybils, etc. Even the pagan Greeks, to whom Jehovah was the unknown God, could lay claim to speaking in tongues as well as to all that was kin to it—divination, demonic prophecy, the use of unintelligible lists of magical names and letters to invoke and conjure their gods and spirits. E.R. Dodds describes the Apollo oracle at Delphi and the Dionysus mystery cult, and it can be said that the similarities of purpose, manifestation, and result between these pagan mystery cults and today's glossolalia are strikingly obvious. It is all pure gibberish that serves no useful purpose!
 - b. "Non-Religious Tongue-Speaking. George B. Cutten cites two thoroughly investigated cases of tongue-speaking that were not associated with Christianity or any other form of religion. A cursory look at each example is enlightening. The first was that of Mlle. Helene Smith (a pseudonym) who was born in 1864 in Geneva. Her father was a linguist of great ability, speaking six languages, and her mother was "somewhat mediumistic and had visions." At 28 she became acquainted with spiritualists, and soon was the principal medium of a group. She claimed to be under the guidance of a spirit named Leopold. In a trance in February, 1896, she journeyed to the planet Mars and returned speaking a few words of the martian fluently and translating it. A professor of psychology at the University of Geneva, Th. Flournoy, observed and studied the case in depth, and he concluded

the language was a prefabrication ingeniously done by Mlle. Smith. The process seemingly consisted in taking certain French sentences or phrases and replacing each word in them with some other word chosen at random. Thus, it was simply French with the sounds changed.

- c. “Religious Tongue-Speaking. Montanus (c. 156 A.D.) was said to have been caught up by the Holy Spirit and placed in a state of rapture and ecstasy, and began to speak in a strange language. The uneducated St. Hildegard (1098-1179 A.D.) claimed to have seen a fiery light which went through her brain, breast, and heart; she understood and interpreted the Scriptures without having a grammatical knowledge of the Latin language. She also pretended to speak in an unknown tongue, which, upon examination, presents ‘an amusing jumble of words, German, Latin, and misunderstood Hebrew.’ French Huguenots (1685-1700s) claimed to speak in tongues. They claimed supernatural guidance in fleeing from persecution, and predicted an imminent return of Christ to establish an earthly kingdom. The Shakers claimed the ability to speak in tongues. Article 7 of the Mormon Articles of Faith still claims the gift of tongues for Mormons. Neo-Pentecostal adherents in many sectarians bodies claim this ability.”
3. Jividen gives the following information in his book, *Glossolalia*:
 - a. “Glossolalia has long been studied as a psychological phenomenon brought on through severe stress, hypnotism, auto-hypnotism and mental illness. Other causes can be given for the phenomenon, but unresolved spiritual tension must be considered a major contributing factor in a majority of the cases. When a person's life style runs contrary to his ideals, severe personality conflicts are produced. Tensions build up in the subconscious to a great degree of intensity. Sometimes these tensions are released through drugs, sex and violence. The cathartic experience of highly emotional religious excitement such as glossolalia may be used to release the tensions. In both situations tensions are released, but the solution is inadequate and temporary. The problem is a spiritual one and must be resolved through spiritual means dictated in the Scriptures. There must be repentance—genuine and from the heart. There must be confession—open and without excuse. Forgiveness must be sought of God through the means he has set in the Scriptures—whether baptism or prayer. One can not solve spiritual tensions through physical means. One must not seek cheap grace through psychologically induced religious ecstasy. It is easier to get caught up in religious excitement than to repent. It is less humbling to seek and find a new way of divine grace and call the old way inadequate, than it is to admit error before the people one has wronged. No doubt one of the reasons for the popularity of glossolalia is that it promises a way to ‘instant salvation,’ ‘cheap grace,’ and immediate spirituality.’ Spiritual tensions are resolved temporarily without having to do it God's way. The ego is not hurt so much this way. (p.153).
 - b. “A number of recent studies have been made on the speech of glossolalia. Pattison brings a number of these together in his excellent article in the Journal of American Scientific Affiliation. From these studies four things can be shown: (pp.162ff):
 - 1) “The speech is not foreign language. Sounds similar to foreign phrases are sometimes uttered either by accident or from the memory storehouse of the subconscious mind. When the mind is under the influence of some powerful external force, when the unconscious self is roused to activity, when the powers of memory are subjected to an abnormal stimulus, foreign languages, the words of which have fallen on the ears of the subject without any conscious attention on his part, and have again without any consciousness of it on his part been impressed on his memory, may be clearly uttered. The same phenomenon can be observed in subjects under hypnosis or under anesthetic. The subconscious mind is such that it can recall things which the conscious mind has totally forgotten.
 - 2) “The speech is learned and perfected by practice. Many glossolalists like to practice their vocabulary and add new sounds to their speech. Several linguistic studies suggest that glossolalists develop their glossolalic speech from ill-formed structure to ‘practiced’ and ‘polished’ glossolalic speech. Thus the linguistic qualities of the glossolalist depends to some extent on the stage of

- development of glossolalia.
- 3) "It can be imitated in the laboratory without being detected by those accustomed to hearing glossolalia. One does not have to be a glossolalist to produce glossolalic speech. Al Carlson at the University of California recorded the speech of glossolalists during their spiritual exercise. Later he recorded the speech of non-glossolalist volunteers whom he asked to speak spontaneously in an unknown language. Glossolalists were asked to rate the different recordings. They were unable to distinguish them. A similar test was made by Werner Cohn of the University of British Columbia with identical results.
 - 4) "The speech has certain characteristics of children's speech. (p. 162). It has long been observed that glossolalia is similar to the speech of children in many ways. Some have suggested that glossolalia is a 'regression to an early mode of speech in which vocalization is used for purposes other than just the communication of rational thought.' It appears that children utter their gibberish for the sheer joy of uttering sound. True of the glossolalist?
- c. "Glossolalia has specific linguistic structure based on the language tongue of the speaker, that the linguistic organization is limited, and that the capacity to speak in this type of semi-organized language can be replicated under experimental conditions. Thus glossolalia does not appear to be a 'strange language.' but rather the aborted formation of familiar language." (p.164).
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The Holy Spirit and Bible Miracles

A. The study of Bible miracles is essential to our comprehension of God's word.

1. There are notable reasons why this study is deserving of our most discerning attention.
 - a. Miracles have long fascinated most of us. Herod had desired to see Jesus for a long time for "he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him" (Luke 23:8).
 - b. The subject of miracles is a continuing prominent theme in the religious world. A great deal of misunderstanding and error persists in their teachings; many fully believe in the reality of modern-day miracles, and make many assertions.
 - c. The Bible reports many genuine miracles, and gives much information on the subject. Any Bible subject is worthy of our diligent investigation, for nothing is included which is unimportant and nothing is omitted that is essential.
 2. In order to understand the subject, it is vital that we understand what is meant by *miracle*. People often use the term too loosely, describing common occurrences of life as miraculous.
 - a. *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines a miracle as "an event or action that apparently contradicts known scientific laws and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, esp. to an act of God."
 - b. Robert Milligan, a gospel preacher of the previous century, defined a miracle as "an extraordinary manifestation of Divine power, operating either independently of the laws and forces of nature, as in the original creation, or in opposition to them, as in the separation of the waters of the Red Sea, or in harmony with them, as in the Noahic deluge" (*The Scheme of Redemption*, p.263).
 - c. A miracle is above the laws of nature, and above the finite abilities of man, and beyond human comprehension.
 - 1) Is there anyone who can comprehend and describe by scientific process how a dead man was raised back to life? Or how speech was given to a mute?
 - 2) Neither man nor nature can multiply five loaves and two fish to feed a great multitude of people. Neither can give instant sight to a blind man or life to the dead.
 - 3) The creation of the universe and the earth was a miracle.
 - 4) The creation of the first oak tree was a miracle; the creation of the first man (and woman) was a miracle. Following the creation of life on earth, the laws God instilled in nature took over, and all living beings on earth today came into being through these natural laws of propagation. The sprouting of an acorn and its growth into a giant tree is not miraculous; the conception and birth of a human baby is not miraculous (Jesus is the single exception).
 3. A careful reading of the accounts of Bible miracles will help us appreciate the awesome nature of miraculous actions, and will impress on our minds the greatness and majesty of God, and thus strengthen our faith and undergird our hope.
 - a. All kinds of diseases were miraculously cured. Modern medicine cannot even approach such a result.
 - b. The deaf were given the ability to hear; the blind were given sight; the mute received the ability to speak; the lame and the maimed had their limbs restored to full size and strength.
 - c. Individuals who had died were resurrected to life again.
 - d. Storms were calmed; Jesus walked upon the waters of the sea; Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake but suffered no ill effects; bread and fish were supernaturally multiplied; water was directly and instantly changed into wine.
 - e. Demons were expelled from many who were afflicted thereby.
 - f. Future events were accurately foretold.
 - g. The miracles of the Bible are factual and extremely impressive!
 4. Many use the term "miracle" too loosely and wrongly.
 - a. The recovery from some illness is not miraculous. It would be miraculous if the healing was instantaneous, without medicine, doctors, or hospitals.
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- b. A mere coincidence is often called miraculous, but that does not fit the pattern of biblical miracles.
 - c. Nearly avoiding an accident, a funny feeling, something out of the ordinary, something that is not easily explained are often called miraculous, but does not fit the facts.
- B. Various terms are used to describe supernatural works: (2 Cor. 12:12; Acts 2:22 ASV).
- 1. Some are called *wonders*.
 - a. This term accentuates the astonishment felt by the witnesses on seeing a supernatural event. "I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark 2:11-12).
 - b. The purpose of a "wonder" was to startle men out of their indifference and cause them to open their eyes to a spiritual appeal that was being directed to them. "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. 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: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. 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. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them" (Acts 14:8-18).
 - 2. Some are called *signs*.
 - a. Christ worked with the early saints, "confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20). The Jews asked for a sign from the Lord to verify his message to them: "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" (John 2:18).
 - b. As a sign, a miracle was a token of the near presence and working of God.
 - c. They validated the message spoken:
 - 1) Exodus 4:1-9: "And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. And the LORD said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other* flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour *it* upon the dry *land*: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry *land*."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
 - 3. Some were called *mighty works*, or simply *miracles*.
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- a. Matthew 11:20; Acts 2:22; 2 Corinthians 12:12: the same Greek word is translated as "mighty works" and "miracles" and "mighty deeds" in these three passages.
 - 1) Matthew 11:20: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not."
 - 2) Acts 2:22: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
 - b. The emphasis of this term is the power of him who is the source of these works.
 - c. Supernatural works are such demonstrations of heaven's power that the term miracle has come to be the common term by which we describe them.
4. Another common term by which all these supernatural works are described in the scriptures is *spiritual gifts* (Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 12:1). God gave the powers.
- a. All the miraculous powers possessed by members of the church in the first century are classified under this heading. The apostles had at least one ability beyond any other saint: the power to lay hands on another and thus confer a spiritual gift.
 - b. Nine spiritual gifts are identified in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."
- C. It is important in understanding N.T. miracles to see how this power was obtained.
1. Joel 2:28 (and Acts 2:16-18) foretold that the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon both Jew and Gentile ("all flesh"). "And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel. 2:28).
 - a. This great prophecy began to be fulfilled for the Jews on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2. The power came upon the apostles (all Jews from Galilee) directly from heaven when they were overwhelmed (baptized) by the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4; 1:5,8; Luke 24:49). [There is only one baptism today (Eph. 4:5; 5:26; Tit. 3:5), and that is the baptism of the Great Commission, an immersion in water unto the remission of sins for the penitent believer].
 - 1) This was a very special case which, when other pertinent passages are considered, was intended to fully empower the apostles to be infallible witnesses of Christ's resurrection, to enable them to pass on to others the abilities to perform certain miracles, and to be ambassadors of Christ, personally during their lifetimes, and through their recorded word after their death.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 5:20: "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."
 - b) 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) Although the case is not specifically recorded, Paul became an apostle by receiving all the powers the other apostles received. His was a special case, not repeated to anyone else. "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of

those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 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. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:13-19).

- b. The prophecy began to be fulfilled for the Gentiles in Acts 10 when Cornelius and his household received miraculous powers directly from heaven. This was a very special case which, when the context (Acts 10 and 11) is considered, was intended to convince the prejudiced Jews that the Gentiles had as much right to the gospel as did Abraham's children.
2. Acts 8:14-18, Romans 1:11, and Acts 19:1-6 illustrate the fact that the apostles had the ability to confer spiritual gifts upon other saints.
 - a. Acts 8 reports Philip's successful gospel meeting in Samaria. He was an inspired preacher who was also endowed with spiritual gifts. When the Samaritans heard his message and beheld the miracles he wrought, many believed and were baptized. Although he had supernatural powers, he could not endow anyone else with these.
 - b. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard about these new converts, Peter and John were sent down to Samaria to do what Philip could not do. They laid hands on the converts and prayed; in this manner the Holy Spirit came on the believers.
 - c. The very fact that the apostles journeyed to Samaria under the circumstances indicated shows that the miraculous gifts could be imparted to others only through the agency of the apostles.
3. 2 Corinthians 12:12-13 also shows that this conclusion (2c above) is correct. Paul affirmed that the signs of an apostle were performed in the presence of the Corinthians. In other words, there were certain things which only an apostle could do. Paul's aim was to confirm to the Corinthian brethren that he was a genuine apostle, hence he states that the "signs of an apostle" were wrought in their midst.
 - a. In 1 Corinthians 1:7, Paul told these same people that they (the church at Corinth) were equal to any other congregation of the brotherhood in spiritual gifts.
 - b. The fact that they had spiritual gifts proved that the one through whom they received spiritual gifts was a genuine apostle. This could not be so unless it was also true that spiritual gifts could come only through an apostle. Stated as a syllogism, Paul's argument runs like this:
 - 1) Miraculous powers can be given only through an apostle.
 - 2) You received miraculous powers through me.
 - 3) Therefore, I (Paul) am an apostle.
 - c. Many today say that miraculous gifts come through other sources. If their assertions are so, then Paul's argument is invalid.

D. Bible miracles occurred to fulfill certain specific purposes.

1. Jesus performed miracles to prove that he was the Messiah.
 - a. When John the Immerser and his disciples wanted evidence that Jesus was truly the Messiah, Christ pointed to his miracles as sufficient proof: "When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Luke 7:20-23).
 - b. He manifested his glory by his miracles: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (John 2:11).
 - c. Nicodemus knew that the Lord's miracles proved him to be from God: "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2).

