

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

# SPECIAL STUDIES

Vol. 2

**BY BOB WINTON**



**GOSPEL  
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## Preface and 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 Italy, July of 1961.

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, doing 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.

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 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 helped 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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## Theistic Evolution

### I. THERE ARE THREE PRIMARY VIEWS OF THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE AND LIFE.

#### A. The Bible teaches that God formed the universe by miraculous edict.

1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3).
  - a. First came the universe, with its stars, planets, and the earth.
  - b. After preparing the earth, God brought forth all the plant and animal life forms.
  - c. He concluded his great Creation Week by creating man and woman.
2. We may not be able to grasp all the details of this creation, but when all other views are considered, this is the only understanding of origins that is logical. There is no science of origins. No man was present to examine and record a full and careful account of what happened; and since it is not being duplicated today, we cannot examine the process scientifically.

#### B. Organic evolution is the type of evolution believed by those who reject the idea of God.

1. The universe, in their view, began with a *big bang* which resulted in the formation of the stars and planets. They claim the earth is between 4 to 5 billion years old.
2. On earth, through a chance combination of chemicals, the first life appeared in the form of a one-cell being.
3. This cell divided, and through a gradual process of change over millions of years, the fantastic assortment and complexity of life developed.
4. This entire process was not directed by any intelligence; it just happened.

#### C. Theistic evolution is the view that God created the universe and the first life form.

1. The name comes from the Greek word for *God*: "Theos." One who believes in this system declares that he believes in God and evolution.
  - a. "The expression 'theistic evolution' is sometimes used to refer to the concept that God created natural laws which would cause evolution to take place and thus in this guiding principle, God can be said to be the author of life. This notion cannot be said to be 'theistic evolution' in any meaningful sense. One might as well refer to theistic rain, theistic thunder, theistic earthquakes, etc. These natural phenomena can be observed, yet we believe that they have totally adequate causes though a theist will no doubt believe God created those natural forces while an atheist will not believe in God. The phenomena are not regarded to be a result of divine intervention into the laws of nature." (Quoted by Bert Thompson, *Theistic Evolution*, 1977, p.51).
  - b. The theory merely pays lipservice to God; it gives him only the honorary credit of starting the process, but gives the greater glory to the forces of nature. Instead of giving God the glory he deserves, it deprives him of it!
2. It claims that God invented evolution which, through the millions of years since, produced the myriads of life forms that developed, including man.
  - a. "It is simply a fact that it [evolution] produced that wonder which we know as the human species .... We have sought to show that evolution is not *in itself* the enemy of Theism, as the Creationists mistakenly assume, but rather can reasonably be interpreted as providing support for the doctrine of divine creation" (Patrick Murray and Neal Buffaloe, *Creation And Evolution*, 1981, p.20; quoted by Wayne Jackson, "Christian Courier," Jan., 1987).
  - b. "If we look carefully at the issues about which we are talking, however, we can find that evolution and the Bible show amazing agreement on almost all issues and that one is not mutually exclusive of the other" (John Clayton, *The Source*, 1976, p.130; *ibid.*).
  - c. A science professor at Abilene Christian University said: "The fact of evolution is beyond dispute." He urged his students to study the Genesis account of the creation along with evolution,

and to *synthesize* a "personal statement of belief about origins" (Bert Thompson, *Is Genesis Myth?*, 1986, pp.10-16).

3. The theory is therefore a marriage between organic evolution and the Bible account; or more accurately, a compromise of the two systems. It is a mass of contradictions.
  - a. One might as well speak of a white black man, or a married bachelor as to talk of *Theistic Evolution*.
  - b. If one rejects the miraculous creation as reported in Genesis 1 and 2, how can one account for man having a soul? The theory says that when man reached a certain stage of development, God placed a soul within him. This would have to be a miraculous act. Why reject one set of miracles, but accept another?
  - c. Atheistic evolutionists ridicule those who try to hold on to both the Bible and evolution. "The attempt to build an evolutionary theory mingling mysticism and science has only tended to vitiate the science. I strongly suspect that it has been equally damaging on the religious side, but here I am less qualified to judge" (George G. Simpson, prominent evolutionist, quoted by Thompson, p.65).
4. The *scholars* of the religious world have largely accepted this mongrel theory. Kenneth Taylor, who gave the world "The Living Bible Paraphrased," is a Theistic Evolutionist (see his footnotes on "evening and morning" in Gen. 2).

## II. WHY CHRISTIANS CANNOT BELIEVE THEISTIC EVOLUTION.

- A. Reasons why one cannot accept evolution and be a faithful Christian (Adapted from Williams, pp.54f).
  1. The Bible teaches that there was one original man (Gen. 2:7f). Evolution implies that there were many men, when they had evolved to the point of being called *men*. To accept evolution is to reject this basic Bible truth. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed" (Gen. 2:7-8).
  2. The Bible states that woman was miraculously brought into being when God opened Adam's side and removed a rib, and from it made the first woman (Gen. 2). One cannot believe this scriptural fact and hold to evolution at the same time. One is left to wonder how evolution can even try to account for the existence of woman, since there are marked differences between the sexes.
  3. The Bible teaches that man has an immortal soul (Matt. 10:28; Eccl. 12:7, etc.). Theistic evolution teaches that man has an immortal soul, but that he obtained that soul somewhere down the chain of evolution. But where along the evolutionary road did man acquire a soul, and when and how was it obtained? At some point, parents that were non-human gave birth to a human! Is this when the soul was acquired?
    - a. Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
    - b. Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
  4. The Bible teaches that the first plants and animals were created complete (Gen. 1:11f, 20-25). Theistic evolution stands in contrast to this.
    - a. Genesis 1:11-12: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
    - b. Genesis 1:20-25: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply

- in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
5. The Bible teaches that plants and animals produced after their kind, which is exactly what we now observe in nature (Gen. 1:11-12, 21, 24-25). Evolution, by its very nature, implies that plants and animals must occasionally produce offspring which are not after their kind.
  6. The Bible represents man to be made in the image of God, and shows man's fall into sin and decadence (Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 3; Gen. 6; Rom. 3). According to the Bible, man began at the highest possible moral, spiritual, and intellectual point, and fell to the lowest depths. But evolution teaches that man began as an infinitely small mass of protoplasmic substance, and from this he climbed unaided to the greatest heights. One cannot believe both of these at the same time.
    - a. 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."
    - b. Ecclesiastes 7:20, 27: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.... Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, *counting* one by one, to find out the account."
  7. Evolution nullifies the Christian system. If the theory is true, then there was no first man, no fall, no sin, no punishment for sin, and thus no need for man's redemption. This makes void the entire redemptive plan of the gospel for saving man from sin by the blood of Christ.
    - a. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
    - b. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
    - c. 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
  8. The Bible teaches that all things were created through Christ (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:1-4). It would be interesting to see how the theistic evolutionist explains the involvement of Christ in evolution.
    - a. John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
    - b. Colossians 1:15-18: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the
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- body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence."
- c. Hebrews 1:1-4: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."
9. In attempting to reconcile the six days of creation with the theory of evolution, the theistic evolutionists encounter problems too numerous to mention.
- B. The Bible refutes the theory of Theistic Evolution.
1. Several statements made by Christ shows it cannot be right.
    - a. Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6. Both man and woman were made "at the beginning," and "from the beginning of the creation." Jesus was either right or wrong about this. If he was right, theistic and atheistic evolution are wrong; if he was wrong about this, how can we believe anything he said?
    - b. Matthew 24:37-39: But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
      - 1) Here the Lord described the events of Noah's flood as if they were historical facts. If Moses was right about Noah, he was also right about the creation.
      - 2) John 5:46-47: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"
  2. Paul made several statements about the creation.
    - a. He spoke of Adam and Moses as real men; he referred to Adam's sin; he described Adam as the figure of Christ.
      - 1) Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
      - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:21-22: "For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
      - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:45: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit."
    - b. Adam and Eve were real people; he mentions the fact that Eve was deceived into committing sin: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting....For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Tim. 2:8,13,14).
    - c. Paul said that the man was created first, and that the woman was taken from man.: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man....For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but all things of God" (1 Cor. 11:8,12).
    - d. God caused the light to shine out of darkness.
      - 1) Genesis 2:3-5: "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground."
      - 2) 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."

- e. The material universe was created from nothing: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3).
3. Peter made some statements that refutes Theistic Evolution: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Pet. 3:3-6).
4. Luke traces the lineage of Jesus back to Adam, and calls Adam "the son of God" (Luke 3:38).

### III. THEISTIC EVOLUTION REQUIRES THE DAYS OF GENESIS ONE TO BE LONG AGES.

#### A. Theistic evolutionists must explain away the days of Genesis One.

1. The account says that in six days God created all these things and rested on the seventh day. But we are told that the days of this chapter refer to long periods of time, not to a day as we know it. Thus, many try to hold to God's word and still cling to the evolutionary explanation of man's origin.
2. It can be quickly and easily shown that one who holds this view of origins cannot believe the Bible at the same time.
  - a. Jesus said that God made man and woman at the beginning (Matt. 19:4). They were made at the beginning, not millions or billions of years after the creation of the heavens and earth. If Jesus was wrong about this point, how can we rely on anything else he said in the New Testament? But if it is correct (and it is), then the theistic evolutionist is wrong in his understanding of Genesis 1.
  - b. If we believe Jesus, theistic evolution is wrong; if we believe theistic evolution, Jesus was wrong. Both cannot be believed at the same time.

#### B. There are some very simple, practical tests we may apply to see just how long the days of Genesis 1 were.

1. A biblical statement or word is to be taken as literal unless there is something in the context which demands that it be taken as a figure of speech. There is nothing in the local or general context of Genesis 1 which indicates these are not literal 24-hour days. No Bible believer understood them in any other way until the theory of evolution became popular.
2. The days are equally divided between light and darkness. Plants were created on the third day. If the days were long geological periods, these plants would have died due to the long nights which would have been extremely cold. Also, many plants depend on insects to propagate; but insects were not created until the sixth day. If these "days" were only a few years in length, plant life would have perished.
3. The word "day" is translated from "yom." This Hebrew word is used figuratively to refer to longer periods of time than the literal 24-hour day in many instances, however in all cases where it is used with a numerical value (except in prophetic passages), it always has reference to a literal solar day. In Genesis One, the numeric values of first, second, etc., are used. There are more than one hundred such usages in the Old Testament. Moreover, when the plural form of "yom" is used, it always refers to 24-hour days. There are more than seven hundred such usages of the word in the Old Testament.
4. The seventh day is not distinguished from the other six days in length in the context. We have no reason to believe it was any longer or shorter than the others. "For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:11).
  - a. Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day. If the days were long geological periods of the length modernists claim, then Adam was extremely old before day number six ended! He lived through part of day six, through all of day seven, and for the rest of his 930 years. If the first six days were each 100,000 years in length, think how old this would make Adam! But the Bible says that "all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died" (Gen. 5:5).
  - b. It is impossible to consistently believe the Bible and theistic evolution at the same time! Many



- are unwilling to give up their day-age interpretations of Genesis 1, and so have been driven to assert that Adam was not a real person. But again, he cannot accept that view and still believe Matthew 19:4 and 1 Corinthians 15:21,22,45,47, which show that Adam was a real man (that he was the first man).
5. The Hebrew word "yom" is used and defined in Genesis One. "As added proof, the word is clearly defined the first time it is used. God defines His terms! 'And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day' (Genesis 1:5). Yom is defined here as the light period in the regular succession of light and darkness, which, as the earth rotates on its axis, has continued ever since. This definition obviously precludes any possible interpretation as a geologic age." (see Bert Thompson, "The Bible and the Age of the Earth"). God plainly said, "The evening and morning were the first day." Genesis 1:14 says that the lights in the firmament were to divide the day from the night, that they were to be for signs, seasons, days and for years. If the "days" were ages, then what are the years? And what is the night?
  6. "Had Moses wanted us to understand that these 'days' were actually long, geological periods of time, he could have used words that so-specified this point. But he did not! He could have used the Hebrew word 'olam,' or the word 'dor,' both of which would indicate indefinite periods of time. He could have modified the Hebrew 'yom' by the adjective 'rab' (yom rab - a 'long' day), but again, he did not. As one author has correctly pointed out, if God said that He created everything in six days, but really used six eons, wouldn't that make God a deceptive, tricky, sneaky, deceitful God?" (Bert Thompson, "The Bible and the Age of the Earth", p.10).