2. Miracles also accredited a messenger as bearing God's truth.
 - a. John 2:18: "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?"
 - b. John 6:30: "They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?"
 - c. Romans 15:19: "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."
 - d. 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
 3. Miracles were intended to build faith by verifying the word of the messenger.
 - a. John 2:23: "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did."
 - b. John 20:30-31: "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."
 4. Miracles were given to confirm the word presented by inspired spokesmen.
 - a. Mark 2:1-12. The healing of this man was done to prove to the people that Jesus had power (authority) on earth to forgive sins. The statement made in verse 5 was confirmed to be right by the miracle (verse 10).
 - b. Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." The word spoken by these preachers of the gospel was confirmed by the signs which the Lord provided for that purpose.
 - c. Hebrews 2:2-4: "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*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" The word was confirmed by signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Acts 8:5-6: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did." Philip preached the gospel, and the miracles he wrought confirmed his message was from God.
 - e. Once the word was revealed, spoken, recorded and confirmed as the word of God, it was forever and eternally confirmed as his holy word. Hebrews 2:3 (notice the past tense of the verb: "was confirmed").
 - 1) When a higher court in the land confirms a ruling of a lower court, it is confirmed for all time.
 - 2) Since the word of God has been confirmed, there is no need for further confirmation. To try to improve on that which is perfect is to make it imperfect (Jas. 1:25).
 5. There is a common denominator joining each of the above four points: miracles furnished concrete, reliable, and undeniable proof that the spokesman who wrought the miracle was speaking the truth, and his word could safely be accepted. Thus, the central purpose of miracles was to verify divine truth.
 6. Miracles were essential in order for the gospel to be revealed and delivered.
 - a. The apostles could not appeal to the written New Testament for authority; it had not been revealed. They had supernatural guidance in receiving and communicating the new covenant.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) 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."
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- 3) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 4) 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. We could not preach today without this written revelation; every gospel truth we know came through that record (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Jude 3; Eph. 1:9-10; 3:1ff). No change is permitted to the written record:
 - 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) Revelation 22:18-19: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which 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 from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book." (ASV).
 - c. If miraculous power was still available now, we could not preach one single fact, command, or promise that is not already revealed in the Bible!
- E. There are significant differences between modern "miracles" and real Bible miracles.
1. The purpose of miracles in the first century was not the same as the purpose of the so-called miracles of today.
 - a. The main thing involved today is the "healing" of diseased and sick bodies. The matter of physical healing is so important to them that they emphasize this above the spiritual. And what they say about spiritual truths is usually error.
 - b. The Lord and his apostles never healed merely for the purpose of healing the body! The healing was for the purpose of confirming truth.
 - 1) Mark 2:11-12: "I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."
 - 2) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - c. If miracles were primarily for the relief of suffering, why did not Paul heal Timothy's stomach problem? (1 Tim. 5:23). Why did he leave Trophimus at Miletum sick? (2 Tim. 4:20). Simply because their healing would not have aided the gospel message; there was no need to confirm the word or prove their credentials.
 - d. Peter was miraculously released from prison (Acts 12:3-11; cf. Acts 5:17-21). This was not primarily for Peter's benefit, but for the gospel's progress. He had much work yet to do.
 - e. Why did God not work miraculously to protect the early Christians from hardship and suffering? It was for their good (Heb. 12:6-12; 2 Cor. 12:1-9; 11:23-27; James 1:2-4).
 2. Genuine Bible miracles were never for show or display.
 - a. In the uninspired pseudopigrapha writings there are accounts of "miracles" that are totally unlike genuine miracles. One has young Jesus retaliating against another child who accidentally bumped into him: "As thou has made me fall, so shalt thou fall and not rise." The child fell down dead. Another has young Jesus playing with other children, making birds and animals of clay. Jesus is said to have made his birds and animals come to life. (Trench, p.46). These absurd and fictitious stories have nothing in common with real miracles. There is nothing constructive about such "miracles," and anyway, his first miracle was at Cana of Galilee when he was grown (John 2:11).
 - b. The "miracles" of today are showy displays conducted in a carnival-like setting in a super-charged emotional atmosphere. Financial gain is the most prominent feature, with many pleas for money, and the hawking of books and other wares.
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- 1) When Moses engaged in a contest with Pharaoh's magicians and won, God's name was magnified (Exod. 7:18—12:36). When Elijah put to shame and silence the false prophets at Mount Carmel, the Lord's cause was greatly benefitted: 1 Kings 18:17-40.
 - 2) Oral Roberts was challenged by a Moslem in Kenya to divide a number of cripples between them and see who could heal his half faster. The winner's religion would be declared the true religion. But Roberts declined, saying that he did not engage in side shows. What an opportunity to prove himself, and to lead a vast number of Moslems out of ignorance! He declined because he knew his trickery would thus be exposed! (*Pat Boone and the Gift of Tongues*, p.293).
 - 3) Some students at a "Christian College" once claimed to have raised a dead cat from the dead. Even if they did, what possible good could this have accomplished? What purpose would it serve except to put on a show?
 - 4) Real miracle workers of the first century never wrought miracles for show! Jesus refused to do so (Luke 23:8-9). Can you imagine Christ going about the country with a circus tent, with a big healing show? Can you imagine the apostles requiring the applicants to be healed to first attend a "faith-building" service prior to being healed?
3. In genuine miracles, there was no delay, or healing on the installment plan. See Matthew 8:5-13; 8:14-15; Acts 3:1-11. The centurion's servant was healed the "self-same hour." Peter's mother-in-law was healed instantly and began waiting on her guests. The lame man's feet and ankle bones immediately received strength so that he leaped up, stood, walked, and leaped. Cf. Mark 2:11-12. There was not even a short period of convalescence!
- a. Modern-day examples are often long, drawn-out affairs.
 - b. They often try to explain their delays by referring to the case in Mark 8:22-26 where a blind man was given his sight in two stages.
 - 1) This is the only such incident of this nature; all the other cases were instantaneous.
 - 2) This example only proves that the Lord could heal by degrees or instantly by one word or action. Will the pretenders give us a clear example from both methods?
 - 3) There were only two steps in this healing, and each was instantly accomplished. There was no waiting hours or days, but in a matter of a moment, the blind man's sight was fully restored.
4. Reports of Bible miracles seldom include any reference to faith on the part of the individual being healed. In the 33 cases of physical restorations or healings (including raising the dead), only 7 cases were said to have been healed on account of personal faith. In 26 cases, no personal faith is indicated.
- a. Modern "healings" are made dependent on the degree of faith possessed by the one to be healed. Any obvious failure to heal can then be charged to a lack of faith on the part of the "patient." This writer once knew a man who had been deaf since he was about four years of age; he was told by Roberts that he could not be healed due to his lack of faith.
 - b. But even some of these "healers" contradict this rule. Aimee McPherson once claimed that John Wesley healed a crippled horse. How much faith did the horse have? Jimmy Swaggart claims that in his poorer days he had an old Plymouth car; one day when it would not start, he prayed for the car. It started! When he sold it later, a mechanic told him that he had never seen a car of that vintage run so well! How much faith did the car have? Did he ever have to get it serviced? Why did he sell it? (Wayne Jackson, "Christian Courier").
 - c. Many in the Bible were healed without any faith on their part.
 - 1) The lame man in Acts 3 was healed by the apostles' faith.
 - 2) The palsied man of Mark 2:5 was healed on the faith of his friends.
 - 3) How much faith did Lazarus have? (John 11). How much faith did the dead son of the widow of Nain have? (Luke 7:11-15).
 - 4) Only once in 31 cases of healing did the Lord require faith (Matt. 9:28). In other cases faith was present and commended, but not commanded. (Jackson, *ibid.*).
5. The greatest distinction between the "miracles" of modern times and the genuine miracles of the Bible
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is there are no successes today and no failures then. Matthew 7:14-21 tells of a case where the disciples could not heal a certain case; the Lord said that "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Thus, the failure was due to the ignorance of the disciples. The Lord promptly cast out the demon afflicting the young man.

F. Bible miracles were genuine.

1. Jesus found no diseased or afflicted body that he could not heal (Matt.4:23-25; 8:16; cf. Acts 5:16).
 - a. Those claiming miraculous healing powers today often fail (in fact, they never have a success), but the blame is almost always placed on the patient's lack of faith.
 - b. A backstage operation takes place before Oral Roberts goes on stage. Those who want to be healed assemble backstage to attend a "faith-building service." The ones to be healed are issued cards, each of which contains a number, and the ailment the victim thinks he has. No one without a card is admitted into the "healing line." (V.E. Howard, "Fake Healers Exposed," p.41).
 - c. But the Lord and the apostles never "screened" their prospective "patients!"
2. Bible miracles were performed in such a way that none could doubt they were real.
 - a. Everything was open and obvious; there were no backstage maneuverings.
 - b. The subjects to be healed were plainly afflicted.
 - 1) John 9:1-7: "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. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." It was known by all who knew him to have been blind from birth.
 - 2) There was a man who was a common fixture at the beautiful gate of the temple, well-known by all that he was lame.
 - a) Acts 3:1-11: "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth *hour*. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."
 - b) Acts 4:22: "For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was showed."
 - 3) No one could deny that Lazarus was dead and in the tomb four days (John 11).
 - 4) There was a man at Lystra who never had walked. "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked" (Acts 14:8). His condition was commonly known.
 - c. The results of Bible miracles were beyond denial.
 - 1) A man who had been born blind received his sight. "And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of

- Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing...."He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight....He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:7,11,25).
- 2) No one could deny the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11).
 - 3) That the lame man at the beautiful gate was healed was undenied; even the antagonistic Jewish council could not deny that a notable miracle had occurred: "And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 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. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it" (Acts 4:6-16).
 - 4) That the man at Lystra had been healed was acknowledged by the population: "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. 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" (Acts 14:8-11).
3. Contrast the foregoing with the modern fakeries as illustrated from these cases taken from V.E. Howard's booklet, "Fake Healers Exposed," pp.38-40.
 - a. "A woman diabetic, who said she threw away her insulin in the belief she had been cured by faith, died Sunday in a Detroit hospital. The woman, Wanda Beach, 37, of Stanton, Mich., a diabetic since infancy, came here Friday to attend services of evangelist Oral Roberts. She called her parents Friday night and told them she was completely cured." (Quoted from *The Abilene Reporter-News*, Abilene, Texas, July 6, 1959).
 - b. A cancer-afflicted woman from Burbank, California heard about Mr. Roberts. She had flown to Cincinnati where he was conducting services. On her way back home, the woman stopped in Evansville, Indiana and told relatives Roberts had healed her. A short time later, 12 hours after the scene of her being cured was featured on Roberts' TV show, the woman died of cancer.
 - c. A woman with a lame leg went to Roberts to be healed. She came back home saying the Holy Ghost works in mysterious ways. She went to have her leg healed, but instead of healing the leg, the Holy Ghost healed a shoulder that had been bothered by lumbago or rheumatism.
 - d. Another family took a daughter to be cured of a mental affliction in 1955. They came back and told folks at the country store that the daughter was completely cured for the fits she had been having. Just then the daughter, who was in the car, went into a rage and fit, the same condition she had before she went to the healer. The parent declared, "I just don't understand; must be them green beans. I fed her too many green beans last night; that's her trouble now."
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- e. Jack Coe, a "healer" from Dallas, tried in 1956 to heal a polio victim. He ordered the parents to remove the little boy's braces. The boy fell to the floor. Coe was sued for \$225,000, and went to jail. He claimed to heal the boy, but a few months later, Coe himself died of polio.
4. While the results of Bible miracles were beyond reproach, today's so-called miracles are subject to much skepticism, to say the least.
 - a. This skepticism is well-deserved when one considers this AP news item from Washington, Aug. 4, 1951: "The Corpse escaped. It all happened in suburban Fairmount Heights, Md. A coffin was lowered into a grave after a tent meeting revivalist told how the 'doomed' man would be raised from the dead. As the earth was shoveled onto the coffin somebody saw the 'corpse' crawl out of the tunnel just outside the tent. The 'corpse' escaped during the ensuing riot" (ibid., p.29).
 - b. If these "healings" are from God, all they need is one bonafide case of healing. "The very fact that no bonafide case of miraculous healing, certified by a recognized medical doctor, can be found in the world today, is evidence of the fact that miracles have ceased" (ibid., p.7).
5. The changes that were made on the eyewitnesses of Bible miracles show that these were truly supernatural works.
 - a. The apostles were greatly affected. Earlier they were weak and fearful, but later they were courageous and strong: "Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men....And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:29, 40-42).
 - b. Paul was never the same after seeing the resurrected Lord.
 - 1) Acts 9:1-5: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks."
 - 2) Acts 9:20-22: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ."
 - 3) Acts 26:19: "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."
 - 4) 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. Many Jews were changed.
 - 1) John 2:23: "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did."
 - 2) John 11:45: "Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him."
 - d. Many Samaritans saw and heard the miracles of Philip, and believed: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those

things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did....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" (Acts 8:5-6,12).

6. Every kind of disease and affliction was healed.
 - a. Jesus healed all kinds.
 - 1) Matthew 9:35: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."
 - 2) Matthew 12:15: "But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all."
 - b. The apostles healed all manner of ailments: "There came also a multitude *out* of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one" (Acts 5:16).
 - c. There were no failures; they did not pick and choose their patients; in every instance where a miracle was needed to verify the message of truth, a miracle was forthcoming!
 - d. The cases today invariably involve ailments that are beyond testing.

G. There are many arguments made by those who believe in modern miracles.

1. It is argued that God is the same today as yesterday and will remain unchanged, and therefore since he gave miraculous powers to men in ancient times, he will give that power to men today. They conclude: "If he does not offer us supernatural abilities now, he has changed!" But if the presence of miracles is required today in order for God to be the same, why are not the *same* miracles being wrought now as then?
 - a. Certain dead people were raised to life again in Bible times. Why are not some being resurrected today?
 - b. Enoch walked with God and was translated so as not to see death (Heb. 11:5). Why does not God translate faithful people today in like manner?
 - c. Why does not God send Christ to suffer and die in every generation?
 - d. If God must continue to work miracles to remain unchanged, why does he not give a revelation to supercede the New Testament as the New Testament superceded the Old Testament?
 - e. Why does he not multiply fish and bread to feed the starving masses in famine-stricken lands today?
 - f. The fact that these things are not being done today is not an argument against God's goodness, his power, or his sameness. But they would be if the arguments made by modern-day "miracle seekers" about God's sameness were correct.
 - g. God has not changed in his attributes or abilities. But his manner of dealing with man has changed.
 - 1) He dealt with Noah and his generation differently from his treatment of us.
 - 2) He required things of Abraham and others under the Patriarchal Age that he does not demand of us.
 - 3) He required things of the Jews under the Mosaic Age that do not apply to our time (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8).
 - 4) God miraculously preserved the shoes and clothing of the Israelites in the wilderness, but he is not doing so for us today (Deut. 8:4; Neh. 9:21).
 - h. The argument has no logical or scriptural connection with whether miracles are still available today.
 2. It is argued that if God does not work miracles today, he showed *partiality* to the ancients who were privileged to see and work miracles.
 - a. But we have not been given the privilege of seeing Jesus face to face. Did the Lord show partiality to them who saw him and deprive us of something essential?
 - b. Only a relative few saw the resurrected Lord. Is that showing partiality?
 - c. We were not selected to be or even to experience the same things that Noah, Moses, Abraham, Solomon, *et al*, were and did. Does that short-change us?
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- d. We have not been translated into glory as were Enoch and Elijah. Does that make God partial toward them?
 - e. Since these illustrations do not constitute acts of partiality, then God did not show favoritism by giving miracles only in those ancient days.
3. It is argued that we are cutting out part of the Bible when we do not accept miracles for our time.
- a. But Christ is not here in the flesh today; does that mean we have cut him out of the Bible?
 - b. There were many miracles done in ancient days which modern "miracle workers" will not try to duplicate. Why will they not try to bring manna from the sky? Or miraculously preserve clothing and shoes? Or part a sea with a rod? Or change water directly into wine? Or bring water from a dry rock? The fact that these and other such things are not being done today does not mean that they have been cut from the Bible. The absence of such things, however, does cast a severe doubt on the authenticity of modern "miracles" of any kind (to say the least).
 - c. Stated briefly, the purpose and design of genuine miracles (those recorded in the Scriptures) was to confirm the word of God and to give men ample reason to believe that Jesus is the Christ (Heb. 2:3-4; Mark 16:20; John 20:30-31). Miracles do not have to be done in every generation to establish this. There is no need to confirm or prove that which has been confirmed and proved.
 - 1) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - 2) John 20:30-31: "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."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:3-4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
4. An argument is made on Mark 16:17-20 to justify modern miracles.
- a. It is asserted that these signs may be wrought by any believer today. They think that all believers, regardless of the century, can produce these signs. The promise included all the apostles and only *some* of the 1st century saints.
 - 1) This is in harmony with other passages which indicate that only some of the Christians of that era received miraculous abilities. From the time when the New Testament took effect (at the death of Christ: Heb. 9:15-17), only two cases are recorded of any receiving miraculous powers directly from heaven: the apostles (Acts 2) and Cornelius (Acts 10). These were very special cases: the apostles received the power the Lord had promised to them in the first case; and in the second, God showed to the Jews that the gospel was also intended for the Gentiles. In describing to the Jewish Christians what had happened at Cornelius' house, Peter had to go all the way back to Pentecost Day (Acts 2) in order to find another instance of the Spirit coming directly upon men in endowing them with miraculous powers. In every other case, one or more of the apostles was present to lay hands on the people before they received supernatural gifts (Acts 8:14ff; 19:1-6; Rom. 1:11).
 - 2) There is no proof that every saint of the first century received a spiritual gift. There is no proof that God even intended that they all receive the gifts. If every Christian in the first century received a spiritual gift, then each of these individuals would have had to have an apostle of Christ to lay his hands on them personally. That would have been impossible for after the death of James (Acts 12), there were only twelve apostles on earth, while the converts numbered in the multiplied thousands. The man from Ethiopia returned home after his conversion; which apostle laid hands on him? And when?
 - b. Mark 16:17-20 does not say that the signs would be worked by all believers. The promise of verse 17 would be adequately fulfilled if only part of the believers had these miraculous gifts. The passage
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- says that the signs would follow the believers (the whole of them); it does not say that the signs would be performed by each of them.
- c. If one of the signs continues in operation today, they all continue. If one can speak in tongues, others will be able to drink deadly poison and handle snakes without harm; and others would be able to cast out demons and heal the sick.
 - d. The greatest, and only, proof of the claims of people today in behalf of miracles for our time is the demonstration of the gifts. "As goes the proposition, so must also go the demonstration." A clear, obvious miracle would put to silence every critic. But they only give us empty assertions.
5. Luke 11:13 is said to support contentions of modern miracle workers: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"
- a. The context of this verse (11:1-13) is the short version of the model prayer. There was a time when the disciples could pray for the kingdom to come, but today we cannot pray for it to come—it has already come! (Col. 1:13-14). Those living in the first century, and who entered the kingdom, had access to the spiritual gifts which were offered to many in the kingdom in that era. Those gifts are not available to us today (as will be shown later in this study).
 - b. An alternate possible interpretation of this verse is that "Holy Spirit" is "a holy spirit ("a holy disposition"). The definite article *the* is not in the original text. The old manuscripts were written in all capital letters and without our modern English punctuations. The context must decide in the present case whether the Holy Spirit or a holy spirit is the correct rendering. In this passage, either rendering is possible in the immediate context. In the remote context, Matthew 7:11 is the parallel passage: "...how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" So the remote context could allow for either view of Luke 11:13.
 - c. But it does not matter which is the real understanding; the issue is resolved when the total context is considered. There was a time when it was right and proper for them to pray for the Holy Spirit to come; there was a time when individual saints could scripturally pray for a spiritual gift (I Cor. 12:31; 14:1; 14:13). The Holy Spirit came in Acts 2:1-4; his gifts were passed on through the apostles to certain saints when the apostles prayed for, and laid their hands on, those who were to receive the gifts (Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6). It is senseless for us to pray for the kingdom to come because it has already come; it is just as senseless to pray for the Holy Spirit to come because he has already done so (John 15:26; 16:7; Acts 2:1-4). And since there is no apostle on earth today to lay hands on us, and since the purpose of miracles has already been accomplished, it is senseless for us to pray for miracles today. When the last apostle died, and the last person died on whom an apostle had laid hands, the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit ceased.
6. James 5:14-16 is used in an attempt to prove miraculous gifts still continue.
- a. This was written at a time (40-60 A.D.) when miraculously endowed elders were in the church. Such as had these miraculous abilities could heal the sick then. That would have confirmed the gospel to unbelievers and weak saints.
 - b. The "prayer of faith" in verse 15 has reference to a miraculous spiritual gift possessed by some in the first century church [1 Cor. 12:8-10 (9a)].
 - c. In verse 16, the prayers of any saint for another saint is meant. The healing mentioned is spiritual healing—the forgiveness of sins. The context of verse 16 shows plainly that physical healing is not meant, but the healing of the individual's spirit. The "faults" are sins committed by the Christian (ASV).
7. It is argued from Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 1:6-8 that those confirming gifts were to continue to the end, when Christ returns. But there is nothing in the passage which warrants this conclusion.
- a. It is uncertain, in the first place, that "gift" has reference to miraculous powers. The apostle may be speaking of the spiritual blessings of the gospel, and not the more limited sense of spiritual gifts.
 - b. But even if the reference is to spiritual gifts, the passage no more says that the miracles would con-

tinue to the coming of Christ any more than it says that the Corinthians would continue on earth until his coming.

- c. One does not have to have miraculous powers to be sustained (confirmed) throughout his remaining days; the word of God is able to confirm us (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). We have the inspired record of the first century miracles (John 20:30-31); the impact of those miracles is still being felt by means of that record; there is no need for their duplication in every generation in order to produce more Christians.
 8. It is argued that the Lord is just as powerful today as he was in the first century, and can still perform miracles today. No one questions this. But the point is, *does he still perform them today?* He does not create men from the dust of the earth directly and miraculously as he did Adam. He does not feed us with manna given directly from heaven. He does not choose to operate in this fashion today.
 9. Every argument advanced by the proponents of modern day miracles meets with equal defeat when the light of the word of God is put upon it. The miracles of Christ and the apostles were clearly supernatural demonstrations which could not be explained away or denied. Again, if their claims are true, there is only one way by which they may be established: present a miracle that is obviously and undeniably a supernatural demonstration—and we will believe you!
- H. Each of the three dispensations was revealed, established, and confirmed by miracles.
1. The Patriarchal Age began with the miracles of creation.
 - a. There was no seed at first to produce after its kind. God created each kind of grass, herb, and tree; after this miraculous creation, the natural laws of nature took control, and by their seed (or root), each of these *kinds* have been perpetuated from one generation to the next.
 - b. There were no insects, animals, or humans. God created the first of each of these beings by his miraculous powers. He ordained (commanded) the law of reproduction for them, and thus have they been perpetuated.
 - c. This miraculous creation was necessary. God did not perform any unnecessary miracles during the Patriarchal dispensation; miracles were kept at a minimum. Though some miracles were wrought in connection with them, the great men of old (such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) never worked a miracle. During the entire 2500 years (or more) of the Patriarchal Age, few miracles were performed; miracles were the rare exceptions, and not the rule.
 2. The Mosaic Age was ushered in by miraculous demonstrations.
 - a. Several miracles were wrought when God delivered Israel from Egypt and while he led them through the wilderness.
 - b. Miracles were associated with the giving of the Law at Sinai and in the construction of the tabernacle. Miracles were involved in conquering Canaan.
 - c. These miracles were performed to convince Israel that God is the only true and living God; that he is to be revered and obeyed by faithful service; that he was with his people to help and protect them.
 - d. Miracles were kept to a minimum; they were not wrought promiscuously during the 1500 years of this age; they occurred only when essential. Prominent men such as David and Solomon did not perform miracles (healing the sick, raising the dead, etc.). Although there were sundry miracles at various times, these supernatural acts were the rare exceptions, and not the rule.
 3. The Christian Age was ushered in by powerful miraculous demonstrations.
 - a. Miracles were associated with the birth of John the Immerser and of Jesus.
 - b. Miracles were present during the personal ministry of Christ; the disciples were given limited power to perform miracles during the limited commission.
 - c. Miracles were present during the crucifixion, death and resurrection of the Lord: the darkness; the earthquakes; the rending of the veil of the temple; the resurrection of Christ; his appearances to certain people.
 - d. Miracles were present on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2 when the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the kingdom was established. Miracles continued for a period of time afterward until
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the gospel was fully revealed, communicated to that generation, confirmed as God's truth, recorded for future generations, and the church was firmly established on earth.

- e. But again, miracles were kept to a minimum. Paul's *thorn in the flesh* was not miraculously removed (2 Cor. 12:1ff); Trophimus was not healed of his sickness (2 Tim. 4:20); Timothy's infirmities were not supernaturally cured (1 Tim. 5:23); Christians were not miraculously protected against persecution.
- f. Miracles may be compared to the scaffolding around a building. As the building is being erected, the scaffolding is present and serves a very necessary purpose. But once the building is finished, it is no longer needed; it would detract from the beauty and function of the building if it was allowed to stay.
- g. Miracles may be likened to the tugboats which guide the great ocean liner from the harbor into the open sea. The tugboats are necessary for that purpose, but would be a hindrance once the great ship is free of the harbor. Miracles were necessary during the infancy of the church, but would be a hindrance and distraction once the church was on its way in the world.
- h. If miracles were still present, they would soon become so commonplace that they would lose their convincing power, and be taken for granted. They would detract from the gospel; men would become lazy in their work, and indifferent to the greater importance of spiritual matters. Miracles, in and of themselves, have never saved a soul, and have not (of themselves) made anyone to be morally pure. The role of miracles was not to save, but to reveal and prove the word of the gospel to be from the God of heaven. Romans 1:16; James 1:21.
- i. "Why are not miracles *now* being wrought?—we remark that, the design of miracles being to confirm and authorize the Christian religion, there is no longer any occasion for them, now that it is established in the world, and is daily extending its triumphs in the heathen lands by the divine blessing of the preached gospel. Besides, if they were continued, they would be of no use, because their force and influence would be lost by the frequency of them; for, miracles being a sensible suspension or controlment of—or deviation from—the established course or laws of nature, if they were repeated on every occasion, all distinctions of natural and supernatural would vanish, and we should be at a loss to say, which were the ordinary and which the extraordinary works of Providence. Moreover, it is probable that, if they were continued, they would be of no use, because those persons who refuse to be convinced by the miracles recorded in the New Testament, would not be convinced by any new ones; for it is not from want of evidence, but from want of sincerity, and out of passion and prejudice, that any man rejects the miracles related in the Scriptures; and the same want of sincerity, the same passions and prejudices, would make him resist any proof, any miracle whatever. Lastly, a perpetual power of working of miracles would in all ages give occasion to continual impostures, while it would rescind and reverse all the settled laws and constitutions of Providence. Frequent miracles would be thought to proceed more from some defect in nature than from the particular interposition of the Deity; and men would become atheists by means of them, rather than Christians" (Thomas H. Horne, *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. I, p.117; see *Christian Courier*, February, 1982).

I. The Bible teaches that miracles have ceased.

1. The New Testament lists several miracles which were done by the members of the church (Mark 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 12:8-10). If any of these are still being done, all can be done. Why is it that "miracle workers" usually pick out one or two of these and omit the rest? Why do they not claim all the miracles?
 - a. Mark 16:17-18: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."

- c. Those who were enabled by the Holy Spirit to work miracles, in certain cases, also raised the dead (Acts 9:36-42), punished at least one man with blindness for hindering the gospel (Acts 13:8-13), and struck people dead for lying [God did this directly] (Acts 5:1-11).
 - d. If one claims to have the ability to speak in tongues, consistency demands that also either he or others of his tribe, be able to drink deadly poison, take up deadly snakes without any harm to himself, to cast out demons, and heal the sick of any kind and without a failure. But in virtually every instance the only thing they claim is the ability to "speak with tongues!" Mind you, what they have in mind by speaking in tongues is a kind of gibberish and jabber, meaningless sounds which they assert is an "ecstatic utterance" or "language of angels." In some cases they even claim to have those who can "interpret" their sounds. But when they send out "missionaries" to a foreign nationality, those who are sent will have to study to learn that unknown tongue just as everyone else must do!
 - e. No inspired person in the Bible ever used miracles for financial gain.
2. 1 Corinthians 12.
- a. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."
 - 1) Paul states in verse 7 that the design of the gifts is for the purpose of profiting the whole. Individual Christians received different spiritual gifts, but the aim of these was for the mutual profit of the whole church.
 - 2) The exercise of the gifts would convince the unbeliever that the speaker was presenting the truth; and the use of these gifts in the church instructed and edified the members.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 14:12: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church."
 - b) 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."
 - c) Ephesians 4:8-12: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."
 - 3) Just because one had a spiritual gift did not mean his eternal salvation was certain—since even the apostles of Christ were still subject to sin.
 - a) 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."
 - b) Galatians 2:11-14: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." The same Spirit
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gave the different gifts; no one person (except the apostles) received all nine of these gifts (one gift was given to one, and to *another* person a different gift was provided. They were dispensed according to the will of heaven (Heb. 2:3-4).

- 1) Wisdom—the wisdom of God which he chose to reveal (cf. 2 Pet. 3:15-16). This would likely include the insight the first inspired elders would need in conducting their work since they did not have the written word (cf. Acts 14:23).
 - 2) Knowledge—the revealed truth of the gospel. Possessors of this gift would have the inspired information which they would be able to communicate.
 - 3) Faith—this would be miraculous faith, and not the faith as in John 20:30-31 and Romans 10:17. It is the supernatural faith which could move mountains (1 Cor. 13:2; Matt. 17:19-20; Jas. 5:15; Matt. 14:31; 21:20-22; Acts 3:1-11).
 - 4) Healing—miraculous healing (Mark 16:18; Jas. 5:14-15). We read about Philip casting out demons, healing those who were afflicted with palsy and those who were lame (Acts 8:6-7), although no specific case is described. Also, certain supernaturally-endowed elders were given the power to heal (Jas. 5:14-15).
 - 5) Miracles—all of the gifts are miraculous, but there is some reason that this class is styled as "miracles." Since the other eight were used in instructing, edifying, and exhibiting mercy, it is possible that this gift included casting out demons, raising the dead, and bringing judgments of punishment on certain ones (Acts 5:1-11; Acts 13:8-13).
 - 6) Prophecy—the ability to speak by inspiration, revealing God's word; it might have to do with past events, instructions for the present, or predictions of future events. Ephesians 4:1-5; Acts 11:27-30; 13:11; 21:9-11.
 - 7) Discerning of spirits—this was the ability to test teachers to determine whether they were true or false. 1 John 4:1-3; 2:26-27. Peter could know that Ananias and Sapphira were lying by this or another of the gifts.
 - 8) Tongues—the ability to speak in a language which the recipient had not learned in the ordinary ways.
 - 9) Interpretation of tongues—the ability to interpret the speech given in a language which was not understood by all present. There would be no profit if there was no understanding of the message.
3. 1 Corinthians 13.
- a. 1 Corinthians 13:1-7: "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. 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." The essentiality of love is affirmed and illustrated, then the attributes of love are given.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 13:8: "Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away." This passage shows that the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge would cease.
 - 1) Prophecies shall fail: This does not mean that prophetic utterance would not be fulfilled since that would reflect badly on God's power. Rather, it means that the prophetic office, the gift of prophecy (to teach, predict, etc., by the Holy Spirit) would not continue. This gift was a channel of revelation, and had to continue until God had fully revealed the New Testament. It would not be needed after its purpose had been accomplished. If a friend reveals a message you over the telephone, you do not have to remain at the telephone with the receiver to your ear after the message has been delivered. The phone was merely the means by which the message was