#### IV. THE FRUITS OF EVOLUTION, BOTH ATHEISTIC AND THEISTIC.

- A. A tree may be known by the fruit it produces (Matt. 7:15-20).
  1. What fruit does evolution produce?
  2. If the fruits of this theory are evil, the doctrine itself is evil.
- B. The theory of evolution has served to help destroy morality and ethical conduct.
  1. The *survival of the fittest doctrine* encourages man to become even more inclined to selfishness. Selfishness lies at the heart of most of the world's problems: wars, crime, murder, injustice, terrorism, embargoes, repression, inflation, etc.
  2. Hitler *liquidated* millions of people in order to insure that his *Master Race* could survive and prosper. He subscribed to the doctrine of the survival of the fittest.
  3. Communism thrives in an atmosphere of atheism, and evolution is atheism. Karl Marx, originator of communism, drew heavily on Darwin's ideas of natural selection and survival of the fittest. "Since the adoption of the Marxian philosophy, Russia has consistently stressed the hatred of God and all forms of religion; Russia not only denies the existence of God, but makes atheism a necessary premise of the system on which its government is formed" (W.O. Davis, quoted by Williams, p.52).
  4. When evolution is accepted there is a tendency to forget about the individual. If man is nothing more than an intelligent animal, there is no room for personal rights and moral values. If evolution is true, what is wrong with everyone doing what pleases him, regardless of the effect on others?
  5. If evolution is true, and man is only an intelligent animal, what is the purpose of life? What real difference would exist between man and sheep or swine?
- C. Evolution encourages immorality and decadence.
  1. One youth said: "If I am the same as dogs and cows then of what consequence are moral standards?"
  2. Immoral conduct is on a rampage in our country and generation. Parents, theologians and others wonder why. The answer is evolution. If a person is convinced that he is nothing more than an animal, he will start acting like an animal.
  3. There is no morality in a herd of cattle! They are mere brute beasts without any moral capabilities or requirements, but man is higher than the highest beasts, and he bears a responsibility before his Creator to keep himself on a high moral and spiritual plane.
    - a. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his

- commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil."
- b. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
  - c. Revelation 20:12-15: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
- D. Evolution encourages unbelief and rebellion against God.
- 1. There are many who are hardened in sin. They do not wish to acknowledge any personal responsibility to a higher Being. Therefore, they will accept evolution to ease their wounded consciences.
  - 2. Arguments used by evolutionists have wrecked the faith of many Christian young people who were not firmly grounded in the faith.
- E. Evolution cannot be harmonized with the Bible account of the origin of the universe or the origin of life.
- 1. There is no reason why any Christian should try to do so.
  - 2. When the theory of evolution has run its course and vanishes, the Bible will still be as true as ever, and the faith of Christians in the Bible will still stand.
  - 3. Psalms 119:128: "Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way."
  - 4. Romans 3:3-4: "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."
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# FEDERALISM and ANTI-FEDERALISM

Psalm 9:17; Proverbs 14:34; Psalm 33:12

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. From its beginning, America has been linked to Christianity.

1. In the real sense of the word, our nation has never been a Christian nation.
2. But the nation was founded on Biblical principles:
  - a. Freedom from religious oppression.
  - b. Acceptance of the equal worth of each human.
  - c. Acknowledgment of Bible morality.
  - d. An underlying faith in the God of the Bible.
  - e. An understood rejection of all other religions except that of the Bible.
  - f. An understood rejection of all other “gods” except the God of the Bible.

### B. Certain documents and statements teach the foregoing.

1. Concerning our nation:
  - a. The First Amendment to the Constitution: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances” (Grollier Multimedia Encyclopedia).
  - b. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” (Declaration of Independence). “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).
  - c. “In God We Trust.” This familiar express, which federal authorities saw fit to place on each item of our money, declares belief in the existence and goodness of the Almighty, the God of the Bible, and reliance on his ability to aid us.

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. In 1774, American colonies sought release from Britain’s rule.

1. A declaration of freedom was made in North Carolina which led to the national Declaration of Independence in July, 1776. This led to war with England, which lasted until 1781, with enormous loss of life and suffering on the part of our forebears. The Treaty of Peace was signed in 1783.
2. At first, our nation was governed by a document known as the Articles of Confederation; this body of law did not provide for an executive branch of government. It furnished the means for making laws, but had no means of enforcing them.
3. In 1787, the people sent representatives to a national convention at which the Articles of Confederation were to be revised; they ended by scrapping these articles, and adopting the Constitution. It was admitted by all that it was not an infallible document; otherwise, no provision would have been allowed to amend it in any way.

### B. Two primary views of the balance of power were advanced.

1. Alexander Hamilton thought that the country ought to have a strong central government, and that the states ought to be kept weak and subservient to the federal government.
  - a. “The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right” (Alexander Hamilton, Grollier). He did not think the local citizens were able to make and enforce laws properly.
  - b. “However much the framers wanted a strong central government, they knew that they could establish one only by allowing the states to retain power or by making it appear that they did. They realized, or at least Hamilton did, that, as a practical matter, there could not be a double sovereignty; the framers persuaded the public to accept the Constitution by claiming that sovereignty was indeed divisible. Under the federal system they devised, the national government was



- given the authority to exercise only the enumerated powers granted it, but it had supreme authority in those areas. State sovereignty was therefore largely a fiction; it was destined to have a stormy future, involving a bloody civil war” (Grollier).
2. Thomas Jefferson reminded the representatives that they had just fought a terrible war to gain independence from a tyrannical form of government, and warned against the dangers of giving too much authority to the central government. He feared that if our federal government became too strong, it might become as oppressive as the regal authority of England had been. He thought the main power ought to be exercised by the states.
    - a. He and his cohorts “argued that the proposed Constitution gave excessive power to the federal government. The Bill of Rights was adopted partly to assuage their fears that individual liberties would be endangered” (Grollier).
    - b. Jefferson and his cohorts wanted the federal government to be weak, and the states to exercise greater power and authority than the federalists were willing to permit.
  3. The Federalists and Anti-federalists openly discussed the issues, and finally reached agreement in September, 1787; the Constitution was adopted, and George Washington was the unanimous choice of the delegates to serve as President. John Adams was elected Vice President. After his inauguration, Washington selected Alexander Hamilton to be Secretary of the Treasury and Thomas Jefferson to be Secretary of Foreign Affairs [now called Secretary of State].
    - a. The great ship of state was launched upon an uncertain sea. Hamilton’s great talent in managing the federal finances placed the federal government on a sound financial footing. Daniel Webster later said of him, “He struck the rock of internal resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth; he touched the dead corpse of public credit, and it sprang to its feet.”
    - b. But Hamilton promoted the plan for establishing a banking system, with the federal government being the chief stockholder. To this idea Jefferson made strong objection.
  4. The Federalists and Anti-Federalists occupied opposite sides regarding the national bank.
    - a. Jefferson and the anti-federalists opposed it because there was nothing in the Constitution which authorized a national bank. The Constitution, said Jefferson, is the supreme law of the land; there is no provision in it which gives us the right to establish a national bank. Their view maintained that a practice or doctrine is lawful only if there is authority in the Constitution permitting it. These men became known as “strict constructionists.”
    - b. Hamilton and the federalists maintained that a practice or doctrine was lawful unless there was some provision in the Constitution which forbade it. This viewpoint called for a loose interpretation of the Constitution, and its advocates were known as “loose constructionists.”
  5. The difference between these views came down to this question: “Shall we be governed by what the Constitution says, or shall we be at liberty to provide any measure, inaugurate any system, or engage in any kind of business, just so the Constitution does not specifically forbid it?”
  6. These two ideas became the basis for two political parties, which were known by various names, but at this time they were called “Federalists” and “Anti-Federalists.” The Federalists prevailed at the first, since John Adams (who held the view) was the first Vice President and the second President. But Jefferson continued to press his view point, and became the third President.
- C. There is a parallel with this matter in the religious arena.
1. It has not been my aim to give a political lecture, but to set the background and furnish an illustration of the main emphasis of this lesson.
  2. The Bible is the world’s only inspired document. The New Testament part of the Bible is the constitution of Christianity; it is an inspired document; it is an infallible document; it permits no amending, altering, or expunging. It is the written will of Almighty God. It is vastly superior even to the Constitution of the United States! No general assembly of its adherents may be held in which changes may be made to it, for God’s word is perfect; to change that which is perfect is to make it imperfect.
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3. How shall we view the Bible? Shall we assert the liberty to operate in the religious arena on the basis that anything is right unless it is specifically prohibited? Or shall we operate by the principle that we may act in a matter only if there is authority in the Bible for the act?
4. It is commonly believed that the Bible offers only broad principles, and grants freedom to interpret and apply it in accordance with our own wisdom.
5. In interpreting and applying the Bible, shall we be Loose Constructionists or Strict Constructionists? What did God intend? How did he intend that we interpret and apply it: loosely or strictly? Does he give us a choice between the two, with both views being equally correct?
6. There was nothing wrong with the national bank; even Jefferson might have admitted this. But he was unwilling to admit that there was authority in the Constitution for the establishment of the bank. The question in his mind was, "Shall we abide by the Constitution or not?" The question we are concerned with is, "Shall we abide by the Bible or not?" May we do anything we please unless God has explicitly stated, "Thou shalt not do it"?

D. How did God deal with man through the Patriarchal Age?

1. God gave Cain and Abel some instructions in Genesis 4 which are noted in Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."
  - a. Abel offered his sacrifice "by faith." He believed what God said, and he acted accordingly; he was blessed by his obedience. "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).
  - b. Abel offered an animal sacrifice; Cain offered a sacrifice of grain. Abel's sacrifice was accepted by the Almighty, but Cain's was rejected. What was wrong with the grain Cain offered? Where was a prohibition given forbidding grain?
  - c. Our choice is the same as Cain and Abel's: shall we walk by sight or shall we walk by faith? Will we be governed by what God has said, or will we demand the liberty to believe and act in keeping with our own wisdom in all those areas where God has placed no specific prohibition?
2. God told Noah to build the ark 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high; it was to have both a window and a door; it was to be sealed with pitch inside and outside; it was to have 3 levels. God's instructions were specific, not general.
  - a. Genesis 6:14-16: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it."
  - b. Genesis 6:22: "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."
3. The patriarchs needed God's authority before taking spiritual action.

E. How did God deal with man through the Mosaic Age?

1. At Mt. Sinai, God gave Israel its Constitution: the Law of Moses. This law was to be in effect for about 1500 years. At the very beginning of this constitution, God issued this warning: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deut. 4:2). N.B. Hardeman called this warning, "A frowning sentinel" which was "placed on guard to uphold and maintain respect for God's word" (p.82). There were Federalists and Anti-Federalists in Moses' day.
2. Nadab and Abihu took the liberty to obtain fire for their priestly offering from a strange source. God voiced his disapproval of their presumptuousness by sending a fire to consume them. Their story stands as a powerful proclamation that God means what he says! "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). Doubtless they could have asserted that they meant well, that their hearts were right, and could see no harm in what they did. The Almighty's response shows that he demands faithful obedience.