- delivered; prophecy was the means by which God delivered his message to inspired men. He gave all truth to the apostles during their lifetime.
- 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 shew you things to come."
 - b) 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."
 - c) Ephesians 3:5: "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."
- 2) Tongues shall cease: The gift of tongues would not continue. Tongues were languages (Acts 2:1-14). Missionaries have to study foreign languages in order to speak those languages. Now there is ample time for men to prepare themselves to preach the gospel in foreign languages without supernatural aid, but during the first century this miraculous tool was necessary, since there were so many people in Jerusalem speaking different languages (Acts 2), and as the message was carried elsewhere, other languages had to be used. The schools where these tongues could be naturally learned were not available to the Christians. Time was of the essence if the church was to be firmly established and spread. But the miraculous gift of tongues would not be always necessary.
 - 3) Knowledge would vanish away: This spiritual gift of miraculous knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8) would not always be needed. This is not a reference to common knowledge; he does not say that we would all have blank minds. Not everyone had this gift (note: "to another..."—1 Cor. 12:8-10). The time was coming when this and the other gifts would be taken away. There would be ample opportunity for Christians to study the revealed, written word in order to know the will of God without receiving that knowledge directly (miraculously) from God. Verse 10 shows when these would be removed. That time is not in heaven for there supernatural knowledge will be vastly increased. No one today has received knowledge of God's will as Paul received it (Gal. 1:11-12). Those who claim to have this kind of knowledge have to study to learn the Bible, and what they teach often contradicts the Bible.
 - 4) What Paul writes in regards to these three gifts of necessity applies also to all of the other gifts as well. They all would cease to be practiced. It was unnecessary for Paul to go through the entire list of nine gifts, one by one, and say the same thing about each. Where is the proof that the other six gifts are still being received? What need would they serve? No new truth could be revealed (Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19; Jude 3). Any new "revelation" could be set under one of three headings: (1) already in the Bible, (2) another "gospel" (Gal. 1:6-8), or (3) discerned by human reason.
- c. 1 Corinthians 13:9: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part."
- 1) The gifts represent imperfection. The Christians having them had to depend on each other—one person did not have all the revelation. God's will was made known through inspired men *as the need arose*, part by part. In Acts 2 the gospel plan of salvation was presented; in Acts 5, the necessity of discipline in the church was shown; in Acts 6, the need for deacons was revealed; in chapter 10, the Gentiles were shown to be proper subjects of the gospel. The New Testament was revealed part by part as the need arose and as they were able to grasp and use the new information, until finally the New Covenant had been completely revealed and recorded.
 - 2) It was only after the entirety of the New Testament had been revealed that anyone had unlimited access to the will of Christ. That which is in part (vs. 9) is placed in contrast with that which is perfect (vs. 10). Thus, the gifts represent a time and condition of imperfection, and the time when the gifts were no longer needed represents a time and condition of perfection (completeness, maturity, full strength).
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- d. 1 Corinthians 13:10: "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."
- 1) Prophecies, tongues and knowledge would fail, cease, vanish away; that which is in part will be done away; that which is in part and the gifts of prophecies, tongues, and knowledge are identical; thus, these will be done away, ended, caused to cease. When? When that which is *perfect* is come.
 - 2) That which is perfect is placed in contrast with that which is in part. When we determine what is meant by "that which is in part" we shall have learned the meaning of "that which is perfect."
 - 3) Notice that Paul does not say "when HE WHO is perfect is come," but "when THAT WHICH is perfect is come." Therefore, he does not mean "When Christ has come" since he used the neuter gender pronoun ("that"). Also, the subject being discussed in the context is the use of spiritual gifts; Paul is not discussing Christ at all. A pronoun takes the place of a noun, and for a pronoun to be meaningful and make sense, it must have an antecedent (the noun it replaces). No reference is made to Christ in the context.
 - 4) The reference ("that which is perfect") is not love, since love is already here and was present at Corinth during the same time "that which is in part" was present. That which is in part and that which is perfect would not be present at the same time; the former would give way to the latter. The only antecedent given for the pronoun "that" (in "that which is in part") is in verse 8 (the various spiritual gifts). But love is always to be present (13:8a; 13:13).
 - 5) The reference ("that which is perfect") is not to heaven for the same reason: the subject of heaven is not even remotely mentioned in the context. To try to justify that assertion requires us to read into the passage a thought which was not included by the Holy Spirit. That which is perfect is in contrast to that which is in part, and transpires here on earth ("when that which is perfect *is come*").
 - 6) The word "perfect" contains the clue we need to understand the passage. It is translated from the Greek "teleios" which means "completeness." The phrase in the Greek text is "to teleion" which literally means "the complete thing" (Jackson, *Christian Courier*, Jan., 1982, p.37). The "complete thing" stands in opposition to "that which is in part" (incomplete).
 - a) Perfect (teleios): "Brought to completion, complete, entire, as opposed to what is partial or limited" (Bagster). "Having attained the end of purpose" (Arndt & Gingrich).
 - b) Notice some passages where this word is found:
 - Matthew 5:48: "be perfect, even as Father..."
 - Matthew 19:21: "if thou wilt be perfect..."
 - Romans 12:2: "good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."
 - Ephesians 4:13: "till we come...unto perfect man."
 - Philippians 3:15: "let us therefore, as many as be perfect."
 - Colossians 1:28: "present every man perfect..."
 - Colossians 4:12: "that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will..."
 - Hebrews 9:11: "perfect tabernacle." James 1:4: "patience have her perfect..."
 - James 1:17: "every perfect gift from above"
 - James 1:25: "perfect law of liberty."
 - James 3:2: "perfect man...if not offend."
 - I John 4:18: "perfect love..."
 - 1 Cor. 2:6: "speak wisdom among them that are perfect."
 - 1 Corinthians 13:10: "when that which is perfect..."
 - c) At the time Paul wrote this passage, only a part of the revelation of the New Testament had been given; prior to the close of the first century, the New Testament had been fully revealed. This was done during the lifetime of the apostles since the Lord promised they would receive "all truth" (John 16:13). The finished revelation is called "the perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25), and "the perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2). In this completed revelation is found "all things that

pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3), and everything necessary for "...doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It is called "the faith which was once [once for all time] delivered to the saints" (Jude 3; cf. Heb. 9:27-28). Therefore, "that which is perfect" is simply the completed revelation of the New Testament, the New Covenant which God had promised (Jer. 31:31-34).

- 7) In the context we are studying, Paul shows that the full revelation of God's will was being made known, part by part, through the use of the spiritual gifts. Each of the three gifts which are named in the context (verse 8) were supernatural gifts directly related to the revealing of God's will to man. When one prophesied, or spoke in a tongue, or interpreted a tongue, or exercised the gift of knowledge, he was making known God's will. The other gifts (12:8-10) were primarily to confirm that the message presented was truly from God, and was not the invention of human wisdom.
- e. 1 Corinthians 13:11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."
 - 1) When Paul was a child, he spoke with a child's language and vocabulary, he thought as a child thinks, he occupied himself with things which children do. But when he grew to manhood, he ceased to speak an immature language, he stopped thinking as a child thinks, and he laid aside his toys. The statement of this verse is an illustration which contrasts the infancy of the church with the mature state of the church. When it becomes full-grown (received the completed New Testament), it puts away its childhood things (the spiritual gifts). Is the church still a child? The things which were in part belonged to its childhood state.
 - 2) Paul is not talking about the earthly state of the church in contrast to the heavenly state. He is showing those who possessed the spiritual gifts that there is a more excellent way. This more excellent way is the way of love, with faith and hope, which are present on earth. In heaven faith will be lost in sight, and hope in fulfillment.
 - 3) The full-grown state of the church would be when the full revelation had been given and the spiritual gifts had vanished away. As more and more of the truth was revealed and accepted and applied by the saints, the church grew in knowledge of Christ until the faith was once for all delivered unto the saints in all its perfection (completeness). It was then that they attained unto the unity of the faith, and the need for the spiritual gifts ceased (Eph. 4:12,13).
- f. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."
 - 1) Here Paul used another illustration to help us see the truth. The old mirrors were called glasses. They were not very efficient in giving a good reflection; they were often made of polished metal. Hence, the image reflected was only dimly, imperfectly seen. Still having the same two contrasting times and conditions in mind, he says that presently they saw only dimly, but in the latter case they would be able to see face to face.
 - 2) The illustration aptly describes the situation during the miraculous age. But now we have the entire revelation and can study for ourselves and can know all that God wants us to know on a given subject. We can see ourselves as God sees us; we can see the kind of persons God wants us to become.
 - 3) The word "now" refers to the period of childhood (of the previous verse). He says "now I know in part" which corresponds to the statement of verse 9, "we know in part." The time of that which is perfect in verse 10 is the time of verse 12 when Paul says we would no longer know in part but know fully. The context shows conclusively that the reference ("face to face," etc.) is not to heaven.
 - a) Matthew 7:16: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"
 - b) Luke 1:3-4: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from

- the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."
- c) Romans 1:32: "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."
 - d) 1 Timothy 4:3: "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."
- 4) It is significant that James uses the same illustration in connection with his statement about "the perfect law of liberty." "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 forget-ful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (Jas. 1:21-25).
- g. 1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity."
 - 1) Faith, hope, and love will exist until the end of time. Faith will be then lost in sight in heaven (we will continue to have trust in God); hope will be lost there in fulfillment; but love will continue on into heaven and eternity (perhaps greatly increased). Neither of these three is miraculous.
 - 2) They each were present during the age of miracles, but would outlast that time of miracles. "In view of the fact that miracles were necessary to reveal and confirm the word, and all that has been accomplished, miracles to that end have ceased" (Roy J. Hearn, Bulletin Article, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, Vol. 13, No. 13, March 31, 1987).
4. Ephesians 4:8,11-14: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men....And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."
- a. Before the New Testament was revealed and recorded, the miraculous gifts were needed for the disciples to preach the gospel and build up the church. Each of the offices mentioned in verse 11 were occupied by Christians possessing spiritual gifts. Those offices which continue today are occupied by uninspired saints, but who are guided by the Holy Scriptures.
 - b. The offices of apostle and prophet were in the church only for a certain time: "till we all come in the unity of the faith, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (verse 13). Notice how *till* is used in Acts 23:12: "And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul."
 - 1) The church needed these miraculous aids until the full revelation was given and recorded. After than, men could learn how to be saved and what their obligations were before God by studying the Scriptures.
 - 2) The church needed these miraculous aids until such a time that it could be sufficiently built up numerically and spiritually to be able to continue its work: preaching the gospel to the lost, helping the needy, and building itself up in the faith (see verse 12).
 - 3) The church needed these miraculous aids until such a time that the books of the New Testament were recorded and collected into one volume. This written record would then be the means by which the church could be sustained.
 - c. Three things were to be accomplished by the spiritual gifts: "For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ" (ASV).
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- 1) To perfect the saints (furnish them what was needed to grow into spiritual maturity).
 - 2) For the work of ministering (teach them the details they needed in order to serve God properly, especially in works of benevolence).
 - 3) To guide and assist the church in carrying the gospel to the lost, thus building up the church numerically (Eph. 4:12).
- d. The word *till* limits the spiritual gifts to a certain period of time: until they came unto (*eis*) the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. There is only one faith (Eph. 4:5); it is the gospel system (Gal. 1:23). This one faith was *once* (literally, once for all time—Heb. 9:27-28) delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Paul uses the same word (for "once") in Hebrews 9 to emphasize the fact that Christ died only once. The gifts were to last until the time when the faith was completed, and after that time they would be taken away. When the faith was completely revealed, and those possessing the gifts died, the miraculous gifts ceased to be exercised.
 - e. Proponents of modern miracles are forced to conclude with reference to this passage that the unity of the faith comes only in the next life, not on earth. But if that is correct, then those who go to heaven will be able to withstand the winds of false doctrine that assail them. Thus, there will be false doctrine in heaven (if their view is correct on the passage here). Further, they will be able to grow up. Hence, there will be immaturity in heaven. And men will practice craftiness and deceit in heaven for the text says that those who come into the unity of the faith will be able to do so. These are some of the logical conclusions which follow if the interpretation forced upon Ephesians 4 is allowed. But, "If the unity of the faith does not occur until the next life, it will never be, because faith will end in sight, in heaven, and there will never be unity of faith" (Guy N. Woods, *Woods-Franklin Debate*, pp.126f).
 - f. Renowned Bible scholar, James Macknight, gives the following interpretation of Ephesians 4:11-13: "Wherefore, when Paul tells the Ephesians, that God appointed in the church, some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, for the sake of fitting the saints for the work of the ministry, and for the building of the body of Christ, his meaning is, that the different orders of inspired teachers which he mentions were appointed, and supernaturally endowed by God, for the purpose of giving the believing Jews and Gentiles such a complete knowledge of the gospel, as would qualify them for preaching it to unbelievers, and for building the body of Christ, by converting them. Accordingly, after the apostles and other inspired teachers were dead, their disciples spread the knowledge of the gospel everywhere....All in every age and country who have devoted themselves to that work, have been fitted for it by them, in as much as from their writings alone they derive their knowledge of the gospel by the preaching of which they build the body of Christ" (*Macknight on the Epistles*, Vol. III-IV, pp.318f).
5. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and Ephesians 4:8-16 address the same subject.
 - a. Notice the parallels that exist between 1 Corinthians 13 and Ephesians 4:
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1 Corinthians 13	Ephesians 4
When (10)	Till (13)
That which is perfect (10)	Unity of the faith (13)
Then shall I know (12)	Knowledge of the Son (13)
Put away childish things (11)	No more children (14)
Became a man (11)	Perfect man (13)
Gifts (8)	Gifts (7,8,11)
To be done away (10)	Done away—perfect (13)
When perfect comes (10)	Perfect man; unity of faith
Child before perfection (11)	Child before (14)
Completed knowledge (10-12)	Not a child (14)
Church as a child (11)	Church a child (13)
Mature when gifts ceased (11)	Mature when gifts ceased (13)

b. Ephesians 4:8-14 refers to the same gifts as 1 Corinthians 12 and 13, which were to last TILL that which is perfect (the unity of THE faith) comes. The faith refers to the whole New Testament, therefore, when that was completed, gifts were no more. The adverbs (then, when, till) limit the time factor of the gifts.

6. Micah 7:15: "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvelous things." Guy N. Woods used this passage in the Woods-Franklin debate to show that miracles were in the church about 40 years. "It doesn't say, 'I will perform the same type of miracles as were then performed.' It says, 'according to the days of thy coming out.' This is not with reference to the substance of miracles but to the time element involved. Now, how long was it? It was the period of the children of Israel coming out of the land of Egypt. Well, how long was that? It was 40 years. We've already seen that these miraculous events began on the day of Pentecost which was in A.D. 33. Now add 40 years to that and you've come up to a period roughly that when Jerusalem was destroyed. That was in A.D. 70. This, if you please, marked the end of the Jewish system of affairs. Therefore, these miracles were to last no longer than that period; and I affirm that they have ceased" (*Woods-Franklin Debate*, pp.6f).

J. How can we account for those events which are claimed to be miracles today?

1. The following is an excerpt from an excellent article by Wayne Jackson which appeared in "Christian Courier," October, 1989: "In the first place, we are really not under obligation to explain or defend, as divine, a modern event simply because it may have elements which are difficult to explain. The antics of witch-doctors, fire-walkers, psychics, etc., may be characterized by certain features that we find difficult to understand; certainly, though, they are not associated with true spirituality. That aside, there are several bases for so-called modern miracles.

a. "First, some instance of 'faith healing' are pure fakery. Consider the case of Peter Popoff, who claimed the supernatural ability to give revealed information about people in his audiences (in conjunction with healing them) was receiving such information through a tiny hearing aid, messages being transmitted by his wife from backstage. Prominent magician, James Randi, exposed the entire affair on national TV. Randi also demonstrated that Popoff was providing rented wheelchairs for people who could actually walk, then, at his services, he was pronouncing them 'healed.'

- b. "Second, some 'miracle cures' are claimed by people who honestly believe that God has healed them. The fact is, however, they had nothing really wrong with them organically. Their ailment was *psychosomatic*. That means that though some bodily feature was actually affected, the real root of the problem was mental or emotional, hence, by *suggestion* a cure might be effected. It has been estimated that more than half of all the people applying for medical treatment in the U.S. suffer from psychosomatic illnesses. Taking advantage of this type of situation, the 'faith healer,' in an atmosphere of hysteria and feverish emotionalism, produces some phenomenal 'cures.' A Canadian physician who investigated thirty cases in which Oral Roberts claimed miraculous healing was involved, found not a single instance that could not be attributed to psychological shock or hysteria. Dr. William Sadler affirmed that after twenty-five years of sympathetic research into 'faith-healing,' he had not observed a single case of an organic disease being healed. It is commonly known that an African witch-doctor can literally command a believer in voodooism to die, and within a prescribed time, the victim will expire. Surely no rational person believes the witch-doctor has the Spirit of God!
 - c. "Third, another possible explanation for some remarkable recovery is a phenomenon known as *spontaneous remission*. Spontaneous remission is an unexpected withdrawal of disease symptoms and an inexplicable disappearance of the ailment. It occurs in about one out of every 80,000 cancer patients. A while back newspapers carried the account of a bartender in Washington. When the gentlemen had exploratory surgery, it was discovered that he was consumed with cancer. His physicians expected him to live only a few months. As time sped by, his disease utterly vanished. There was nothing supernatural about it. No claim of faith, prayer, or miraculous healing was involved. Wouldn't some faith-healer have revelled in taking credit for that cure?
 - d. "Fourth, it must be admitted that since physicians are human, they can and do make mistakes. Sometimes they mis-diagnose a case. They may judge an illness to be fatal when in fact it is not. Some of these situations are seized upon by modern 'miracle-workers and a supernatural aura is attributed to them.
 - e. "Finally, here is a point worthy of consideration that needs to be pressed with great vigor. There is no alleged 'miracle' being performed today by those of a 'Christian' persuasion (Pentecostals, Mormons, Christian Scientist, Catholics, etc.) that cannot be duplicated by the various 'non-Christian' sects. Those who practice Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, Psychic Healing, Scientology, New Age Crystal Healing, etc., claim the same type of 'signs' as these others. In fact, more than twenty million Americans—of every conceivable religious persuasion—annually report mystic experiences (including healing) in their lives.
2. "Now, since the Scriptures clearly teach that the purpose of miracles, as evidenced in biblical days, was to *confirm the authenticity of the system* (cf. Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:4), does the alleged examples of modern 'miracle healings' indicate that the Lord has authenticated all of these woefully contradictory systems? Think of the implications in that—especially in light of Paul's affirmation that God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). There is ample evidence that there were genuine miracles performed by divinely appointed men in the first century. The New Testament abounds with documented cases. But there is nothing comparable to those wonders being duplicated in the modern age."
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The Gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38

A. This passage has been subject to much disagreement and speculation.

1. For the most part, the verse is very simple and plain: those believers who will repent and be baptized in the name of Christ will receive the remission of sins.
 - a. But many deny that there is any connection between baptism and remission of sins. This conclusion is reached by erroneous interpretations of other verses such as John 3:16, Romans 5:1, and Ephesians 2:8-9. This passage then is twisted and forced to fit the previous conclusion. So instead of "for" being understood in its proper meaning, a forced interpretation is rendered: "for" means (they assert) "because of." They illustrate by saying: "A man is hanged for stealing. He is hanged because he stole; he is not hanged in order to steal."
 - 1) In response to this, we need only to notice that whatever baptism is *for*, repentance is *for* the same thing. Why do we repent? Is it because we have already received remission of sins, or in order to obtain remission? Repentance and baptism are connected by the copulative conjunction "and," which means that remission of sin is the result of repentance *and* baptism. Since repentance is essential to remission of sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30), then this passage teaches repentance is in order to obtain remission; and since repentance is in order to obtain remission, then baptism has the same end in view. Another Greek word would have been used if Peter had intended to say *because of* as our religious friends allege.
 - 2) The Greek word *eis* [translated *for*] means "unto" or "in order to." This definition is obvious from the way it is used in Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many *for* ("eis") the remission of sins." The blood of Christ was not shed "because" we had already obtained remission of sins, but in order that remission might be possible.
 - b. The passage also states: "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This has been variously understood by many people. Pentecostals assert that the gift is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, accompanied with the full range of supernatural operations and miracles. This claim is false doctrine because the Bible plainly teaches that the age of miracles has passed:
 - 1) Ephesians 4:11-15: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 13:8-13: "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."
2. Among our own brethren there are various ideas as to the meaning of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The correct answer cannot be obtained by ascertaining how many are in each camp, or by determining the views of certain notable brethren. The various positions we shall identify are followed by a sizeable number of good, scholarly, reliable brethren. These brethren do not make their views a test of fellowship.

- a. Because the statement is highly disputed among those of like precious faith, it behooves us to go cautiously in arriving at a conclusion. And caution is also advised in announcing one's conclusion. We should not allow such a matter as this to drive a wedge between brethren in Christ, thus destroying fellowship.
 - b. If one's view of the subject under consideration leads him to violate some precept of God's will, sin is the consequence; such is not to be encouraged or condoned. For example, if we were to view the gift of the Spirit as a direct, personal indwelling, and then allege that his presence lead us to find parking places in a crowded city, or in some other way to direct us separate and apart from the word of God, we would have crossed the line between truth and error.
3. There seems to be three basic views of the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38; no doubt there are some variations of these views. We shall present a brief statement identifying each of these positions, and later discuss each in more detail. There are favorable points made for each, but there are significant objections that may be raised against each position.
- a. It appears that the majority (or nearly so) of brethren view this gift as an ordinary indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Most of these do not claim that this benefit does anything for the Christian apart from the word of God. In the conviction and conversion of alien sinners, these brethren faithfully maintain that the word of God is the instrument. Many of these brethren think that the Spirit personally indwells us, that the gift received is the Holy Spirit as a person. The gift is said to be something that automatically comes to each person who obeys the gospel. Passages cited include:
 - 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 5:32: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."
 - 3) Romans 8:9,11,16: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his....But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you...."The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."
 - 4) Romans 8:26-27: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.*"
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
 - 6) 2 Corinthians 1:22: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."
 - 7) 2 Corinthians 5:5: "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."
 - 8) Galatians 4:6: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."
 - 9) Ephesians 1:13-14: "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."
 - b. Others say that the gift of the Holy Spirit is one or more of the spiritual blessings. Specifically, some think that pardon is the gift; or eternal life which we have in promise (I John 2:25). This view states, therefore, that the gift is something which the Spirit gives, and is not the Spirit himself. These good brethren affirm that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian only through the word of God. Verses cited include:
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- 1) Acts 2:38-39: "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. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call."
 - 2) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 3) Hebrews 9:15: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) 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."
 - 6) 1 John 5:11: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."
- c. A third view is that the gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous power. Those who advocate this position say that it was not intended for anyone beyond the first century; that not everyone then received a miraculous gift; that the gift was bestowed on the apostles and Cornelius directly from heaven, but that the others who received it, obtained the gift by the imposition of the apostles' hands. Some of this persuasion state that few, if any, of the New Testament references speak of any "ordinary" indwelling of the Spirit; that all, or nearly all, of the statements in the gospel on this subject describe the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. None of these brethren believe that miracles are being wrought today; all will affirm that the age of miracles ceased as was predicted in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and Ephesians 4:11-14.

B. An examination of the personal, direct indwelling as the gift.

1. It is claimed that the phrase, "gift of the Holy Spirit," can be taken either as something that the Spirit gives or as the gift of the Spirit himself. These brethren say that even though the word "Spirit" is in the genitive case (possessive), that there are other usages of the genitive, and that the context must decide what the proper use is in the case at hand.
2. These brethren further say that the Holy Spirit as a gift dwells in us directly.
 - a. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). John 15:26-27 identifies the apostles as the witnesses here mentioned. But it is argued that the pronoun "them" differentiates between the apostles and those to whom the Spirit was given. Two problems are encountered: (1) This verse does not state that the Holy Spirit personally dwelt in those described; and (2) we are told that God "hath given" (past) the Spirit to those who "obey" (present) him. This describes something done in the past; there is nothing in the statement that requires us to believe God is now doing the same thing. And how can we know that this indwelling is identical with the gift of Acts 2:38?
 - b. Romans 8:9-27 contains several references to the Spirit being in the Christian. But again we are not told *how* this indwelling is accomplished. To say that he dwells in us personally is to read into the statements something that is not stated. And to affirm that the Spirit dwells in us does not prove necessarily that the indwelling is the gift of Acts 2:38.
 - c. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Galatians 4:6 are also used, but the same objections must be met.
 - d. The earnest of the Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14) is said to be this gift—the personal indwelling of the Spirit. But how can we know this is so? To make the claim is not the same as proving the contention.
3. Objections to this position include the following:
 - a. There is no plain statement of scripture affirming that the Holy Spirit is in us personally.
 - b. The argument is very inconclusive that the phrase in Acts 2:38 says that the gift is the Holy Spirit

himself. The evidence points to the gift being something the Spirit gives, as we shall see later.

- c. The statement was made in the midst of miraculous events as an inducement to win the multitude to believe and accept the message presented by Peter (see Acts 2:36-41). Of what value to this end would a promise of an ordinary indwelling of the Spirit be to those people?
- d. If the Holy Spirit dwells in us personally, what does he do for us that necessitates his direct presence in us?
 - 1) Some claim that we are urged to maintain purity of life based on the fact that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. But this is something we must do, not the Spirit.
 - 2) The claim is made that the Holy Spirit's indwelling enables us to have a confident life, citing Romans 8:26-27: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." We would not know of this information except for the inspired Record. What gives us the confidence? The work the Spirit does or the truth stated in the Record? The Spirit can make this intercession in our behalf whether or not he personally is dwelling in us. Again, the point to be proved is assumed and asserted without adequate proof. Given this position, how could we answer the radical who claims that the Spirit guides him to parking places, or helps him to find the best bargain when shopping for a new car, etc.?
 - 3) See the chart given later in this study which lists some of the things done for us which are attributed to both the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The Spirit accomplishes the results by means of the inspired word; we do not need his personal presence to receive them.
- e. The position discussed tends to promote extremist views that are clearly wrong. It leans toward the subjective; the effects that are supposed to be given are nebulous and uncertain.

C. An examination of spiritual blessings as the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1. These brethren (at least some of them) say that no one now or at any other time (including the apostles) has ever had a direct, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit dwells in Christians representatively, through the word of God (Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16). Thus, the gift of the Holy Spirit is something the Spirit gives, not a gift of the Spirit himself. This is a correct view so far.
2. These brethren hold the truth regarding the cessation of the spiritual gifts. Miraculous gifts were intended only for the time of the church's infancy.
3. The gift the Holy Spirit gives according to this view is pardon from past sins; or the spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3); or citizenship in the kingdom of God (Col. 1:13-14); or eternal life in heaven (1 John 2:25; 5:11; Rom. 6:23); or a combination of some or all of these blessings. Acts 2:38 is compared with Acts 3:19, and the parallels between the two verses are demonstrated. The point is made that the "gift of the Holy Spirit" and "the time of refreshing" are said to be equivalents (which is true); and the latter is said to be identical to the spiritual blessings of Ephesians 1:3, hence, "the gift of the Holy Spirit is also explained as those blessings. Those baptized into Christ are "made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). Since we are lead to be baptized by the Spirit's instruction, the reward of his leadership is attributed to him. This figurative drinking is said to be the imbibing of the spiritual blessings.
 - a. If the gift of the Holy Spirit is forgiveness of sins (pardon), then Peter was being redundant in his statement: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and you will receive pardon."
 - b. If the other spiritual blessings in Christ are meant, there might not be any redundancy. The same is true if the gift is citizenship in the kingdom or the hope of eternal life in heaven.
 - c. But the gift is something different from remission of sins; and if one has the remission of sins he also has all the other spiritual blessings: they come in the same package.
 - d. If eternal life is synonymous with the gift of the Holy Spirit, then it is given on the conditions of repentance and baptism. But 2 Peter 1:5-11 shows that entrance into heaven (where eternal life is actually given) is conditioned on developing the graces. However, we have eternal life here in hope

(in prospect and promise)—Titus 1:2; 3:7; Romans 8:24-25; 1 John 2:25. So it is difficult to find anything that is clearly wrong with the view that the gift of the Holy Spirit is eternal life—at least on the basis of our present inquiry.

4. While this view offers nothing that would lead one into error, there still seems to be something lacking.

D. A examination of the view that the gift of the Spirit was miraculous abilities.

1. First, the gift of the Holy Spirit is something given by the Holy Spirit, not the gift of the Spirit as a person. This conclusion is reached from the following considerations.

- a. "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]." *Ye* is the subject of the clause; *shall receive* is the predicate (verb); *gift* is the thing to be received. "Shall receive" is a transitive verb; as such, it must have a direct object; the direct object must be in the accusative (objective) case. The word *gift* is in the accusative case in the Greek text. Therefore, the word "gift" is the direct object of the verb "shall receive," and thus, the gift is something the Spirit provides. The word *Spirit* ("pneumatōs") is in the genitive case in the Greek text, which is the simple possessive case in English. Greek authorities say that there are other usages of the genitive than that of showing possession, but it appears that the common usage is possessive. If this is so in the present passage, then the gift is something which the Spirit gives.
 - b. The same phraseology is found in other passages which are not disputed.
 - 1) John 4:10: "If thou knewest *the gift of God*..." No one understands this gift as God himself, but something God gives. "Gift" is in the accusative case and "God" is in the genitive case. Why should we think of the gift in John 4:10 as something God gives and in Acts 2:38 as the gift of the Spirit himself?
 - 2) Acts 8:20: "...Thou hast thought that the gift of God..." The same cases of the key words are present in this clause, also. Yet no one understands the gift as God, but something God gives.
 - 3) Ephesians 4:7: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of *the gift of Christ*." The gift is something which Christ gives, not the gift of Christ himself.
 - c. For these viable reasons we understand Acts 2:38 as referring to a gift which is given by the Holy Spirit. If this is a sound, accurate conclusion, then the first proposition considered is wrong, and the second or third is correct.
2. Consider some reasons why the gift of the Holy Spirit is the miraculous gifts bestowed on believers during the first century.
- a. It was a statement given to people living more than 1900 years ago; it was not something said in a 20th century setting. The exact setting was one overwhelmingly supernatural. The apostles had just received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4); Peter had informed the multitude that what they were seeing and hearing was in fulfillment of Joel (2:28), a promise that God would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh (Acts 2:16-18). With this as the setting, what would *you* have expected to receive when Peter promised you "the gift of the Holy Spirit?" Certainly not some ordinary indwelling.
 - b. The expression, "gift of the Holy Spirit," occurs only twice in the Bible: in Acts 2:38 and Acts 10:45. In both of these cases, the situation is the same: a miraculous setting. "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the *gift of the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 10:45).
 - 1) Cornelius and his household had received the miraculous ability to speak in other tongues; this supernatural gift was delivered directly from heaven without any human agency being involved, just as had been the case with the apostles in Acts 2:1-4. Peter's later report of these events in Acts 11 shows that this outpouring of power came just as he began to speak (11:15). The Greek word used emphasizes this fact.
 - 2) In the sermon on Pentecost Day, Peter stated that the gift being displayed was intended to be for "all flesh" (Acts 2:17). This meant that it was to be given to both Jew and Gentile, since this is the meaning of the phrase. It was given to Jews in Acts 2, and to Gentiles in Acts 10.