3. There was a certain man who picked up sticks on the Sabbath. He could have reasoned, "I have no intention to be disobedient to God; my heart is pure; these sticks are to be used for a good purpose."
    - a. What harm was done? He violated God's law; he was executed for his error. There was no specific prohibition against picking up sticks.
    - b. Numbers 15:32-36: "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses."
  4. God instructed Moses to produce water for Israel while they were in the wilderness. "Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink" (Num. 20:8).
    - a. Moses acted presumptuously when he both spoke to and smote the rock. "And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts *also*" (Num. 20:10-11).
    - b. By smiting the rock, he violated God's decree; he had authority only to speak to the rock. Moses had been leading God's people for 40 years, and was now 120 years old. He had suffered much and had sacrificed the treasures of Egypt (Heb. 11:24-27).
    - c. His deviation cost him entrance into the Promised Land of Canaan. He died on Mt. Nebo after getting a panoramic view of the land that flowed with milk and honey; he could see what he was going to miss (Deut. 34).
    - d. Why was he denied entrance? In this specific case, Moses was a "Loose Constructionist."
  5. God directed King Saul to utterly destroy the wicked Amalekites, along with their livestock.
    - a. Saul was a "loose constructionist." He spared King Agag and the best of the flocks and herds. He obeyed God up to a point, in a broad, general way; he perhaps sincerely believed that he had done the will of God by obeying the spirit of the command. "And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed *be* thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD. And Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" (1 Sam. 15:13-14). The animals called Saul a liar!
    - b. Saul was rejected as king because he placed a loose construction of God's word. "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams....Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king" (1 Sam. 15:22-23).
  6. The Israelites needed God's authority before taking spiritual action.
- F. How does God deal with man through the Christian Age?
1. Hebrews 2:1-3: "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*."
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2. In the temptations of Christ (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13), the principle of this lesson is amply shown. The enticements were offered by making appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and to the pride of life (cf. 1 John 2:15-17). The first temptation appealed to his physical hunger.
  - a. "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." What was wrong with the action of turning stones into bread? The Lord was hungry; he had power to thus make bread; he later turned water into wine miraculously. What harm would be done? God had not given a specific prohibition of the act.
  - b. The Lord replied, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). He was saying, "I am not my own; I am subservient to the Father; it is his will that must be done, not my own" (cf. Mt. 26:39). God had not given him authority to turn stones into bread; he therefore would endure the hunger and remain obedient to God."
  - c. In guiding the Israelites through the trackless wilderness, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night was the sole guide. If the cloud moved, the people moved; when the cloud stood still, the people stopped. They were guided by what the cloud did.
3. The written word of God is to us what the pillar of cloud and fire was to Israel. When it speaks, we speak; where it remains silent, we are silent.
  - 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 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
  - c. People today need to have God's authority before taking spiritual steps.

### III. CONCLUSION

#### A. The Bible is our spiritual constitution.

1. Jefferson had the proper view of our nation's Constitution. It is the supreme legal authority in the land. Americans are obligated to do what the Constitution says, and must not be so presumptuous as to go beyond what it allows. The only safe course in legal matters is to obey the constitution and the laws it engenders.
2. The only safe course for us in spiritual matters is to take God at his word, believe what he says, become and be what he requires; then living by his will, we worship as he decrees, practice what he allows and requires, and receive the blessings and rewards he freely gives.
3. Violations of the principle of the lesson on the national scene led to grievous problems in the past. Our forebears overlooked the slavery question, violated one of the basic tenets of the Constitution, and our nation paid a heavy price in the horrors of our Civil War. If at the birth of our nation, men had put the slavery issue to the Constitution, that awful institution would have been dissolved then.
4. Violations of the principle of the lesson in spiritual matters will certainly lead the violators to the most horrible of all horrors: eternity in the place of torment prepared for the devil and his angels!
5. Faithfully adhering to the principle of this lesson in spiritual matters will surely lead to the most glorious of honors and rewards. When the storms of this life are over, we will be conducted by angels into the eternal kingdom of Almighty God!

#### B. Our attitude is this:

1. Show us our errors in interpretation, practice, and living by the Bible, and we will change! We will shape our thinking, motives, actions, and words to conform to the holy will of God. We do not claim personal infallibility; we know we are capable of erring. But if our disposition of heart is as described above, we will correct every error in our faith and practice.
  2. Let us therefore:
    - a. Give up every false belief and practice.
    - b. Shun every act and attitude not in accordance with God's word.
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- c. Stand fast in the faith (1 Cor. 16:13; Jude 3; Gal. 1:23).
- d. Honor no leader except Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Matt. 28:18).

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# The Sin of Gambling

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. The word "gamble" is not in the Bible but its sinfulness we shall show.

1. Many sinful practices are not called by name in the Bible: manslaughter; rape; larceny; bootlegging; embezzlement; dope peddling; racketeering; kidnapping, etc.
2. A thing is sinful if it violates a direct statement, principle, or any other teaching given in the Bible:
  - a. Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
  - b. James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin."
  - c. 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
  - d. 1 John 5:17: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."
  - e. 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."

### B. Many states have inaugurated a government-run lottery, a form of gambling.

1. Is participation in a state-run lottery gambling? Is gambling sinful?
2. If gambling, including a legal lottery, violates God's word, it is indeed sinful!

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. What does the Bible teach on the subject?

1. The Bible teaches that man is to provide for his own needs through honest work.
  - a. This was true in Eden (Gen. 2:15) and remained true after man's expulsion from the garden (Gen. 3:19).
    - 1) Genesis 2:15: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."
    - 2) Genesis 3:19: "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."
  - b. God requires that we work for our living: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" (2 Thess. 3:10-12).
  - c. Honest labor is commanded in order to help the needy: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
  - d. Gambling discourages honest labor; it encourages one to risk what he has in order to get something for nothing, at another's expense.
  - e. Gambling does not produce any goods or services; it violates Bible principles which encourage honest labor.
2. Gambling violates the Golden Rule:
  - a. Passages:
    - 1) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
    - 2) Luke 6:31: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."
  - b. It tries by trickery, luck, and skill to take from another that which rightly belongs to that other person.

- c. When a man gambles, he is hoping to do something to others that he does not want them to do to him.
- d. "But by buying a lottery ticket I'm hoping to take money from a state-run organization, not from my neighbor!" But who is the loser? Not the organization!
- 3. Gambling violates the second great commandment.
  - a. Mark 12:31: "And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
  - b. Romans 13:10: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law." Gambling works ill toward another, thus gambling is sinful.
  - c. Taking money from someone by skill or trickery contradicts this principle.
- 4. Biblical principles condemn the spirit of materialism and covetousness, which are inherent in gambling.
  - a. Passages:
    - 1) Ephesians 5:3: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints."
    - 2) Ephesians 5:5: "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."
    - 3) Colossians 3:5: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."
    - 4) 1 Timothy 6:5-10: "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
  - b. The spirit of materialism includes the love of money and greed.
  - c. One gambles for money because he loves money, which is the root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6:10)
- 5. In a God-fearing society, gambling greatly harms a Christian's influence.
  - a. Passages:
    - 1) Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
    - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ."
    - 3) Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
    - 4) 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
    - 5) 1 Peter 2:11-12: "Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."
    - 6) 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."

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- 7) 1 Peter 4:1-5: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."
  - b. Because of the value of our influence, we must abstain from all appearances of evil.
    - 1) Romans 12:9: "*Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."
    - 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:22: "Abstain from all appearance of evil."
  - c. Gambling has the appearance of evil: and evil is to be shunned in all its forms!
  - d. It soils a saint's influence so that he is not a fitting example of a believer.
  6. Gambling often causes a man to neglect his family.
    - a. Some will spend their pay on gambling instead of paying the rent or buying food.
    - b. Therefore, it stands condemned by 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
- B. Many excuses are made to justify gambling.
1. Passages:
    - a. Isaiah 5:20: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto *them that are* wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"
    - b. Proverbs 16:25: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
  2. "Other gamblers consent to my taking their money, else they would not gamble."
    - a. They cannot give you the right to violate Biblical principles. No human being has the authority to give anyone other human being the right to disobey any feature of God's will. Could your spouse give you the right to commit adultery? Could a preacher give you the right to take the name of the Lord in vain?
    - b. It is sinful to wrong another even with his consent. Helping someone to commit suicide cannot be construed as right even though he gives his consent for you to assist him.
    - c. Consent does not make it right to kill another in a duel, which is combat between two persons, fought with deadly weapons—by consent.
  3. "Life is a gamble: investing in the stock market, farming, betting on horses, playing bingo for cash, buying a lottery ticket, are only different forms of taking a calculated risk. If one is right, they all are right."
    - a. But the mere presence of risk in an activity does not make it gambling.
      - 1) The outcome of planting a crop or engaging in some other worthy enterprise is determined primarily by the good, honest effort of the individual, and not by risk-taking or mere chance.
      - 2) Honest endeavor has God's approval and assistance; the uncertainty involved teaches us to have greater trust in God and to ask for his help. Would a spiritually-minded person ask God to bless the coin he is about to put into a *one-armed bandit*? Or ask God to bless the cards he is about to be dealt which would enable him to take money from the person sitting across the table?
      - 3) The rewards of honest efforts (farming; cattle-raising; a business investment) do not deprive others of their money or property.
    - b. But gambling is based primarily on pure chance; there is always a loser even though he might not be sitting across the table. The winner of a lottery is paid by all the many losers who contributed unwillingly to his success.
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- c. If the outcome depends entirely or mostly on chance, it is gambling; if the outcome depends on skill and diligence and is a worthy endeavor in which no one is made to be a loser, the activity is not gambling.
4. "If the result of gambling advances a good cause, it is all right: playing bingo at church raises money for orphans, helps feed the needy, etc, thus is permissible. The lottery provides money to operate and improve our school system; therefore this kind of gambling is proper because it supports a worthy cause."
  - a. But why use such a questionable activity as gambling to accomplish a good end? This very "argument" shows that it is questionable since it seeks to justify an activity which is wrong in its usual occurrences.
  - b. Even doing good does not permit us to disregard what God has said.
    - 1) Nadab and Abihu were involved in a good work when they burned incense in the tabernacle, but the means they chose to accomplish it led to their condemnation: "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).
    - 2) Saul was condemned for offering a sacrifice (1 Sam. 13). "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).
  - c. If serving a good cause justifies gambling, why not set up houses of prostitution? Or make counterfeit money? Or embezzle money from a rich company? None of these appears to hurt anyone directly and much money could be raised for worthy causes thereby! But these activities and gambling are wrong!
  - d. Feeding the poor is a good cause, but it must be accomplished by legal and scriptural means. Educating young people is a good cause, but doing so at the expense of moral principles will do more harm than good.

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. Gambling has some grievous side effects which also make it wrong.

1. It is an established fact that gambling and organized crime go together—where gambling is, crime increases, including graft, prostitution, robbery, and murder.
2. Few people can control themselves when they start gambling: "...Makings of a major social and economic problems in U.S." (USN&WR, 1-28-80). Little gamblers become big gamblers; little losers become big losers.
3. Wives, children, employers, the economy, thus the nation, all suffer from gambling.
4. Many compulsive gamblers are eventually driven to suicide.
5. The revenue received by the state is not what is promised; it declines, as recent statistics indicate. The people of Florida were promised a windfall amount of revenue from the lottery which would put the state's school system on "easy street." The opposite was true after less than three years! Many teachers were forced to buy classroom supplies from their own funds.
6. The cost of welfare assistance to gamblers and their families, the increased costs for law enforcement, the added burden of great expense in the penal system, etc., more than equal the funds raked in by this social evil, and show the insidiousness of gambling.