- 3) The gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 10:45 was a miraculous ability; the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 was also a promise of the same; it came directly in Acts 10; it would come through the apostles in Acts 2.
- c. In view of the powerful miraculous flavor of Pentecost Day (Acts 2), it is incongruous to try to make the gift of the Spirit some ordinary indwelling. It is entirely reasonable to expect this gift to be miraculous, more so than the alternatives.
- d. Multitudes of Jewish people were present, from all over the Roman Empire. In a short time they must return to their homes. Many of these had obeyed the gospel; some of them would doubtless remain in Judea to learn more of this new religion they had espoused, but many would need to go back home. But since they knew so little about the kingdom, how could they be expected to remain faithful and carry out their obligations to the Lord, having only an elementary understanding of it? There was no written New Testament. What they needed was exactly what the apostles provided where ever they planted a congregation: some miraculous gifts. Before they could spread the gospel in their homelands, they needed the ability to receive further details of truth, and the ability to confirm their spoken words with miraculous signs. Paul provided these spiritual gifts to the new converts at Ephesus (Acts 19:1ff); Peter and John did the same with the Samaritan converts (Acts 8:14ff). These spiritual gifts were provided the church at Corinth (I Cor. 12-14), in the churches of Galatia (Gal. 3:5), and in every other locality where the need existed and there was an apostle available. Acts 19:6; Romans 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:6.
- e. To hold the gift of Acts 2:38 as miraculous endowments of the Holy Spirit is to put that worthy passage in complete concord with Mark 16:15-20.
 - 1) Mark 16:15-16 requires that the gospel be preached to all people; Acts 2 is an example of how that great work was begun, with salvation being extended to those believers who would repent and be baptized.
 - 2) Mark 16:17-18 states that certain miraculous signs would follow believers. Note that this promise was not limited to the apostles, but was to be exercised by believers. But not all believers had miraculous gifts. These signs were in consequence of the bestowal of miraculous powers and not the result of having obeyed the gospel. The gifts were distributed according to the will of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11).
3. Consider some objections and problems relating to this view.
 - a. Acts 10:47 speaks of Cornelius receiving the Holy Spirit, but verse 45 speaks of it as the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is called "metonymy of the cause." In this case, the Holy Spirit is put for the thing given (verse 47). That which was poured out upon Cornelius (Acts 10) and the apostles (Acts 2) was not the Holy Spirit as a person, but the power which pertained to him. To receive the Holy Spirit in those cases was to obtain the power of the Spirit. To receive the gift of the Spirit as promised in Acts 2 was to receive the power of the Spirit (through the imposition of the apostles' hands).
 - b. Some object that if this is interpretation is true, then we cannot preach Acts 2:38 today. But Mark 16:17-20 immediately follows verses 15-16, and we have no trouble making the proper distinction between the two sections. The first part (16:15-16) applies to all time; but the second part (16:17-18) had application only to the age of miracles.
 - c. Another objects, saying that since remission of sins is offered to every believer who repents and is baptized, then the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit is also extended to each who thus obeys. But by using proper inductive logic, as we do in discussing Mark 16:15-20, we can see that the miraculous aspect of the passage applied only to the miraculous age. This is just another case of "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The miraculous gift of the Spirit is no more offered to everyone than the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the baptism of fire were ordained for every person in John's audience (Matt. 3:11-12) when those two subjects were first broached.
 - d. Another objection asserts that only the apostles performed any miracles from Acts two through Acts five. But just because there is no specific record that any other persons received miraculous gifts

through the apostles, and exercised those gifts during this period of time, does not prove there were none. The time period spanning those chapters is short, and all the apostles were still in Jerusalem; it was mainly their work that was being recorded. The inspired historian recorded only what was necessary to accomplish his purpose; it was not necessary to include reports of all the activities of the brethren that transpired during that time frame (miraculous or non-miraculous).

- e. It is argued that John would be filled with the Holy Ghost (Luke 1:15), and yet he did no miracles (John 10:41), thus, he had a non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit. But John was inspired (Luke 7:29-30): he had a miraculous gift.
4. Consider some additional passages.
- a. Galatians 3:2: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Many infer from this statement that a personal indwelling of the Spirit is meant, but verse 5 shows that the apostle had in mind the miraculous gifts of the Spirit: "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Paul is showing in the book that he is a genuine apostle, that the gospel he preached is the only one authorized, and that the gospel has superceded the Law of Moses. His argument in this passage is that the gifts of the Spirit came through the gospel (the hearing of faith), and not by the Law.
 - b. Romans 8:9 is used to show that all who belong to Christ must have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."
 - 1) The work of the Holy Spirit in connection with the scheme of redemption was to reveal the mind of God to men (I Cor. 2:9-13) and to confirm the revealed word by miraculous signs (Heb. 2:3-4; Mark 16:20). Inspired men in the first century proved their messages by working miracles by the power of the Spirit. Preachers then used the Holy Spirit to prove they had the word of God; those who claim a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit use the word of God to try to prove they have the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) Is there anything in the context of Romans 8 which would lead Paul to say that all who belong to Christ will have the Spirit dwelling in them in some non-miraculous way? Nothing. However, there is a reason for him to refer to the miraculous gifts furnished by the Spirit to him and others who were teaching the truth. Romans deals with the problem of the Law of Moses and the gospel of Christ. Judaizers sought to turn the Gentile converts from the gospel to the Law; these false teachers could not confirm their doctrines by miraculous signs; those who preached the true gospel had the power to confirm what they preached; Paul reminds them of this fact in the latter part of the verse in question.
 - 3) It was a miraculous gift Paul indicates, and not some uncertain, indefinable indwelling. The phrase, "in the Spirit," at the beginning of verse nine, is a reference to miraculous endowments (Thayer, p.522). Paul did not change the subject from the miraculous power to the non-miraculous indwelling in the midst of this one verse. The apostle is saying to his auditors, "If someone comes to you teaching a doctrine which he could not confirm with Holy Spirit-empowered signs, do not believe him." Today, we have the inspired Record of divine truth to guide us into the truth and away from error. Compare:
 - a) 1 John 2:27: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." [The *anointing* was the gift of miraculous powers].
 - b) 1 Corinthians 12:10: "To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."
 - c) 1 John 2:20: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." [The

unction is a reference to spiritual gifts].

- d) 1 John 2:26-29: “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.”
- c. Acts 8:14-17. Philip, an inspired preacher and empowered to perform miracles, had proclaimed the gospel in Samaria; many people obeyed the gospel. Two apostles (Peter and John) went to Samaria, and after praying and laying their hands on these converts, the Holy Ghost was given.
 - 1) What was given was obviously visible for verse 18 says that Simon saw it. The purpose of the apostles' actions was the conferral of miraculous gifts (Acts 19:6; Rom. 1:11). What is there about the non-miraculous indwelling that is visible? Why would Simon want the ability to confer it to others?
 - 2) These Samaritans had been converted but the Holy Spirit had come upon none of them. When the apostles laid hands on them and prayed, the Holy Spirit was then given. If the non-miraculous gift of the Spirit comes automatically at baptism, why did not these receive it then? Our situation is like that of these people: they had believed and were baptized, but had not received the gift of the Spirit until the apostles came. We have believed and were baptized and have not received the Spirit: and will not because there is no apostle on earth to lay hands on us.
 - 3) What these Samaritans received through Peter and John were miraculous gifts, such as were conferred on the Ephesians by Paul (Acts 19:1-6).
- d. Acts 5:32: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Instead of teaching the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, this passage discusses the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Notice the context of the statement. The Jews had accused the apostles of preaching error by proclaiming the resurrection of the Lord (Acts 4:1-2). The next morning, Peter and John were brought before the Jewish court; Acts 4:8-12 records Peter's inspired defense, which attributed the healing of the lame man (Acts 3) to the resurrected Jesus. After threatening them, the council released these apostles. In Acts 5, the Jewish leaders arrested and imprisoned all the apostles. An angel released them during the night. The apostles resumed their preaching, and were arrested again (5:25-26). The council asked why they persisted in their preaching (5:28). Acts 5:29-32 is the reply Peter gave to their question. Look at verse 32:
 - 1) To what things were the apostles witnesses? The things which are stated in verses 29-31, including the resurrection of Christ.
 - 2) The Holy Spirit is said to be a witness of something: what? The same things stated above, including the resurrection of Christ.
 - 3) How were the apostles witnesses? By being empowered by the Holy Spirit (John 15:26-27; Acts 10:38-41). How did the Holy Spirit witness these things? By the manifestation of various miracles *through the apostles*.
 - 4) Acts 5:32 is an example of the fulfillment of the promise Christ made to the apostles in John 15:26-27 and Acts 1:8.
 - a) John 15:26-27: “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.”
 - 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.”
 - 5) To whom had the Holy Spirit been given? To the obedient. For what purpose, according to the

- context, was he given? For the purpose of being witnesses of the Lord's resurrection. Does the statement of fact given in the verse apply to anyone living today? No, since we are not to be witnesses. Is the gift of the Holy Spirit in the verse miraculous or non-miraculous? Miraculous.
- e. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:13-14). "Earnest" is a term used to describe a pledge or down-payment. The supernatural endowment of the Spirit represented God's pledge or assurance of the heavenly inheritance. The *sealing* also refers to the miraculous gifts—to Christ and the apostles (John 3:33-36; 6:27; 2 Cor. 1:22).
5. A brief examination of Acts 2:39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." What is "the promise?"
- a. In Genesis 3:15, God made a vague promise that as the seed of woman, some great personage would be raised up. This promise was restated to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 (and on later occasions); Galatians 3:16 shows that the "seed" spoken of was Christ. This promise runs throughout the Old Testament, while the background was being established and the people were being prepared. It found its ultimate fulfillment in Christ and the gospel, where all families of the earth may be blessed.
- b. Part of that great promise is the prophecy of Joel 2:28. In order for Christ to accomplish successfully his great work, the miraculous element must be used. In Acts 2:16-18, Joel's prophecy was cited by Peter, and the events even then being portrayed before the eyes of the people are said to be in fulfillment of what Joel had predicted.
- c. On seeing and hearing the miracles then occurring, the people asked: "What meaneth this? Their question grew out of the fact that "...*this* (the miracles noted) was noised abroad..." Peter responded to the question:
- 1) "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel."
 - 2) Christ "hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."
 - 3) "Now when they heard this" (what Peter said), they asked another question: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (2:37).
- d. In reply to this question, Peter gave the statement of Acts 2:38-39. It recognizes the promise to Abraham (which affects all people); it includes the prediction of Joel (which affects Jew and Gentile). Everyone can enjoy pardon; and both Jew and Gentile (then) could obtain "the gift of the Holy Spirit."
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Blaspheming the Holy Spirit

A. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit is a fear-producing theme to many people.

1. The statements are found in these passages:
 - a. Matthew 12:31-32: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come."
 - b. Mark 3:28-31: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit. There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him."
2. The meaning of these passages has been debated for generations, and has been subjected to many differing interpretations.
3. These passages contain the Lord's conclusion to the points he has just made. He states in effect that there is a limit to divine mercy. There are some things which are unforgivable.
 - a. Hebrews 6:4-6: "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."
 - b. 2 Peter 2:20-22: "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."
 - c. 1 John 5:16: "If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."
4. To blaspheme means to offer injurious speech against someone or some thing. "Rail at or revile" (Vine, p.131); is used of those who railed at Christ (Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29; Luke 22:65); of those who speak contemptuously of God or of sacred things (Matt. 9:3; Mark 3:28; Rom. 2:24). To blaspheme against the Holy Spirit is thus to speak evil against him, to offer contemptuous words toward him.

B. Why is it more severe to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit than against God or Christ?

1. It is not because he is more important, more powerful, or more holy than are they. The three Persons of the Godhead are equal in all things except authority. "I and *my* Father are one" (John 10:30).
2. Both Christ and the Holy Spirit are also referred to as God:
 - a. Acts 5:3-4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."
 - b. Hebrews 1:8: "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."
3. In authority, the Father reigns supreme for "he who sends is greater than he who is sent" (cf. John 13:16). The father sent Christ (John 3:17,18); Christ sent the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26). Christ plainly stated that the Father is greater than he: "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater

than I" (John 14:28).

4. Since they are equal in all things (except authority), it is not more sinful to speak against the Spirit than against the Father or the Son. To blaspheme the Spirit must involve something else.

C. Salvation was not limited to only a few, but was intended for all.

1. Christ shed his blood for all men:

- a. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
- b. 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."
- c. 2 Corinthians 5:15: "And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."
- d. 1 Timothy 2:4-5: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
- e. 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."
- f. 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."
- g. 1 John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world."

2. Everyone has the privilege of being saved:

- a. Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light."
- 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."
- d. 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."
- e. 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."
- f. Acts 2:23, 37-41: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain....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 you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
- g. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "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. 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."
- h. 1 Timothy 1:13-15: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,

that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

- i. 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
3. But God's patience has a limit. Man can grow so hard that God's truth, and thus his grace (Rom. 5:21; Acts 10:34-35; Ps. 119:172; 1 John 3:7; John 8:32; 17:17; 1 Pet. 1:24-25) will not have the proper effect on him (Eph. 4:18-19; 1 Tim. 4:2; 2 Cor. 3:3-4).
 - a. Genesis 6:3: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."
 - b. Jeremiah 7:16: "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee."
 - c. Hosea 4:17: "Ephraim *is* joined to idols: let him alone."
 - d. Romans 1:28: "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."
 - e. 2 Peter 3:8-10: "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."
- D. We can determine what this sin is not and thereby make it easier to identify it.
 1. It is not the sin unto death of 1 John 5:16. That sin applies only to "brothers," members of the Lord's church; it is not applied to alien sinners. "If a man see his *brother* sin a sin which is not unto death he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."
 - a. 1 John 1:9 identifies the sin unto death: any sin which an erring Christian confesses will be forgiven. Repentance is unstated but implied (Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3; Acts 8:22). A sin which a erring Christian will not confess (thus from which he will not repent) will not be forgiven.
 - b. In effect the sin unto death and the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit are the same; those who are guilty will be lost. But they are not identical since one applies to an alien sinner and the one in 1 John 5:16 applies to an erring saint.
 2. It is not murder, immorality, idolatry, and other such "common" sins for Paul and many others in the New Testament were saved from such sins (I Cor. 6:9-11; I Tim. 1:13-15; Acts 26:9-11). But those who die while guilty of these sins will be lost (Gal. 5:19-21).
 3. It is not negligence to obey the gospel, for as long as an opportunity exists to obey, one can obey the gospel and be saved.
 4. It is not suicide, for one can be guilty of blaspheming the Spirit and still be alive.
 - a. Matthew 12:31-32: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."
 - b. Mark 3:28-30: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."
 5. It is not merely to speak certain words that will condemn without hope of pardon. If so, then one could ignorantly speak those words and eternally condemn his soul. Yet the gospel is extended to all, even to those Pharisees who were guilty of this sin (Acts 2:23,36; 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8). Paul confessed to being a blasphemer, yet he obtained pardon (I Tim. 1:13-15).
 6. It is not merely asserting that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub. Some have alleged that this was the

sin, and that no one today can commit it since Christ is not casting out demons now. If this assertion is so, why did the Lord include references to this sin in the New Testament? Why confuse people with unnecessary information?

E. To blaspheme means to speak impiously, irreverently and reproachfully against the Spirit.

1. The Pharisees did this (Matt. 12:24). They were blaspheming Christ as much as they were blaspheming the Holy Spirit: "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (12:24; cf. 12:28).
2. They were primarily rejecting what Jesus taught: his miracles proved his message, and they rejected this miracle as coming from God. When one rejects what Christ taught, he is rejecting Christ and the Father who sent him: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16).
3. The message Christ taught originated with God, and was conveyed inerrantly to men from Pentecost Day onward by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4; I Cor. 2:9-14; 14:37; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). The Holy Spirit caused that same message to be recorded by inspiration as the New Testament.
4. When one denies, rejects, treats with contempt that Spirit-given message, he is blaspheming its Author (the Holy Spirit). One can blaspheme by action, attitude or by words.
5. There will be no hope for such a one for he has shunned the final offer of salvation which God makes available to mankind. This is the only offer being extended today, and after it there will be no other!
 - a. 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."
 - b. 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."
 - c. 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."

F. An illustration depicting the sin blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

1. A man fell into a river which was rushing toward a great waterfall. Someone threw him a rope in order for him to grasp it and be drawn to safety; he refused the offer. Farther downstream, another person cast him another rope which he likewise ignored. As he drew nearer the cataract, a third man threw him another rope, the last one to be offered. If he refused this rope there was no hope of escape.
2. God, through the centuries of the Old Testament era, pleaded with mankind by the prophets, a plea that was mostly ignored. During his personal ministry, Christ pleaded with the Jews; his pleas were shunned by the majority. Finally, the Holy Spirit revealed (by the edict and power of God) the gospel (John 16:13; 8:32; Acts 2:1ff; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; Jude 3). Those who accept the offer will be saved; those who reject it have forfeited their only hope.
3. But can one, who at one time utterly shunned the message of the Spirit, later change his mind, and receive salvation? Yes, if he is willing and able to meet the gospel conditions.
 - a. John 8:21,24: "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in

- your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come....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. Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - c. Romans 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - 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."
 - e. 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."
4. The sin of blaspheming the Spirit is not a single act but a sin of disposition. It is developed gradually.
- a. One grieves the Spirit (Eph. 4:30) by not living right. One resists the Spirit (Acts 7:51) when he withstands the word and refuses to believe the truth. One quenches the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19; cf. Heb. 10:29) when he disputes, denies, opposes, rejects, hates, perverts, and refuses to obey the word of God.
 - 1) Ephesians 4:30: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."
 - 2) Acts 7:51: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 5:19: "Quench not the Spirit."
 - 4) Hebrews 10:29: "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?"
 - b. The result is a hard heart on which the Spirit-given word has no effect, since he has rejected that message of truth.
 - 1) Matthew 13:13-16: "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 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. But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."
 - 2) John 12:37-40: "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."
 - 3) Hebrews 6:4-6: "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."
 - 4) Hebrews 10:26-29: "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?"
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- c. One can get himself into such a state of hardheartedness that he will not and cannot accept the gospel; but if he can muster a change in his attitude of heart, he could receive salvation.
 - d. Many get themselves into such a deep state of rebellion and hardness that they cannot (or will not) obey the gospel: this is the type person the Lord describes as a blasphemer of the Holy Spirit! This sin can be accomplished by words spoken or by deeds done, which reflect the hard, impenitent attitude of heart that rejects the truth of God's word.
5. The Bible gives examples of this sin.
- a. Acts 13:44-46: "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."
 - b. Acts 28:24-28: "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their eyes*, and hear with *their ears*, and understand with *their heart*, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."
6. If we hate the truth, reject it and refuse to believe and obey it, we are guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit; if we are concerned about whether we have committed this sin, that is a sure sign we have not!
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How the Holy Spirit Influences Men

- A. The Bible presents the Holy Spirit as an active, powerful member of the Godhead.
1. The preceding information demonstrated this to be so.
 2. But how does he exert influence over the lives of men? How does he influence the alien sinner to become a child of God? How does he move Christians to do our duty? We shall see in this section that he does many things, but the question at this point is, How does he do these things?
 3. Many people think the Holy Spirit does his work through miraculous means, directly and supernaturally bringing his influence to bear on human beings.
 - a. The Bible says he is active in the salvation of alien sinners. "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11). The usual understanding is that he does this by a direct operation on the heart.
 - b. The Bible also teaches that he is active in the sanctification (the edifying) of the saints.
 - 1) 2 Thessalonians 2:13: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."
 - 2) 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."
 - c. His work involves reproving the world: "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. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:7-11).
 - 1) Of sin.
 - a) The Jews rejected Jesus.
 - "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."
 - Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:36-37: "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?"
 - b) The whole world is involved in sin.
 - Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 1 John 5:19: "...The whole world lieth in wickedness."
 - 2) Of righteousness.
 - a) He would show the world that Jesus was innocent of wrongdoing; he was not crucified because of any sinful or criminal conduct.
 - b) He would show the world that righteousness is required of anyone who desires to please God and be admitted into Heaven.
 - 3) Of judgment.
 - a) He would show the Jews and the world that the judgment that had been pronounced upon Christ was unjust. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 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. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly,

that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:32-36).

- b) Those who are guilty of sin are facing the grim prospect of standing before the judgment seat of Christ in an unprepared state (2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:31-46).
 - 4) "The three areas in which the Spirit would convict are sin, righteousness and judgment. To convict one of sin is to bring to one's consciousness an awareness of the enormity of it and the tragedy which it brings; of righteousness by showing that only those who work it are accepted of God (Acts 10:34,35), and of judgment by pointing out that it will bring condemnation to all who do not turn in penitence to the Saviour" (Woods, *Commentary on John*, pp.340f).
 - 5) "The time will come when the world will be forced to face the fact of judgment and he who is its ruler—the devil—has already been judged, i.t., condemned for this reason....The power of Satan is very definitely restrained (Heb. 2:14, 15), and will ultimately be ended forevermore" (Woods, p.341).
 - 6) The Spirit did this through the message of truth he gave through inspired men.
4. To many people, the Holy Spirit, his identity, his nature, and his work are mysterious. Consequently, they interpret his work as mystical and miraculous, thinking that the primary means he has of operating in our world is through the supernatural. The following are examples of this false teaching:
- a. Lorraine Boettner, a leading Calvinist advocate, stated: "In addition to the outward general call to salvation which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation. The external call (which is made to all without distinction) can be, and often is, rejected; whereas the internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ. He is not limited in His word of applying salvation by man's will, nor is He dependent upon man's cooperation for success. The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ. God's grace, therefore, is invincible; it never fails to result in the salvation of those to whom it is extended" (*The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, p.435).
 - b. Boettner says regarding the elect following their call: "All who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end" (ibid.). Thus [according to this error], once a person is saved, the Spirit does everything for him that is needed—independent of his own will and activity. He cannot fall from grace.
5. But what does the **Bible** say about the method of the Spirit's influence?
- B. In times past he acted directly and miraculously in special situations.
1. He exerted direct, miraculous influence on certain animals in a few select cases.
 - a. Read Numbers 22:22-35: He caused Balaam's donkey to speak with a man's voice. (Since there is perfect unity between the members of the Godhead, what one member of the Godhead is said to have done from heaven, can be also attributed to the other two). The donkey was as much a donkey after this episode as he had been before; this miraculous influence did not change its nature.
 - b. Read 1 Samuel 6:1-12: Two milk cows were hitched to a cart, their calves were put up at home; the cows were guided to the right place, bearing the ark of the Lord. This supernatural influence did not change the nature of these cows.
 2. The Holy Spirit exerted direct miraculous influence on selected men in guiding them to receive and communicate God's word. "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" (2 Pet. 1:21).
 - a. David was inspired to transmit God's will to men.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 23:1-2: "Now these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue."
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- 2) 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."
- b. The apostles of Christ also received this inspiration.
 - 1) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
3. The direct influence of deity upon these animals and men did not change the nature of any of those involved.
 - a. The donkey and cattle remained the same afterwards as they had been before.
 - b. The men were still as likely to commit sin afterwards as before. Peter communicated an infallible message, but later fell victim to the sin of violating the same truth he had delivered.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) Galatians 2:11-14: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"
- C. In the conviction and conversion of alien sinners, the Spirit uses indirect influence.
 1. There is a void or empty space between two minds which requires a medium across which communication must be established.
 - a. We cannot know what is in the mind of someone else unless that person uses some medium by which to express to our mind what he wants us to know. "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" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - b. We could not know what is in the mind of God but for the fact that the Spirit searched God's mind and communicated that message to us. Again: "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" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - c. The Spirit used words, at first spoken words, and written words later, in giving the message to those who were lost. He did not exert direct influence of mind-on-mind in instructing them in what they must do to be saved. This truth will be firmly and clearly established as the study progresses.
 2. Satan is forced to use mediums through which he exerts his evil influence.
 - a. When he enticed Eve to violate the God-given edict forbidding the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tempter did not exert direct, mind-on-mind, miraculous influence. Rather, he offered his temptations by the medium of words. And since there were no other human beings to do his evil work for him, he operated in the guise of the wily serpent.
 - b. When the devil wanted to tempt the Savior, he used the medium of words which was addressed to the natural appetites of the fleshly body and the pride of life (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). Even though he approached Christ in person (evidently), he still had to use a medium to offer the temptations.
 - c. 1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the

world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." When he tempts us today, he does so indirectly through the same three avenues: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For agents he uses false teachers, sinners, situations that develop, and the natural weaknesses of the flesh.

- d. In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, the devil was the source of their temptation: "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3). But in the next verse Peter asked, "Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?" The passage does not teach that Satan miraculously placed the temptation into their minds; rather he used the medium of their own greed and pride to entrap them!
3. The Holy Spirit uses the medium of words to convict and convert alien sinners.
 - a. 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." We can know what the Spirit says by hearing and learning his words.
 - b. Revelation 2:7: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." We can know what the Spirit says by hearing and learning what he has expressed in words.

D. The Holy Spirit's medium is the inspired word of God.

1. The void (space) between the mind of God and the mind of men must be breached.
 - a. The Holy Spirit searched out the information in God's mind and communicated that message to the minds of selected men by means of inspiration. That information was given to those men in the form of a message of words.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-13: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
 - 2) There is no natural way that men can learn the mind of God; only by the supernatural means of inspiration could God's will be obtained by man. "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. 2:14, ASV).
 - b. But when that message of words was given to the inspired men, they were used in communicating that same message to the lost. Only when the lost received and obeyed that message were they saved.
 - 1) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - 2) 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."
2. In the creation, God through the Spirit used direct, irresistible force. "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 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" (Ps. 33:6-9).
3. In changing hearts, he uses a message of words.
 - a. 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."
 - 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. 1 Corinthians 1:21: "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."
 - d. 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."
 - e. Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
 - f. 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."
 - g. 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."
 - h. 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."
 4. He uses persuasion to save and force to punish. Because God loved faithful Noah he told him to prepare the ark for the saving of himself and his family. Because God's holiness and justice required the punishment of sin, he brought a great flood upon the earth to destroy the sinful. God intends to bring great punishment upon the disobedient at the last day, but in the meantime, he urges mankind to heed his word, and avoid the awesome penalty of sin.
 5. The Holy Spirit speaks through the inspired word of God.
 - a. 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." Revelation 2:7: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which
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- is in the midst of the paradise of God."
- b. He gave that word and commanded its dissemination. When that word is heard, believed, and obeyed, people are thereby drawn to the Lord. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45).
 - c. This process is described in the parable of the sower. The result of the sowing depends on the reaction of the individual to the word preached. "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:11-15).
6. If the Holy Spirit exerts his saving influence by direct force, separate and apart from the word, there are some questions that cannot be answered.
- a. Why are there no Christians where the gospel has not gone?
 - b. Why are we commanded to go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone?
 - c. Why is there no knowledge of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, and heaven where the gospel has not been taught?
 - d. Where was the Holy Spirit during the Dark Ages when the Bible was hidden from the common man?
 - e. Who is responsible when a sinner dies lost? If the Holy Spirit must operate on the sinner's heart directly before he can be saved, and this operation is not done, who is responsible for the lost soul?
 - f. Why is there no faith where the gospel has not gone? If the Spirit gives faith apart from the word, why is there no faith without the gospel?
 - 1) Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - 2) Acts 15:7: "...Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."
7. If we can see how the Holy Spirit strove with the sinful men of past we can see how he does so today.
- a. He strove with Noah's generation (Gen. 6:3); Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5); the Spirit strove with them in the person of Noah who did the preaching (1 Pet. 3:18-20).
 - 1) Genesis 6:3: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."
 - 2) 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."
 - 3) 1 Peter 3:18-20: "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."
 - b. The Spirit strove with ancient Israel; this striving was done by the Spirit when he guided the inspired prophets in preaching to the people: "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" (Neh. 9:30). When they resisted the words spoken by the prophets, they resisted the Holy Spirit. "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye" (Acts 7:51).
 - c. The Spirit strove with the Jews through the inspired preacher Stephen (Acts 6:9-10; 7:55; 7:51-53).
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These Jews refused to accept the truth the Spirit proclaimed to them through Stephen, and proceeded to stone him to death (7:54-60).

- 1) Acts 6:9-10: "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."
 - 2) Acts 7:55: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."
 - 3) Acts 7:51-53: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*."
 - 4) When they resisted the words spoken by Stephen, they resisted the Holy Spirit.
- d. The Spirit strove with the great audience of Jews who came together to hear the apostles on Pentecost Day. The apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit to present a message of words to the people (Acts 2:1-4). The message convicted some of them that they had killed the Messiah and were guilty before God (Acts 2:36-37). Those who accepted the message of words presented by the apostles were convicted by the Holy Spirit who was operating through this spoken message (Acts 2:40-41). Those who are operated on by the Holy Spirit may accept or reject the teaching according to their choice.
- 1) 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."
 - 2) 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 you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Acts 2:40-41: "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."
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The Holy Spirit Operates Through the Word

WORK	HOLY SPIRIT	WORD
Instructs	Neh. 9:20,30	2 Tim. 3:16-17
Begets	John 3:5	1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18
New Birth	John 3:5	1 Peter 1:22-23
Quickens	John 6:63	Psalm 119:50
Teaches	John 14:26	John 6:44-45; Titus 2:11-12
Convicts	John 16:8	Titus 1:9
Comforts	Acts 9:31	1 Th. 4:18; Rom. 15:4
Gives Love	Rom. 5:5	1 John 2:5
Saves	1 Cor. 6:11	Acts 4:4; Jas. 1:21
Washes	1 Cor. 6:11	Eph. 5:26
Sanctifies	1 Pet. 1:2	John 17:17
Converts	John 16:7-8	Psalm 19:7
Makes Free	Rom. 8:2	John 8:32; 17:17
Strengthens	Eph. 3:16	Deut. 11:8; Acts 20:32
Indwells Saints	Eph. 5:18-19	Col. 3:16
Leads	Rom. 8:14	Psalm 119:105
Witnesses	Heb. 10:15; 1 John 5:6-8	Heb. 10:15-16; Jer. 31:31-34
Produces Fruit	Gal. 5:22-23	Col. 1:5-6

E. In the light of the foregoing, it is clear that the Spirit operates through the Word.

1. The effects wrought, the emotions stirred, and the changes made (on us) are all produced by the Holy Spirit through the medium of God's word.
2. If a man chops down a tree with an axe, one could attribute the result either to the man or the axe since both are directly involved; but neither could accomplish the feat without the other. So it is with regards to the Spirit and the Word!
3. If we reject the Spirit-given word, what is left? When we reject his word, we also reject God, Christ, and all hope of salvation and heaven! If we accept that Spirit-given word, then all spiritual blessings are opened to us!
 - a. Ephesians 6:17: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
 - 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 discernor 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

meeckness 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."

- 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."

How the Holy Spirit Operates Is Seen in Cases of Conversion

CASE	GOSPEL	ACTION	ACTION	ACTION	RESULT
Acts 2	Spoke	Heard	Pricked	Baptized	Added, Saved
Acts 8:1-13	Preached	Heard	Believed	Baptized	Great Joy
Acts 8:26-40	Preached	Heard	Believed	Baptized	Rejoiced
Acts 10 & 11	Spoke	[Heard]	Believed	Baptized	[Saved]
Acts 16:12-15	Spoke	Heart Opened	Attended	Baptized	[Saved]
Acts 16:19-34	Spoke	[Heard]	[Believed]	Baptized	Washed Stripes
Acts 18:1-8	Reasoned	Heard	Believed	Baptized	[Saved]
Acts 9, 22, 26	Spoke	Heard	Believed	Baptized	Sins Washed

How the Holy Spirit Operates Is Seen in Cases of Non-conversion

CASE	GOSPEL	ACTION	ACTION	RESULT
Acts 5:29-33	Spoke	Heard	Cut to the Heart	Wanted to Kill Them
Acts 7	Spoke	Heard	Cut to the Heart	Resisted, Stoned
Acts 13:14-46	Spoke	Heard	Contradicted & Blasphemed	Rejected
Acts 17:16-33	Spoke	Heard	Mocked	Rejected
Acts 24:24-25	Reasoned	[Heard]	Trembled	Put Off
Acts 26	Spoke	[Heard]	Believed	Rejected
Acts 28:23-29	Expounded & Testified	[Heard]	Did Not Believe	Disputed

F. An examination of the above cases reveals the following:

1. The word of God was presented in every case.
 - a. Not a word was said to them about looking for a direct operation of the Spirit.
 - b. In each case the Spirit gave the message which was presented by the preacher. The Lord's command in Mark 16:15-16 was being fulfilled: "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. In each case the word was heard, even though a specific statement to that effect is not reported. Not everyone who heard the message believed it, hence were not drawn to Christ by the Father.
 - a. John 8:37: "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you."
 - b. John 8:44-45: "Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not."
3. Belief is stated or implied in each case of conversion. Without faith in God there is no spiritual blessing (Heb. 11:6); without faith in Christ and his gospel there is no salvation.
 - a. 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."
 - b. 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. 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."
4. Repentance is stated or implied in each case of conversion.
 - a. Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - b. Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
5. Confession of faith is present in each case in stated fact or by implication.
 - a. Matthew 10:32: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also 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 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
6. Baptism is specifically mentioned in each case of conversion.