#### B. Gambling is sinful!

1. We must shun it ourselves, and teach others to avoid this tragic evil.
2. Any government that seeks to raise revenue to fill its financial needs by appealing to the greed of its citizens, is hastening its own demise, and brings upon its subjects greater suffering and loss than any potential good it can ever hope to fulfill.
3. God's word cannot be ignored or repudiated without serious consequences.
  - a. Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."

- b. Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people."
  - c. Isaiah 59:1-1: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
  - d. 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, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."
  - e. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
  - f. 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."
  - g. 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."
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## MODERN TRANSLATIONS

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. Times such as ours are extremely dangerous.

1. There are many enticements to commit sin; it is extremely easy to sin today.
2. The threat of war has returned, and Satan is still vicious: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).
3. There are more counterfeit churches today than there has ever been; each holds up before the unsuspecting a plan of salvation, a plan of worship, a plan of service that basely contradicts what is taught in the Bible.
4. There are powerful efforts to steal the hearts, minds, and souls of young people by leading them into materialism, the occult, immoral conduct and drugs.
5. The Bible, God's word, is the only means of counteracting these evils; in times like these, we truly need the Bible!

#### B. But there are many enemies of the Bible today who would rob us of God's word.

1. Jehoiakim tried to destroy God's word with his penknife; although he ultimately failed, yet for a time he succeeded. Jeremiah 36.
2. Creeds and commandments of men have sought to supplant or nullify God's word for many centuries.
3. Many are weakening the effect of the Bible in the lives of men today by such assertions as, "The Bible is its own defense; it does not need defending."
  - a. Such was not the sentiment of Paul: "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17).
  - b. Peter did not agree with this theory: "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 Peter 3:15).
  - c. The word of God should be precious to each of us; we each must be interested in learning, developing faith in, proclaiming, and defending the holy Scriptures.
4. Modern translations are weakening the effect of God's word in our world.

### II. DISCUSSION.

#### A. Two fundamental questions we need to notice.

1. Has God spoken to the human family? "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).
    - a. Hebrews 1:1-3: "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." He spoke in times past to men through the inspired prophets of the Old Testament; and he speaks to our world today through his Son.
    - b. He spoke to patriarchs: Noah; Abraham; Isaac; Jacob.
    - c. He spoke to Moses and the prophets; what he said is written in the Old Testament (39 books; 929 chapters). This is God's revelation, not man's fabrication.
    - d. Today: he speaks through Christ: our Prophet, Priest, and King.
    - e. The word of Christ was delivered to mankind through the holy apostles Christ chose and the inspired prophets whom he also empowered.
  2. Has his word been preserved?
    - a. More than 1500 years were used to deliver God's revelation; this is not indicative of something unimportant. He will not allow puny man to destroy it!
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- b. The leading thought through the 176 verses of Psalm 119 is the word of God. There are 22 divisions built into the chapter, with almost every verse speaking about God's word. Other verses, including the following, affirm the eternal nature of the Scriptures.
    - 1) Psalms 100:5: "For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations."
    - 2) Isaiah 40:8: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."
    - 3) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
    - 4) 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."
  - c. But just because a book has the words, *Holy Bible*, on its cover, does not mean that what lies between the covers is God's Holy Word. Some of the modern translations do not measure up.
- B. Some modern translations promote modernism.
- 1. Modernism is one of most deadly enemies of God's cause.
    - a. It rejects God's supernatural actions related in the Bible; it denies the authority of the Bible; it rejects everything we hold dear.
    - b. "Scholars" claim to know what Jesus did not say. In recent years, they have told us what parts of the model prayer Jesus said and did not say. But Matthew knew better what the Lord said than do the modernists.
  - 2. The RSV had on its translating committee a man named Burrows—a modernist.
    - a. He claims we cannot prove that the patriarchs even lived. But Abraham (and Isaac and Jacob) has millions of descendants on earth today!
    - b. He claims to know what is *myth* and what is not myth. He claims the Passover was a myth. The ancient Israelites would not believe him.
  - 3. The RSV was put out by modernists, and it promotes modernism.
    - a. Oswald Allis said if the RSV became a best-seller, it would signal the success of modernism, and the decline of biblical truth. It gained about 25% of Bible sales. [The NIV has now replaced the RSV as the darling of modernism and liberalism].
    - b. Orlinski, one of its translators, said: The RSV is the Bible of the liberal Protestant community. He was doubtless correct in this affirmation.
    - c. It seeks to destroy Old Testament prophecies: "Virgin" (Isa. 7:14) has been replaced by "young woman." But young women have always had children; but no other case ever occurred where a virgin brought forth a child. Only Mary and Jesus fulfill the prophecy. "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" (Matt. 1:18-25).
  - 4. The "Good News for Modern Man" (later called "Today's English Version—TEV) was produced by Mr. Bratcher (a one-man translating committee); it contains grave dangers.
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- a. Bratcher said: "One who believes in an inerrant Bible is ignorant or dishonest." A cardinal principle of Modernism is the rejection of an inerrant Bible.
  - b. The TEV shows its modernism in Isaiah 7:14 where Bratcher changed virgin to young woman: "Well then, the Lord himself will give you a sign: a young woman who is pregnant will have a son and will name him Immanuel." In John 3:16, Jesus is made to be God's "only Son," which takes away from the meaning of the original.
  - c. In at least sixteen instances, he deleted *blood* from the inspired text, and gave another word which is less offensive to a modernistic mind.
- C. Some modern translations promote Premillennialism.
1. This is likely the most dominant false doctrine of today: about 70-75% of the religious world believes in some form of Premillennialism.
    - a. The books by Hal Lindsay, et al, sell by the millions; these books contain much sensational, but erroneous, material! These books would not sell by the tens of millions if they treated genuine Bible truth.
    - b. When a movement or a theory gains popularity, they will find their way into the creeds and the *New Bibles*.
  2. The Living Bible Paraphrase promotes Premillennialism.
    - a. John 5:28-29: it gives *time* instead of *hour*; it saves time for the Rapture, the Tribulation, Anti-christ, and Armageddon.
    - b. 2 Timothy 4:1: "And so I solemnly urge you before God and before Christ Jesus - who will some day judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his kingdom." But Paul uses the reality of God, the Judgment and the kingdom as the basis of making his solemn appeal to Timothy to "preach the word."
  3. The TEV likewise fosters Premillennialism in its rendering of 2 Timothy 4:1: "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because he is coming to rule as King, I solemnly urge you." But Christ is now King!
- D. Some modern translations promote faith-only salvation.
1. This false doctrine used to be only in the creeds and writings of false teachers. Now it is found in the New Bibles.
  2. NIV—Romans 1:16-17: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last...."
  3. RSV—Romans 1:20: "Watch out! Remember that those branches, the Jews, were broken off because they didn't believe God, and you are there only because you do..."
  4. TEV:
    - a. Romans 1:17: "For I have complete confidence in the gospel: it is God's power to save all who believe, first the Jews and also the Gentiles. For the gospel reveals how God puts men right with himself: it is through faith alone, from beginning to end...." (1966 Edition; **alone** dropped in later editions).
    - b. Romans 3:28: "For we conclude that a man is put right with God only through faith, and not by doing what the Law commands."
    - c. Galatians 2:16: "Yet we know that a man is put right with God only through faith in Jesus Christ, never by doing what the Law requires. We, too, have believed in Christ Jesus in order to be put right with God through our faith in Christ, and not by doing what the Law requires. For no man is put right with God by doing what the Law requires."
    - d. But it contradicts itself in James 2:24: "So you see that a man is put right with God by what he does, and not because of his faith alone." Neither the creed-makers nor these Bible-makers can keep from contradicting themselves.
  5. How can we teach people the truth about the faith-only theory when that false doctrine is in the
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"Bible?"

E. Some modern translations teach Calvinism.

1. Many members of the church, some schools, and professors, use and recommend the NIV. It has become increasingly popular with liberal members of the church.
2. Edwin Palmer, a Calvinist, served as chairman of the NIV translating committee.
  - a. He wrote a book advocating and defending the five cardinal tenets of Calvinism: TULIP:
    - 1) T—total hereditary depravity.
    - 2) U—unconditional election.
    - 3) L—limited atonement.
    - 4) I—irresistible grace.
    - 5) P—perseverance of the saints.
  - b. How could a man who is sold on these bankrupt false doctrines be expected to serve as an accurate translator of the Bible! He could translate Scriptures correctly, if he will do so. But the question is, have they kept their false doctrines from the text?
3. The NIV teaches the doctrine original sin.
  - a. It does so in those passages where reference to our "sinful nature" are found. Romans 7 and 8 in the NIV are filled with Calvinism, as well as in many other places.
    - 1) Romans 7:18,25: "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out....Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin" (NIV).
    - 2) Romans 8:2-3: "Because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man" (NIV).
    - 3) Romans 8:5,8-9,12: "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires....Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.... Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it" (NIV).
    - 4) Romans 13:14: "Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (NIV).
    - 5) 1 Corinthians 5:5,13,16: "Hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.... You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.... So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (NIV).
    - 6) Galatians 5:19,24: "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery....Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires" (NIV).
    - 7) Galatians 6:8: "The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life" (NIV).
    - 8) Ephesians 2:3: "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath" (NIV).
    - 9) Colossians 2:11,13: "In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by



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Christ....When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins" (NIV).

- 10) Psalm 51:5 (NIV): "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."
  - b. The Bible denies that man is born with a "sinful nature" in many places.
    - 1) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
    - 2) Ezekiel 28:15: "Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."
    - 3) Matthew 18:3: "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
  4. The NIV teaches the theory of salvation by the direct operation of the Spirit.
    - a. John 3:8 (NIV): "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with every one born of the Spirit."
      - 1) But the text does not say how the new birth is accomplished; it tells which part of us is born again (i.e., our souls).
      - 2) Christ gave the principle of conversion here, describing it as being born again; for literal language of how the new birth is accomplished, we must see the Great Commission and the examples of the new birth as given in Acts.
    - b. 1 Corinthians 2:14 (NIV): "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."
      - 1) The context is a discussion of how man learns the will of God. His will cannot be discovered by natural means; it had to be revealed by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit took the will of God, and caused inspired men to receive and record that message inerrantly.
      - 2) Therefore, Paul concludes in the verse that man in his natural environment and using his natural skills and powers, cannot know the will of God. But since it was revealed by the Spirit, and inerrantly recorded and preserved, anyone can read the Bible, and learn God's will.
      - 3) John 7:17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or *whether* I speak from myself" (ASV).
      - 4) 1 Timothy 4:13-16: "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) 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."
      - 6) Calvinistic theory teaches that man is so dead in sin that he cannot hear or learn or do any more than Lazarus could while dead. Such is false! It denies the plain teachings of God's word.
        - 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) Acts 2:36-41: "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
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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."

5. Charges have been made that the KJV and ASV contain Calvinistic ideas.
  - a. If so, how were our brethren able to use these to put Calvinism to flight? These translations deny, defeat, and refute all Calvinistic ideas. Campbell used the KJV to defeat Rice in one of the greatest debates of all time.
  - b. These sound translations of God's word have brought the church to us. We must keep in mind, however, that the ASV is based on the Westcott-Hort text, which omits portions of the original text.

F. Some modern translations have inserted vulgarities in the text.

1. The Living Bible used vulgar language.
  - a. 1 Samuel 20:30: "Saul boiled with rage. 'You [s.o.b.]!' he yelled at him. 'Do you think that you want this son of a nobody to be king in your place, shaming your self and your mother?'"
  - b. 1 Kings 18:27: "About noontime, Elijah began mocking them. 'You'll have to shout louder than that,' he scoffed, 'to catch the attention of your god! Perhaps he is talking to someone, or is out sitting on the toilet, or maybe he is away on a trip, or is asleep and needs to be wakened!'"
  - c. John 9:34: "'You illegitimate bastard, you!' they shouted. 'Are you trying to teach us?' And they threw him out."
  - d. Baptists objected to Baptist bookstores selling this "Bible" (in Nashville). Not because of its sectarianism or premillennialism, or Calvinism, or faith only inclusions, but for the vulgarity it contains.
2. The TEV has Peter using a profanity in Acts 8:20: "But Peter answered him, 'May you and your money go to hell, for thinking that you can buy God's gift with money!'"

G. Some modern translations contain mutilated and condensed texts.

1. Modern versions get shorter and shorter—by excluding parts they do not like.
2. Readers Digest said they were going to eliminate 50% of the Old Testament and 25% of the New Testament. It appears they did what they promised.
  - a. They deleted the genealogies: 1 Chronicles 1-9 was axed out.
  - b. Sixty-eight Psalms were removed.
  - c. Matthew 1 does not contain genealogy (half of the chapter was removed).
  - d. Whole sections of Scripture are removed (cf. 2 Cor. 11).
3. How can they get away with this?
  - a. They eliminated the chapter and verse divisions; since most people are unacquainted with the Bible, most simply do not know what has been deleted.
  - b. Readers Digest must have worn out a case of penknives in their whittling away entire sections of God's word!
  - c. N.B. Hardeman told of a lady who had cut Mark 16:16 from her Bible with scissors; these people had done the same thing, but they are not often rebuffed for doing so.
4. The RSV left out more of Mark 16 than they included: omitted verses 9-20.
  - a. One hundred and sixty-three or more Greek words were excluded by the RSV.
  - b. More than sufficient evidence exists proving Mark 16:9-20 belongs in the Bible.

H. Let us not consider the English Standard Version [ESV].

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I. Do we have a reliable translation of the Bible today?

1. Four things are necessary in order to have a correct translation of the Bible.
  - a. Accurate translation of the original text.
  - b. Understandable rendering of the original message.
  - c. A rendering that is reverential in its treatment of God's message.

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- d. It must contain all of the text. Creed-makers have added, subtracted, modified, and substituted; now Bible-makers are doing the same.
  2. The KJV and ASV meet the conditions named above.
    - a. Some among us will speak respectfully of KJV in one breath, but attack it viciously in another, destroying people's confidence in it.
    - b. The KJV has done more to populate the realm of the redeemed than all of the other English translations combined.
    - c. There is not a single truth that ought to be preached, believed and defended that is not found in the KJV. It brought the church to us.
  3. Foy E. Wallace, Jr. spent thousands of hours studying the new Bibles, only to have many brethren denounce him.
    - a. He helped the church in the battle against Premillennialism in earlier years, and spent his latter years warning against modern translations.
    - b. He observed: "The New Bibles will make a different people of us." They have, they are, and they will continue to do so.
  4. Stay with the KJV and the ASV; the average word in the KJV is 5 letters in length.
    - a. Some say it is too difficult, but how hard can words of five letters be?
    - b. The text of the KJV can be understood; some of the most uneducated have understood it very well!
    - c. The difficulty is in a lack of willingness to study, and a failure to live up to its standard, which God set, and which is accurately brought to us in these tried and reliable translations!

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. There are four attitudes among us regarding the modern translations.

1. Some happy with every version, regardless of its accuracy, understandability, reverential makeup, and completeness.
2. Many others are full of apathy. They simply do not have any concern about the seriousness of the matter.
3. Another group, which is growing in number, is comprised of those who have decided to report the strengths and weaknesses of each version, and let each individual make up his own mind which to use.
  - a. But very few have the time or the means to know all the strengths and weaknesses of each. There are between 300-500 English (partial or entire) translations.
  - b. Most people do not know what constitutes a strength or a weakness.
4. Then there is a small group, comprised of those who recognize the great problem modern translations represent, who try to learn and warn of the dangers.
  - a. If you live near a heavily-travelled highway, you would not be interested in telling your child of the smoothness and beauty of the highway; you would point out the danger of getting near or on the highway.
  - b. We have no obligation to recommend the strengths of a Bible translation that has fatal errors in it; the errors override the strengths. D-Con rat poison may contain only .005% poison which is mixed throughout the 99.995% pure food; but we do not call it "rat food"—we call it "rat poison!"
  - c. How much error must be inserted into the text of the Bible before it becomes poison to the soul, instead of good nourishment?

#### B. We need to stay with the good, reliable Bible translations.

1. The KJV and the ASV are good and reliable.
2. We need to learn it; memorize it; live it; teach it.
3. If we study too many versions, we cannot quote any accurately; we will not remember which version said what.
4. Some say they like the modern translations because they are easy to understand. But what is it that we are understanding? Is it God's word, or is it something man has invented?

#### C. Some say that one can learn the plan of salvation from any modern translation.

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1. But the truth is, we must first know the plan of salvation before we can find it in the modern versions.
  2. If you are looking to learn what to do to be saved, and you happened on the following passages in the modern versions, what would you do? The NIV teaches:
    - a. In Ephesians 1:13 that a person is in Christ at the point of hearing: "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit."
    - b. But in Romans 10:10, it has a person being saved at the point of faith: "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."
    - c. And in Romans 10:10, it has him being justified at the point of confessing: "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."
    - d. But then in Galatians 3:27, it has people being baptized into Christ: "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."
  3. If I am in Christ when I hear, then I must get out of Christ in order to be justified by faith; and I must get out again so I can be saved when I confess; but I must get out again in order to be baptized into Christ!
  4. How can we respect versions that mislead people at this point of how to be saved?
    - a. This is the most dangerous affair possible!
    - b. Many think that Billy Graham preaches much truth on morality and ethics; but this does not make up for the millions he has mislead into believing and following error which condemns the souls of millions!
  5. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

#### ABBREVIATIONS:

KJV—King James Version  
NKJV—New King James Version  
ASV—American Standard Version  
RSV—Revised Standard Version  
TEV—Today's English Version  
NIV—New International Version  
ESV—English Standard Version

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# The Immortal Soul of Man

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. The Bible has much to say about our immortal nature.

1. 2 Corinthians 4:14-18: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you. For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."
2. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

### B. The Bible declares that we are made in God's image.

1. Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." We are not told that man was made in the image of angels; nor are we told that angels are made in the image of God. But we are told that man is made in the image of God.
2. In our image; after our likeness —these two phrases are equal. In what sense are we made in God's image? Does a man's physical body look like God? God is Spirit (John 4:24); a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39); therefore, man is not made in the physical image of God since He has no physical body.
3. Man has a soul or spirit; man has the ability to think, reason, understand, plan, and be creative; God has these same capabilities; it is in these areas that man is made in God's image.
4. The Bible teaches that the spiritual part of man (soul, spirit), once it has been created (Zech. 12:1), will never cease to be (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Eccl. 12:7).
5. God is infinitely pure and holy; when man comes into being, he is pure and holy, spiritually, intellectually and morally we are made in the image of God. Through sin, man loses the measure of the divine stamp; it is only as he obeys the gospel, he regains that image (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor 3:18; Jas. 1:22-25).

## II. WATCHTOWER WITNESSES ASSERT THAT WE DO NOT HAVE AN IMMORTAL SOUL.

### A. They claim that one who dies is in a state of total unconsciousness.

1. This assertion they make in a tract entitled "What Hope for Dead Loved Ones?" (1987, Watchtower, Brooklyn, NY).
  2. In an excellent article, Wayne Jackson uses the case of the Rich Man and Lazarus to show conclusively that the dead are fully conscious: "The narrative involves a certain rich man who lived in an expensive house (suggested by the word "gate"), who was luxuriously clothed, and who lived 'in mirth and splendor every day' (cf. ASVfn). By way of stark contrast, Lazarus, a beggar (the Greek word denotes the poorest of the poor), was unceremoniously dumped (so the original language indicates) daily at the wealthy man's gate, hoping only for the crumbs that fell from that gentleman's table. Any meager comfort that Lazarus enjoyed was provided by the foraging street dogs who licked the diseased tumors of his frail body. Finally, both men died and their state of affairs was dramatically altered. The rich man was subjected to agonizing torment while Lazarus was honored and comforted. It is in consideration of the details chronicled in verses 22ff that it becomes very obvious that the dead, both righteous and wicked, are conscious. Let us note some of these indications:
    - a. **Perception**—The rich man could see both Abraham and Lazarus; he thus possessed perception.
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- Perception involves an awareness of objects, hence, consciousness.
- b. **Satisfaction**—Lazarus was described as being “in Abraham’s bosom.” This expression is a biblical idiom which suggests a state of honor (cf. Jn. 1:18; 13:23). It implies that Lazarus was in a warm and respected fellowship with Abraham. Alfred Plummer notes that the language suggests that the former beggar now shares Abraham’s “happiness” (International Critical Commentary on Luke, Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1896, p. 303). Clearly, this indicates consciousness.
  - c. **Sensation**—The rich man is in “torments.” Indeed, he is suffering “anguish,” which certainly affirms conscious sorrow (cf. 2:48; Acts 20:38). On the other hand, Lazarus is “comforted.”
  - d. **Communication**—The rich man could both speak and be spoken to. Communication is possible only with conscious beings. The suffering rebel had not been annihilated.
  - e. **Recognition**—The rich man recognized Lazarus and requested his services by name. Recognition involves consciousness.
  - f. **Comprehension**—The rich man made two requests of Abraham. First, he asked that Lazarus be permitted to dip his finger in water in order to cool his parched tongue. Abraham reasoned that such was impossible because an impassable gulf separated the righteous from the wicked. Second, the rich man requested that Lazarus be allowed to go and warn his brothers not to come to that place of punishment. The patriarch replied that those brethren had access to the Old Testament Scriptures, and that such was sufficient to prevent those kinsmen from dying lost if they were disposed to heed the message. Apparently, the rich man understood Abraham’s response; he had no further comment to make. Again, the narrative implies consciousness.
  - g. **Volition**—The rich man’s petition that Lazarus be allowed to enter the hades realm where he was, or that he be permitted to return to earth, implies that Lazarus had the volitional and/or locomotive ability to accomplish that feat if divinely allowed. That further suggests consciousness.
  - h. **Recollection**—Abraham reminded the rich man of his earthly status: “Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things....” Where there is memory, there is consciousness.
  - i. **Emotion**—When the rich man reflected upon the spiritual condition of his earthly brothers, he evidenced concern, and urged that they be warned not to enter that dreadful hades realm. People without consciousness evidence no concern for others.
  - j. A careful and honest consideration of the information contained in this account can only lead to the conclusion that the dead are conscious. Theories which allow for the extinction of the wicked, or for “soul-sleeping” on the part of the righteous dead, are not consistent with this divine teaching as given by Jesus Christ.”
3. The context of Ecclesiastes 9:5 destroys the Watchtower argument on the state of the dead.
    - a. They say: “Showing that death is a state of total unconsciousness, the Bible says: ‘For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, *they are conscious of nothing at all.*’ (Ecclesiastes 9:5) When a person dies, the Bible explains: ‘His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; *in that day his thoughts do perish.*’—Psalm 146:3, 4.”
    - b. The text says: “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing that is done under the sun*” (Eccl. 9:5-6). The statement about the dead being unaware of anything is limited by the phrase, *under the sun*. Far from saying the dead are totally unconscious, the text simply affirms that the dead do not know what is going on back on earth.
    - c. Psalms 146:3-4: “Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”
      - 1) “Verse 3—Put not your trust in princes (comp. Ps 118:10). Israel was always apt to trust in bureau rather than Divine help. Now it was Egypt (Isa 30:2; 36:6), now Assyria (2 Kings 16:7), now their own kings or nobles. At the time of the return from the Captivity, too much was expected from Zerubbabel and the other ‘princes’....Confidence in human aid of whatever kind
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is forbidden. In whom there is no help; or, 'that hath no saving power'....Verse 4—His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; or, when his breath goes forth' - i.e., when he breathes his last—"he returns to his earth," i.e. to the earth of which he was made (Gen 2:7,19). In that very day his thoughts perish. All his schemes and projects ('eshtonoth, a word not occurring elsewhere) come to an end—are nipped in the bud—perish. So weak is he, and not to be depended on" (from The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft).