G. If the direct operation of the Spirit theory is so, there are some awful consequences.

1. The theory would eliminate the mediatorship of Christ. "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
 2. It would remove the need for the gospel and would thus mean Christ died in vain.
 3. It would erase the purpose and mission of the apostles.
 4. It would eliminate the work of evangelism then and now.
 5. It denies the need for obedience to the gospel.
 - a. Matthew 7:21-23: "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. Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
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- c. John 14:21: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."
 - d. 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."
 - e. 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."
 - f. 1 John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
6. It makes God a respecter of persons. "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).
 7. It contradicts what Christ said. "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" (Matt. 7:21-23).
 8. It removes all personal responsibility from man and places it all entirely on God.
 9. If the theory is true, how and why will we all be judged by the word? "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" (John 12:48).
- H. The theory is a short-cut, a cheap man-made substitution for God's will.
1. It puts the burden and responsibility on God entirely.
 2. It is not only unscriptural (totally lacking in scriptural authority), but it is anti-scriptural (it is a direct repudiation of what the scriptures teach).
 3. God's truth is plain and unmistakable on this matter.
 - a. The Holy Spirit convicts and converts alien sinners only through the word; he does so only when the word is faithfully preached, believed and obeyed.
 - 1) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:11: "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."
 - 3) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 4) 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."
 - 5) 2 Corinthians 2:17: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."
 - 6) Galatians 2:4-5: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."
 - 7) 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."
 - b. Our part is simple, easy -- AND REQUIRED!

The Holy Spirit and the Word of God

A. We need to learn to depend upon the Word of God more.

1. Only if we respect God's revelation, the Bible, will we be impressed with the fact that his word is the sum of our information regarding his will.
2. If we do not know the Bible, we do not know God's will, because apart from the Bible nothing is known about the will of God. No one on earth can know a single word God has ever spoken or a single thought he has ever had that is not recorded in the Bible!
3. Unless we know and understand the Bible we cannot do what pleases our Creator.
4. Are we achieving the purpose God intended for us to accomplish?

B. Many have lost respect for the Word of God.

1. They have substituted an erroneous concept of how the Holy Spirit operates in convicting and converting alien sinners.
 - a. Erroneous doctrines and practices have been developed which assert that one is saved by a mysterious, direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the human heart.
 - b. Virtually all of the denominations have a perverted view of how the Spirit operates in leading the alien to salvation and guiding the saved in doing their duty.
2. In a bulletin article, a gospel preacher asserted: "Since the Holy Spirit does indwell the Christian, we ought to ask, 'What is the purpose of His indwelling?' Is it not possible that one purpose would be to put into your mind just the right thought, or word, or action for a given situation, even though you have not just prayed, or read the Scriptures? I think He does and I think that the 'right thought, or word, or action' is in a Christian's mind because of a life committed to prayer and Bible reading. In those instances where necessary, the indwelling Holy Spirit needs only to supply you with the 'right thought, or word, or action' from your own sub-conscience. In those instances it is the Holy Spirit speaking to you, but He is still using His instrument, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17)." [Vero Beach church bulletin, February 7, 1990, page 2].
 - a. If he is writing what it appears, he is saying that the Holy Spirit puts into the Christian's mind certain thoughts, words, and actions which are "flashes of insight that help us and guide us" (ibid.), that these are separate and distinct from the written word, but are equal in authority to the written word.
 - b. Does the Holy Spirit operate in helping and guiding a Christian by any means other than by the written word of God? Some say he does, and therefore depend on a human source of information instead of a divine source in living the Christian life. How could one know whether a sudden thought had been prompted by the Holy Spirit or by some devilish urge?
3. If the Holy Spirit operates separate from the written word in leading us into doing our duty before God, then the written word is insufficient to that end; something else is needed.
4. It is obvious that we need a clear perception of the Holy Spirit's work. This study is somewhat of a review of more detailed information presented earlier on the Holy Spirit.

C. Who is the Holy Spirit? Is he a real Person or some kind of mysterious force?

1. The common denominational understanding is that he is some kind of power and that his operations are mysterious and ghost-like which are beyond human comprehension. Untrue!
2. The Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead.
 - a. The word "God" is used in the Bible as the name of Divine Nature. There is only one Divine Nature; thus the Bible speaks of "One God."
 - b. But the Godhead is comprised of three distinct Persons, each possessing all the characteristics of Divine Nature. "God" is descriptive of what? Divine Nature. How many Divine Natures are there? Only one. Therefore there is only one "God." How many persons possess that Divine Nature? Three. Who are they? The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Each is referred in the Bible as "God."

- 1) Father—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."
 - 2) Son—John 1:1,14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....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) Holy Spirit—Acts 5:3-4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."
 - d. Plural pronouns are used in reference to the Godhead: "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).
3. The Holy Spirit is a Person—as much so as the Father and the Son. A proper appreciation of this fact will go far in helping people to avoid error on the subject of how the Holy Spirit operates. A clear perception of the personality of the Holy Spirit will help us avoid many of the current errors regarding his work.
- a. He is not some mysterious, incomprehensible "something" that operates on you in a manner beyond your understanding. That is human doctrine, not Bible truth!
 - b. He is spoken of in the Bible as a masculine person [he, him]: "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" (John 16:13-14).
 - c. He is usually named third in the listings given.
 - 1) 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."
 - 2) 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."
- D. Since he is a real person, he communicates as every intelligent being communicates.
1. One intelligent being communicates with another intelligent being by means of words (signs of ideas) or their equivalent.
 - a. If this is so, and we shall show it is, then the idea that he leads in some mysterious fashion (hunches, intuition, inner leadings) is false.
 - b. What does the Bible say? This is the only court to which we may appeal!
 2. 2 Samuel 23:2: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."
 - a. He spake with words, not by hunches, etc.
 - b. There is no other way intelligent information can be conveyed.
 3. 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."
 - a. What did the Spirit do here? He spoke. How did he speak? Plainly, clearly. How did he convey the information? Through the use of language.
 - b. There is no other way.
 4. Revelation 2:11: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches..." This statement is found seven times in Revelation 2-3.
 - a. These seven letters never had independent circulation; they were always part of the book of Revelation. The statement is made in each of the letters.
 - b. The book shows that Christ dictated the letters (and the rest of the Book), and John wrote the information down. What Christ revealed to John was recorded; when we receive what is recorded,
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we are receiving what the Spirit says.

- c. The way the Holy Spirit communicated to the churches of that day was by means of words; those words were written; and when one received that written message, he received what the Spirit said.

E. It is an important fact that the Spirit is the revealer, not the originator, of truth.

1. The Father and the Son are the originators of truth; the Spirit's function was to reveal what they originated. If this is so, and we shall show that it is, then the claims made today that the Holy Spirit influences people separate and apart from, and independent of, the written word of truth, are false.
2. 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. He shall glorify me: *for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.*"
 - a. He shall not speak of himself but will reveal what the Father and Son originated.
 - b. The Holy Spirit is the revealer of truth; he is not the originator of truth.
3. A review of some things seen thus far:
 - a. We have seen who the Spirit is—the third member of the Godhead.
 - b. We have seen how he communicates—by means of words.
 - c. We have seen that his mission was not to originate, but to reveal, truth.

F. How did he reveal that truth?

1. Three points are made in a passage that is not familiar to those who speak long and loud about the Holy Spirit: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:9-13).
 - a. Verses 9-10 show that a revelation is required for us to know God, and that this revelation of truth was made by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Verse 11 tells how that information was revealed: through a message of words. He uses an excellent illustration to picture the problem. It is impossible for you to know what I am thinking until I reveal my thoughts to you; and I must use words to make my thoughts known to you. It is likewise impossible for us to know what is in the mind of God without the revelation given by the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Verses 12-13 show how the Holy Spirit's revelation came to man: "Which things also we speak."
 - 1) We—Paul, the other apostles, and other inspired men. Compare Ephesians 3:3-5: "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."
 - 2) Speak: they used words to communicate the message. These words were not furnished by human wisdom, but by the Holy Spirit.
2. The revelation was given through the work of the Holy Spirit; he used the inspired men selected for that job to receive and record the message which he gave to them.
3. Where is that body of truth located today which was revealed by the Holy Spirit?
 - a. 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." God (the Father) once spoke through the Old Testament prophets; he no longer speaks in that fashion; now he speaks through his Son.
 - b. Hebrews 2:1-4: "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*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" Another contrasting statement is here given. The words spoken through angels (they were instrumental in giving the Old Covenant—Acts 7:53) was strictly bound, and every transgression was punished severely; how much more so will our rejection of the New Covenant (which provides the great salvation) be punished!

- c. The message of the Son (which gives the great salvation) is inscribed on the pages of the New Testament. To reject the New Testament, or any part thereof, is to reject the message originated by the Father and the Son and revealed by the Spirit.

G. To what extent does that message meet our needs?

1. Is it entirely sufficient to satisfy all our needs? Or does it only partially do so?
2. The written word of God is fully able to provide for all our needs. "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 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - a. The man of God is completely supplied by the inspired scriptures with all he needs. The New Testament provides all the information we need to become children of God: "that we may be perfect (complete)."
 - b. Further, it is the instrument we have at our disposal which is totally adequate to enable us to fulfill all of our obligations as Christians.
 - c. It prepares us and arms us to do our full duty toward God and man.
3. But what harm comes if I think that my intuitions, hunches, inner leadings are given to me by the Holy Spirit?
 - a. The first thing wrong with it is, "It is not true!"
 - b. We should not want to believe anything that is erroneous. We should not want to accept any idea or practice that might affect our salvation.
 - c. It impeaches the passage we have just considered. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 shows the truth that the written word furnishes us everything we need spiritually. There is no support here (or elsewhere in the Bible) for the theory. If the theory is true, then the word alone is insufficient—we need the word plus something else to have all that God offers to us.
 - 1) But the passage says the written word is sufficient! What it says is either true or false. Which is it?
 - 2) If we cannot believe and rely upon this scriptural statement, which passage is reliable? If it misleads me here, how can I rely on it anywhere else?
 - 3) The view impeaches the integrity and authority of the word of God, and must be rejected by all who love God and his word!
 - d. Those who teach this view end up teaching things which are contrary to what the Holy Spirit teaches in the New Testament.
 - 1) He is charged with saying one thing in the Scriptures and another conflicting doctrine to sectarian preachers; and often these people teach contradictory doctrines; but each claims that he is lead by the Holy Spirit. If so, the Holy Spirit tells one man to deny what he has told another man to affirm!
 - 2) Among our own brethren, we have some who hold this view that the Spirit gives them information not contained in the written word. We are beginning to hear them teach things (e.g., on marriage, divorce, and remarriage) that contradict what the scriptures say.

H. The theory has grown out of a faulty interpretation of certain New Testament statements.

1. The New Testament teaches that the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians, but some have read into those statements something that is not stated!
 - a. Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised

- up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by *his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*" Many read this (and other passages which make the same or similar statements) and conclude: "Therefore the Holy Spirit dwells in us literally, personally." The verse does not say *that*.
- b. But what may one properly learn from the statement? That the Spirit is in us personally? No. There is a sense in which he is in us. The statement does not say how he indwells us.
2. The Bible teaches that all three members of the Godhead dwell in us.
 - a. The Father dwells in us: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus in the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (I John 4:15). How does the Father dwell in us? Literally? Personally? Certainly not—I Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen." God is in us as we believe and obey his word—by the influence of his will in our lives.
 - b. Christ dwells in us: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..." (Gal. 2:20). "...Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith..." (Eph. 3:17). How does Christ dwell in us? Personally? Directly? He lives in us by faith. As we believe in him, follow him, and imbibe his spirit, he lives in us.
 - c. Has the Father and Christ divided themselves up into as many portions as they have followers and a part of themselves dwell in each of us? Certainly not! But as we take their will into our hearts, and live sincerely for them day-by-day, it is proper to say that they live in us. But this indwelling is representative, not literal or personal.
 3. In the same terminology the Bible says the Holy Spirit indwells Christians. Since the other two members of the Godhead do not do so literally or personally, we should not expect the Holy Spirit to be directly, personally in us. He dwells in us in the same way as do the Father and the Son—indirectly, representatively—as we imbibe his teachings into our hearts and lives; by the influence he exerts on us by the word.
 4. Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The children of God are those who are led by the Spirit; and only those who are led by the Spirit are children of God.
 - a. In the context of this verse, Paul is discussing the living of the Christian life. We are led to live the Christian life by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit enables me to live the Christian life. But the only information I have about how to live the Christian life is found in the New Testament. The New Testament instructs me how to live the Christian life. I am being led by the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life when I live according to his instructions given in the New Testament.
 - b. Since the only way we can know how to live the Christian life is to live in obedience to the instructions found in the New Testament, and since the Spirit is said to direct us in living the Christian life, then the way the Spirit directs us in this is by his teachings in the New Testament. If one wants to be led by the Holy Spirit, he will follow what the Holy Spirit has said in the revealed, written word of God.
 5. Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:16 are parallel passages which speak on the subject, using virtually the same words except for one phrase; they were written by the same apostle, at the same time, and on the same subject.
 - a. The two passages:
 - 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. Notice the comparison of the two passages as depicted in the following table:
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Ephesians 5:18-19	Colossians 3:16
Be filled with the Spirit	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly
Speaking to yourselves	Teaching, admonishing one another
Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs	Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs
Singing	Singing
Making melody in your heart	With grace in your hearts
To the Lord	To the Lord

- c. "Be filled with the Spirit" is not a promise but a command. We are commanded to be filled with the Spirit; it is not something done for us but what we are told to do.
 - d. How do we obey this command? By taking into our hearts the truths he teaches in the New Testament. To be filled with the Spirit and to let Christ's word dwell in us are two different statements which are identical in meaning; we fill our hearts with the Spirit when we fill our hearts with the gospel.
- I. Do not let anyone in or out of the church mislead you on this important matter.
1. The Spirit tells the alien sinner that he must believe, repent, confess Christ, and be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins:
 - 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. 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. Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - d. Romans 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - e. 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."
 - f. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - g. Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 2. The Spirit tells the erring Christian to repent of his sins, confess it, and ask for the Lord's forgiveness in prayer:
 - 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."
 3. The Spirit tells us to walk in the light of the gospel; be faithful to the Lord's word unto death; and promises eternal life in heaven.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the

last time."

- b. 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."
 - c. 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."
4. Eternity is long; the Judgment approaches; death nears for us all.
- a. Excuses are all petty and will be stripped away in the Judgment; we will stand before him in our true light; there will be no second chance; we cannot afford to be wrong!
 - b. We need to have the courage of conviction to do what is right. Feelings are no guarantee of salvation; they are delusive and misleading. The pagan mother would throw her baby into the river to be eaten by crocodiles sincerely believing that this was right.
 - 1) The only way that we can be right and know that we are right is by following the inspired word of God, revealed by the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) 1 John 2:3-5: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."
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