- 2) "The Hebrew for 'thoughts' means—*lit.*, 'shinings,' 'polishings,' implying how *elaborately fabricated* were his *plans*....How can he bring 'help' or *salvation* to others who cannot save himself? Death suddenly snaps asunder his web of projects, and therefore ends all the hope that was placed in him" (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, pp.406f).
- 3) The text does not teach that a man is totally unconscious after death; it teaches that a man's plans, schemes, aspirations perish when he dies—he is no longer alive on earth to carry out any of those intentions. This coincides perfectly with all of the other statements in the Bible that teach man has a soul (a spirit) that departs from his physical body at the moment of death.

**B. They claim that man has no immortal soul.**

1. "Yet someone may ask: 'Don't humans have an immortal soul that survives death?' Many have taught this, even saying that death is a doorway to another life. But that idea does not come from the Bible. Rather, God's Word teaches that you *are* a soul, that your soul is really *you*, with all your physical and mental qualities. (Genesis 2:7; Jeremiah 2:34; Proverbs 2:10) Also, the Bible says: 'The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.' (Ezekiel 18:4) Nowhere does the Bible teach that man has an immortal soul that survives the death of the body" (ibid.). But the word death means separation; when the spirit is separated from the body, the body is dead (Jas. 2:26); when a soul sins against God, it is separated from God—it is dead (Gen. 2:16-17)..
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."
  - a. Paul here expresses his desire that the brethren be completely sanctified by the God of peace. This is not some miraculous change which God brings upon us, but the gradual growth we undergo as we study, learn, and improve in the Christian life. It is the apostle's heart-felt wish that the saints should reach this level of spiritual maturity, and enter into their heavenly reward at the end. It was his desire also that their whole spirit, soul, and body should be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ. A distinction is made here between the spirit and the soul. Man is a triune being, possessing a physical body, physical life, and a spirit.
  - b. In the usual case, the words *spirit* and *soul* are used interchangeably in the Scriptures.
    - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The part of man which will be saved in eternity is called "the spirit."
    - 2) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." 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." The part of man which is subject to eternal punishment is here called "the soul."
    - 3) Genesis 35:18: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin." What was it that departed from the dying body of Rachel? It was her spirit (her soul). It survived the death of her body.
    - 4) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." The spirit survives the death of the body; this spirit is also called the "soul."
    - 5) 1 Kings 17:21: "And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again."



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- 6) 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.**" The spirit (soul) is formed within the physical body of a man.
  - 7) Daniel 7:15: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me." His spirit (soul) was able to be grieved; it was present in the midst of his physical body. The spirit (soul) is separate from the body.
  - c. The word *soul* is also used in the Scriptures in reference to individuals (persons). "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" (1 Pet. 3:20).
  - d. The word *soul* is used in the Scriptures in reference to animal life which we possess in common with beasts. In this sense, animals have souls.
    - 1) Psalms 74:19: "O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude *of the wicked*: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever."
    - 2) Psalms 72:13: "He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy." The needy are those in need of physical necessities; the provisions given was food to sustain their lives.
    - 3) 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."
  - e. The text speaks of the spirit, the soul, and the body of each of the saints; the spirit is the eternal part of the person; the soul in this usage is a reference to the life of the person; and the body referred to is the physical body in which the spirit dwells. Paul expresses his desire that the spirit, soul, and body of each of the saints might be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ.
  - f. "The apostle does not intimate here that either the body or the vital principle will be admitted to heaven, or will be found in a future state of being, whatever may be the truth on that subject. The prayer is, that they might be entirely holy, and be kept from transgression, until the Lord Jesus should come; that is, until he should come either to remove them by death, or to wind up the affairs of this lower world" (Albert Barnes, Commentary on 1 Thessalonians, p.63).
  3. The false witnesses of the Watchtower enterprise ignore many passages that must be considered before reaching any correct conclusion regarding the nature of the soul. They isolate a few verses that use the word "soul" in the sense of "physical life" and apply that meaning to all of the occurrences of the term.

### III. THE SOUL IS IMMORTAL—IT NEVER CEASES TO EXIST.

#### A. The spirit makes us different from the animals.

1. Our have a spirit marks the difference between man and beast.
    - a. Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."
    - b. Daniel 7:15: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me."
  2. The spirit (soul) has no material properties.
    - a. Whether living or dead, the physical body has the same weight. A doctor, knowing that his patient was on the verge of death, weighed him before and after death; there was no change in the weight.
    - b. A dead body cannot see, cannot touch, cannot smell, cannot hear, and cannot taste. All of the senses it used in life are no longer available; that which animates the body is the spirit—and it departs from the body at death. In fact, the very absence of the spirit from the body **is** death: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26).
  3. Biblical statements:
    - a. Genesis 5:21-24: "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he
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- was not; for God took him."*
- b. Hebrews 11:5: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."
  - c. 2 Kings 2:1-11: "And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said *unto him*, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so*. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."
  - d. 1 Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."
  - e. James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
4. Moses survived death: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 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" (Matt. 17:1-5).
  5. The souls of slain saints were alive and located under an altar: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled" (Rev. 6:9-11).
  6. Paul's experience demonstrates the conscious survival of beyond death. For the argument Paul makes in this passage, the individual has to be Paul. "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:1-4. [It is certainly possible that the apostle *could* have been
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- dead during this episode; it is certain in either case, that consciousness continues in the *Hadean* realm.
7. The resurrections reported in the Scriptures show that death does not destroy the identity of the dead individual. Lazarus remained Lazarus; the widow's son was still her son; so also with Jairus' daughter. There is an "inner man" that is eternal: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16).
  8. The spirit (the soul) is the *knowing* part of man: "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).
    - a. Knowledge and consciousness not properties of body—these pertain to the soul (spirit): "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). There is neither knowledge nor consciousness in a dead body.
    - b. The heart (used in reference to the spirit or soul) lives forever.
      - 1) Psalms 22:26: "The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever."
      - 2) Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee."
      - 3) Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
      - 4) Romans 10:8-9: "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 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."
    - c. Soul is incorruptible—immortal.
      - 1) 1 Timothy 1:17: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."
      - 2) 1 Peter 3:3-4: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Note: We are made in God's image.
  9. Angels have no physical bodies, reserved for punishment.
    - a. 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
    - b. 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
    - c. Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
- B. Relation of the soul to God the Father.
1. Our spirit was given by Jehovah: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl 12:7).
  2. The Lord formed the spirit within our physical body: "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" (Zech. 12:1).
  3. Our spirit was formed by the Lord (Zech 12:1). The Lord forms the spirit of man within him.
    - a. The formation of the heavens and the laying of the earth's foundation were one-time acts, but the forming of the spirits of men is an on-going work.
    - b. There is more to a man than the physical body.
      - 1) Genesis 35:16-19: "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in
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- hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem."
- 2) Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man..."
  - 3) Romans 7:22: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."
  - 4) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
  - 5) 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. God is the father of our spirits. "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9: cf. Num. 16:22).
  - d. When does God form the spirit within us? The only logical time is the moment of conception; it is then that the body begins to form and life begins. When the spirit leaves the physical body, death results (Jas. 2:26); consequently, it is when the spirit joins the human body that life begins.
4. We are made in God's image, but God has no physical image.
- a. 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."
  - b. Luke 24:36-39: "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."
  - c. John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
  - d. We are the offspring of God.
    - 1) Genesis 1:11: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."
    - 2) Acts 17:28: "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."
    - 3) Eve's body came from Adam; Adam's body was created from the elements of the earth.
    - 4) Our bodies are derived from earthly elements; our spirit came from God—made in his image.
5. God is the Father of our **spirits**: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb 12:9).
6. All souls belong to God.
- a. Ezekiel 18:4: "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die."
  - 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."
7. We have a spiritual relation to Christ now, as the children of God: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise" (Gal 3:26-29, ASV).
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#### IV. VALUE OF THE SOUL.

##### A. To the body.

1. The spirit gives life.
2. The spirit provides understanding, judgment, affections, will, intellect, and consciousness.
3. The spirit furnishes us with memory and reason.
4. The body without the spirit is dead—it has none of these qualities.

##### B. The spirit is more important than physical body.

1. Statements of the Scriptures thus teaching:
  - a. 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."
  - b. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
  - c. Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."
2. Worldly-minded people expend vast sums of money to provide comfort for the body, and for preventing and curing disease.
3. Many grieve over the loss of physical resources; some even try to blame God for these losses: "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).
4. The cries of infidels at death show that they then perceived the truth—but when it was too late to do them any good.
  - a. 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."
  - b. 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!"

##### C. The soul is of vastly greater worth than world.

1. Statements of the Scriptures:
    - a. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
    - b. Luke 9:25: "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"
  2. Alexander the Great mourned that he had "No more worlds to conquer!"
  3. The world passes away:
    - a. 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved,
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- 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."
- b. 1 John 2:17: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."
4. But the soul lives on:
- a. Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
  - b. 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."
  - c. Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
  - d. 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
5. The most spiritual are willing to sacrifice themselves in behalf of their souls, in the service of God.
- a. Martyrs willingly gave physical lives.
    - 1) Many were slain in Roman arenas, fighting against beasts or brutish men.
    - 2) Many were burned at the stake, refusing to vilify Christ (cf. Polycarpa).
    - 3) Many were crucified.
    - 4) These were more willing to die than forfeit their soul's reward.
  - b. Paul sacrificed his physical ease; he suffered great hardship, persecution, and hatred—for his soul's eternal reward.
    - 1) 2 Corinthians 11:23-28: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labour 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. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."
    - 2) Philippians 3:13-14: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I *do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
- D. Who cares for your soul?
- 1. God cares: "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" (Rom 5:8-9).
  - 2. Christ cares:
    - a. Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
    - b. John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."
  - 3. Holy Spirit: "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" (Rev 22:17).
  - 4. Angels: "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.....Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7,10).
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5. The church, which spends great sums of money and effort in the interest of precious souls, yours included:
    - 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. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26: "That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."
  6. Those who have gone into eternity lost: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 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. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment" (Luke 16:19-28).

## V. **CONCLUSION.**

### A. Since the soul belongs to God, he must come first.

1. Scriptural statements:
  - 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. 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."
2. Allegiance is due him for he created us.
3. Allegiance is due him for he allows us to live, despite our imperfections.
4. Allegiance is due him for he sustains us.

### B. The soul's principal need is God:

1. We need the salvation from sin which only God can provide—through Christ.
  2. It is in the best interest of our soul to dedicate it to the service of God.
  3. Revelation 3:20-21: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."
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## Lessons from the Tabernacle

### I. INTRODUCTION:

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

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

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

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

### II. DISCUSSION:

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A. The Outer Court is representative of the world.

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

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

1. The Altar was used in offering up the many sacrifices which God commanded Israel to offer.
    - a. Leviticus 9:7: "And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded."
    - b. Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul."
  2. The sacrifices involved the offering of the blood of animals.
  3. The Israelites provided the sacrifices which were costly to the individuals.
  4. Without the shedding of the blood of the animals offered, there was no means of their approaching God. "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" (Heb. 10:22).
  5. The Antitype is in the Lord's sacrifice of himself for the sins of all men.
    - a. Romans 5:8-9: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
    - b. Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."
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- c. Hebrews 7:27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."
- d. Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
- e. Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
- f. Hebrews 10:16-19: "This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."
- g. Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

C. The Laver has its counterpart in the New Testament System.

1. The laver was a basin containing water: "And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations" (Ex. 30:18).
2. The Type involves the following particulars.
  - a. God specified its location: Between the tabernacle and altar: "Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein" (Exodus 30:18).
  - b. Those entering the tabernacle were to lay aside their old clothes before washing and putting on the priestly garments.
  - c. Those entering the tabernacle were to wash before entering lest they die.
    - 1) Exodus 29:4: "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water."
    - 2) Exodus 30:19-20: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD."
  - d. After washing and before entering, they were to put on their priestly garments prior to assuming their priestly duties (Exodus 29:4ff).
  - e. They had to be ceremonially pure before they could perform their priestly services acceptably: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Ex. 30:17-21).
3. The Antitype holds true to the pattern.
  - a. God specified the location of baptism: between Christ's sacrifice and salvation.
    - 1) Acts 2:36-38: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

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- 2) 1 Peter 3:21: "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."
  - b. We baptize rebellious children of the devil; they are rebelling against Satan and desire to obey God sincerely.
  - c. We must lay aside our practices of sin (by repenting) before we can be washed.
    - 1) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
    - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
    - 3) Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
    - 4) Colossians 3:8-9: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds."
  - d. The impurities (guilt) of sin are removed in baptism.
    - 1) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
    - 2) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
    - 3) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
  - e. After this washing, we put on our spiritual garments.
    - 1) Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
    - 2) Colossians 3:15-20: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."
  - f. We are now spiritually pure and our services can be offered acceptably: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:5,9).
- D. The Holy Place typifies the church of Christ.
- 1. Bible statements:
    - a. Acts 15:16-17: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."
    - b. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of
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God is holy, which *temple* ye are."

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

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- cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
- f. Faithful members of the Lord's church see by the light of God's word.
- 1) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
  - 2) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
  - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
  - 4) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
  - 5) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
  - 6) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
  - 7) 2 Peter 1:1-11: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
  - 8) 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
- g. Only by going through the church can any accountable person have hope of entering heaven.
- 1) Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
  - 2) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
  - 3) Matthew 16:17-18: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
  - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:24: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."
  - 5) 2 Peter 3:5-11: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that
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then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness."

E. The Candlestick depicts the Word of God.

1. The thick tenting material closed out all the natural light, dust, and rain. The candlestick of the Tabernacle was to burn continually, and furnished the only light for the Holy Place: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually" (Lev. 24:1-4).
2. The Word of God is the only light needed in the Antitype, the Lord's church.
  - a. All man-made precepts, commandments, and creeds are specifically excluded. We must insulate the church from all error!
    - 1) Mark 7:7-13: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."
    - 2) Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
    - 3) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
  - b. God's word gives light.
    - 1) Psalms 119:105: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
    - 2) Psalms 119:130: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."
    - 3) Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
    - 4) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
    - 5) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

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

2) 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."

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

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

1. This table contained twelve loaves of bread which were replaced every sabbath.

a. The priests were to eat the loaves that were replaced. "Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute" (Lev. 24:3-9).

b. Only the priests were authorized to eat this bread.

2. The Lord's Supper is the counterpart in the church of Christ.

a. Every first day of the week, the saints come together and eat this supper in remembrance of Christ. It is a perpetual command.

1) Acts 20:7: "And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

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

b. Only Christians have the right to partake of it.

1) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

2) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in

breaking of bread, and in prayers."

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

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

1. The Veil is described in Exodus 26:31-37 as a very costly and beautiful curtain: "And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim *wood* overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold, upon the four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy *place*. And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars *of* shittim *wood*, and overlay them with gold, *and* their hooks *shall be of* gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them."
- a. It was made of fine twined linen of cunning work and dyed with the costly colors of blue, scarlet, and purple.
- b. Only the High Priest could go beyond the veil, and that only on the Day of Atonement when he offered the blood of the atoning sacrifice for all: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7; cf. Lev. 16).
- c. The Veil concealed the items in the Most Holy Place: the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat.
2. The Veil, and its being rent at the Lord's death, depicts several significant things.
  - a. It symbolizes the mysteries of God's eternal plan which was unrevealed until the New Testament was given
    - 1) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets,

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- according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
- 2) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
  - 3) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- b. It symbolizes for us death by which we leave this world and enter eternity. Its having been rent depicts the great truth that Christ, by his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, has won victory for us over death.
- 1) Isaiah 25:7-8: "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*."
  - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:20-22: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
  - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:55-57: "O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
  - 4) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
- c. The rending of the veil at the death of Christ symbolizes the abrogation of the Old Covenant.
- 1) Matthew 27:50-51: "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."
  - 2) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
  - 3) Hebrews 9:7-10: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were
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- offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation."
- d. It symbolized the separation between God and men, and the need for a mediator which role the Levitical high priest filled. The rending of the veil proclaims that all men are on equal standing with God and need no human priest as mediator.
    - 1) Matthew 23:8: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren."
    - 2) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
    - 3) 1 Peter 2:5.9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
    - 4) Revelation 1:6: "and he made us *to be* a kingdom, *to be* priests unto his God and Father; to him *be* the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (ASV).
  - e. Its rending symbolizes the fact that Christ, our High Priest, is in heaven, and has offered the atoning sacrifice for us: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:6-17).
  - f. The veil being rent pictures the fact that the way into heaven has now been opened.
    - 1) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
    - 2) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
- I. The Most Holy Place represents Heaven.
1. The Ark of the Covenant rested there.
    - a. It contained the tables of the law, Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna; the golden censer of Hebrews 9:4 is likely the one from the Holy Place which was taken into the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement (Lev. 16:12-14).
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- b. It was covered by the Mercy Seat made of pure gold.
  - c. It was in this place, at the mercy seat, that God met with his people: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (Ex. 25:22).
  - d. No earthly light was in this place; the glory of God was sufficient light.
2. The Antitype is Heaven itself.
- a. The ark of the covenant and the tables of the law suggest the New Covenant.
    - 1) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
    - 2) Hebrews 8:7-13: "For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."
  - b. The manna suggests Christ who is the bread of life: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:47-51).
  - c. The mercy seat suggests our Advocate and Mediator in Heaven—Christ: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*" (1 John 2:1-2).
  - d. The Most Holy Place itself is Heaven.
    - 1) Hebrews 6:19-20: "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
    - 2) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
    - 3) Hebrews 9:24: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."
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3. There is no need for the sun, moon, or other light; the glory of God the Father and of the Son is sufficient: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23).

### III. CONCLUSION:

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

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

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

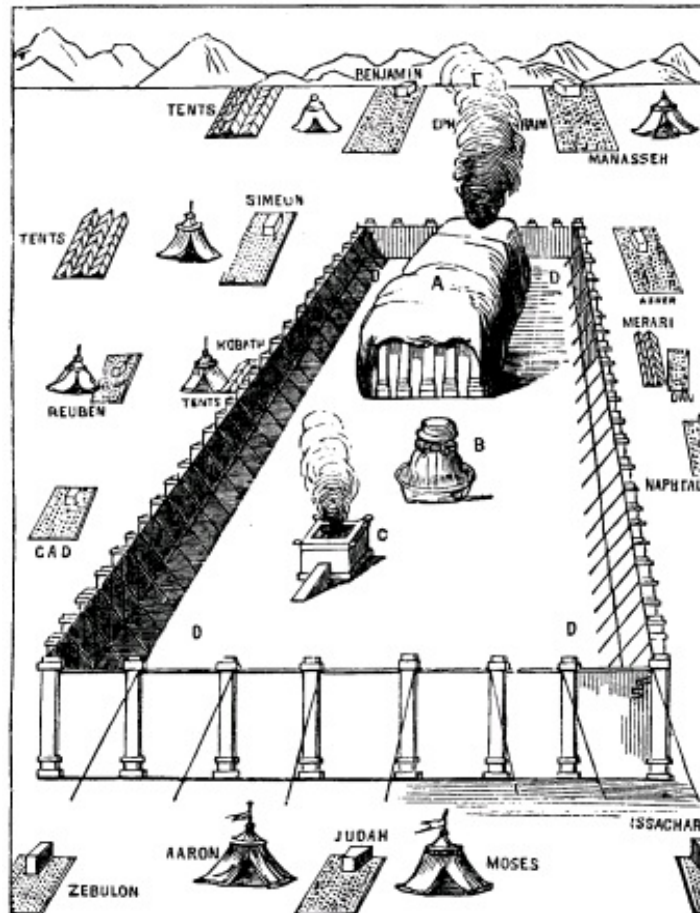
1. Some try to move baptism and put it in the church, and speak of it as "Christian" baptism. But it is not for a Christian, but in order to become a Christian.
2. The Laver was outside the Tabernacle; the priests had to wash there before they were allowed to enter the Holy Place. Baptism puts one into the church (into Christ).
  - a. 1 Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."
  - b. Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
  - c. Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."

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

1. We are not members of the body of Christ merely for our own pleasure and profit, but to serve God and our fellowman.
  - a. Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
  - b. 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
  - c. Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."



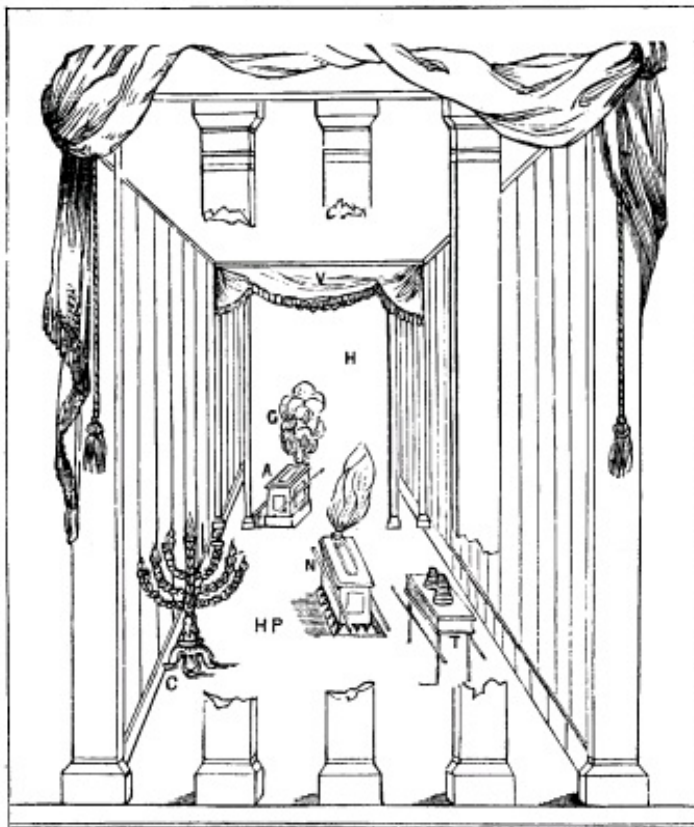
2. Our obligations are ordained by the God of heaven:
    - a. To worship of God: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).
    - b. To live pure lives: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).
    - c. To spread the gospel: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).
    - d. To defend the faith: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7c; 2 Cor. 2:17).
  3. Thus do we prepare for Heaven!
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**The Tabernacle**

- A—Tabernacle
- B—Laver
- C—Altar of Burnt Offerings
- D—Outer Court

## Inside the Tabernacle



# A Society Without Reason

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. A New Testament description of the evils of ancient society:

1. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and 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” (Romans 1:18-25).
2. This is God’s description of ancient societies which departed from him. A careful examination of the passage reveals several steps those people took which led to their demise as a civilization and the personal destruction of their souls.
3. Since men are still subject to the same passions and tendencies, there is a powerful message in Romans 1 which can greatly benefit our modern society.

### B. The passage shows when man abuses his powers, evil consequences follow.

1. When one willfully follows a certain course of life, his will-power ceases to function as intended, his affections are perverted, his conscience is corrupted, and his mind is affected.
2. His thinking becomes twisted; he can no longer perceive things correctly. This is the point of emphasis in the rest of our study.

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. The human mind is a very delicate instrument.

1. If one inputs the wrong information into a computer, that usually helpful tool becomes useless. It does not know what to do with it, and gives the operator an error message or locks up.
  2. The God who made us, gave us the Bible to instruct our minds. He impressed on the instinct of animals their role and activities in life; they have no choice but to follow the dictates of their instinct.
    - a. But man has the power of choice, which operates properly only if his mind has accurate information, and can utilize that information correctly.
    - b. God’s word (the Bible) gives man information regarding his origin, his identity (that he is the offspring of God), the purpose of his being, his limitations, how to live, what his duties are, and his ultimate destiny.
  3. We must be careful what we put into our minds.
    - a. Franklin Camp reported a rather malicious prank some psychology students played on one of their class-mates. The first boy met the victim and asked him what was wrong with his eye; the young man said nothing was wrong with it. Later, the second boy asked the victim the same question, and got the same reply. The third boy asked him the same question, to which the victim replied that he did not know, but that it was red. Before the day was over, the victim was on the verge of going to see a doctor; his eye was actually bothering him because he had been rubbing it, thinking he had a problem. The mind can play tricks on us, if we allow it to operate on faulty information.
    - b. This psychological prank was relatively harmless, but think of the consequences if a man feeds his mind on serious information that can affect the way he lives.
  4. There are several prominent evils which are fed the mind which can have disastrous effects on the mind.
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- a. The theory of evolution has an evil effect on the human mind; it tells us that there is no God; that we are the product of a chance combination of elements; that there is no purpose to life; that the only destiny we face is life on earth.
  - b. False religions invented by wicked or misled humans can have disastrous effects on the mind. These systems would have us believe that the Bible is insufficient or wrong; that we need the religious system the teacher is trying to feed us. Once we accept it, the word of God will be seen through the colored glasses of the false religion we have accepted; we will not be able to see the truth because of the blindness of our own mind.
  - c. False moral standards have an evil effect on the human mind; by these we are taught that there is no absolute standard; or that a certain action or lifestyle is permissible; or that each individual is the only one who can decide what is right or wrong; or that one must not condemn another's morality regardless of how repugnant it may be.
  - d. Perverted truth has an evil effect on the human mind. If God's truth is contaminated by man's error it ceases to be God's truth and becomes man's error. If we accept such a perversion, we will be led into beliefs and practices which are contrary to God's will, and we will be unable or unwilling to see God's truth; the error we have accepted will have perverted our thinking.
- B. Accepting illogical concepts has a detrimental effect on man's mind.
- 1. Suppose a man should examine your new car, see the obvious designs inherent in that vehicle, but then declare that your automobile had no designer, that its design features are not real, and that the car was made by chance.
    - a. One who would seriously maintain such a position has a twisted mind; its thought processes have been perverted; a "cog" has slipped in the machinery of his mind!
    - b. Vandals put sugar in the fuel tanks of some road machinery during the night; when the engines were started the next day, the foreign elements in the gas destroyed the equipment. Why? Engines are not designed to run on sugar!
    - c. The human mind is not designed to operate properly when it is fed the wrong kind of information. Irrational data can have a detrimental effect on the mind, causing it to be twisted in its thinking, and rendering it incapable of logical reasoning.
  - 2. Romans 1:19-20: "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."
    - a. The eternal power and divinity of God are clearly seen by the things that God created. God's power and divinity are themselves invisible to the human eye, but they are revealed in such a way that the human mind can clearly perceive their presence and reality.
    - b. One who looks at the universe, the earth, life, the orderliness of the creation, the balance found in nature, and an assortment of other items, and declares that all of these are merely accidental, and that there is no real design to be seen, is illogical and irrational; his thinking is perverted; his mind has become twisted. Such a man is not operating in an environment of reality. He is no different from the man who said your car is the result of blind chance.
    - c. God says that such a man is without excuse, that he has no rational explanation for his assertion. In the Judgment (Eccl. 12:13-14), he will be dumbfounded when his eternal destiny is pronounced (cf. Matt. 22:11-12).
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) Matthew 22:11-12: "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."
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3. Romans 1:21: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became **vain in their imaginations**, and their foolish heart was darkened" (KJV). Romans 1:21: "Because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became **vain in their reasonings**, and their senseless heart was darkened" (ASV).
    - a. To become vain in their imaginations is to become vain in their reasonings. One thus described does not use his reasoning power; he acts contrary to reason; he is unable to reason correctly.
    - b. We have a colloquial expression that is very graphic and accurate: "He can't see straight!" A famous television star said he supported the so-called Equal Rights Amendment because his baby daughter might want to be president when she grew up.
    - c. Religious false teachers used to argue that baptism is not immersion because the Jordan River is so narrow that a man could dam it up with his foot. The same errorists claim that infant membership in the church is authorized because Lydia's entire household was baptized, that there was bound to be an infant among that number; also since no one would immerse a baby, therefore the baptism administered was sprinkling.
    - d. Other confused thinkers have argued that instrumental music in the worship of the church on earth today is authorized because David had instruments of music. David also had several wives, offered animal sacrifices, and followed the Mosaic Law in its entirety; if we may use instruments because he did, we can do anything else he did. An illogical mind cannot or will not see that an argument that proves too much, proves nothing.
  4. The rest of Romans 1 shows the ultimate end of vain reasoning.
    - a. Atheism says: Evolution just happened; it had no designer even though the universe is filled with evidence of design; that there was no purpose in the formation of the world; that there was no guiding power behind the universe. This is a plain denial of the grand truth of verse 20.
    - b. Public schools have fed several generations of American children on this foolishness. Here is the cause for the vain, illogical thinking that is rampant in our society.
    - c. We are now paying the price for what millions have been taught and accepted. Runaway crime, the massive drug problem, abortion, homosexuality, and hedonism are some of the consequences of the unbelief that predominates in American education and society in general.
  5. Charles Darwin is the father of the modern theory of evolution.
    - a. He began his studies as a mature, brilliant, well-educated man who believed in God. After spending years filling his mind with the theory, he became an infidel; his theory destroyed what faith he had.
    - b. How could a little child do better? They are fed the theory on television, in elementary school, in high school, and college.
    - c. We feel helpless to combat this well-entrenched enemy, but we can teach the truth to all within the realm of our influence, in all the avenues open to us.
  6. To help correct this situation, some things are necessary:
    - a. We must identify the real problem: false information.
    - b. We can try to get the young and old to see the truth, its importance, and power.
    - c. We should realize the difficulty of getting people to repudiate that upon which their lives have been built.
- C. Corrupted reasoning leads to foolish (senseless) hearts.
1. Romans 1:21-22: "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."
    - a. This condition began with their rejection of the Living God, the intelligent designer of the world. "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" (verse 20).
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- b. They proceeded through well-intentioned idolatry to licentious living.
    2. Evolutionists and infidels in general are often intelligent, well-educated, and respected people, but no one is more foolish! One who rejects the existence of God and the inspiration of the Bible is vain in his reasoning, has a foolish heart, and willingly has taken up residence in darkness.
      - a. Evolutionists claim to operate by reason but they fail the most basic test of rationality (verse 20).
      - b. They ignore the basic tenets of true science: like begets like.
    3. Evolutions and infidels must defend what cannot be defended.
      - a. That non-living matter produced living beings.
      - b. That matter is eternal (which is contrary to the laws of thermodynamics).
    4. They profess themselves to be wise, but are actually foolish. "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).
      - a. They exalt intelligence and education, and claim all intelligent and educated people accept evolution, and that only ignorant and obtuse people reject the theory.
      - b. But many scientists reject evolution; these are intelligent, well-educated, and respected. Werner von Braun was one such believer in God; he was the father of the American space program. [Anthony Flew, a prominent atheist who debated our own Thomas Warren, announced in early 2005 that he was now a believer in a Supreme Being].
    5. In today's world, there are more educated fools than ever. Education that excludes God is not genuine education.
  - D. To reject God is to have a perverted view of the universe and of man.
    1. Romans 1:23-25: "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."
    2. The men who first rejected the Living God subsequently developed a corrupted concept of God. They formed idols to represent God. They generated all sorts of "gods" made in the likeness of man, beast, and snakes.
    3. If we reject the God of the Bible, we change our view of God, by thinking of him in human terms (cf. idols), or by denying his power and goodness, or by denying his existence altogether.
    4. If we reject the truth of God, we change the object of our worship and service, from the Creator to the creature.
    5. If man does not have a proper concept of God, he will misconstrue the universe, and will not long have the proper concept of himself; he will pervert God's moral standard (vs. 24).
    6. Evolution emphasizes nature and repudiates God. The environment, ecology, and the lower creatures are then exalted above God and mankind.
    7. One who denies God's involvement in the origin of the universe, loses the ability to reason correctly; how can he rationally explain the existence of the universe and life apart from God? Impossible!
  - E. Rejecting God leads ultimately to an utter repudiation of God's moral standards.
    1. Romans 1:26-27: "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."
    2. In the past several years in America, homosexuality has exploded on the scene.
      - a. There have always been perverts around, but they stayed "in the closet," knowing the revulsion their wicked practices caused right-thinking people; there was a godly measure of shame about it then.
      - b. But now they are out of the "closet"—and openly flaunt their perversions.
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3. It has gone to another extreme: homosexuality is openly practiced in the name of religion.
    - a. We were shocked some years ago when a church in California put on a dance for homosexuals.
    - b. These perverts are now welcomed into the membership of prominent denominations.
    - c. Homosexuals are now occupying pulpits among some main-line denominations.
    - d. Anyone who disagrees with this disgraceful lifestyle, is accused of bigotry and hatred.
  4. What happened to produce this present foolishness?
    - a. The basic cause was a rejection of the Almighty and the authority of his word.
    - b. Another major cause was the wide-spread acceptance of evolution.
    - c. When enough people in society have rejected God, compromised or repudiated his word, and have accepted evolution, their thinking becomes so twisted that they do not reason straight.
  5. Romans 1 shows that when God is rejected, we ought not to be surprised at what takes place.
    - a. Moral corruption: uncleanness; homosexuality.
    - b. Nonsensical conduct: worship of idols made like animals, snakes, and man.
    - c. Riots, drugs, crime, breakdown of the home, turmoils of all kinds.
  6. God gave up ancient societies when they degraded themselves. "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.... 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" (Rom. 1:24, 26).
- F. They did not want God in their knowledge.
1. 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."
  2. In a television interview with the winner of a heavyweight championship match, the interviewer became audibly upset when Evander Holyfield kept giving credit to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit for his victory. This was not what the interviewer and the public wanted to hear.
  3. God gave the ancients up to a reprobate mind (a mind void of judgment).
    - a. They could not properly discern, think, reason.
    - b. Why? It began with an unwillingness to have God in their knowledge.
  4. Does modern America have this problem?
    - a. A large portion of our tax money is spent on space exploration, one prominent design of which is to find evidence of the "Big Bang" and evolution.
    - b. One can get into serious legal trouble by disturbing turtle eggs, but aborting human babies is legal.
    - c. A pregnant woman shot herself in the abdomen, killing her baby. She was charged with murder. But the same woman could have paid an abortion doctor a few hundred dollars to murder her baby, with no penalty.
    - d. A drunk driver in Texas crashed into a pregnant woman's car; her baby died 44 hours after delivery. The man was convicted of manslaughter. But abortion clinics murder hundreds of unborn babies daily with no penalty imposed.
  5. How can we explain this obviously twisted system? Many have perverted the God-given mechanism (the mind) by learning and accepting the devil's lies [in scientific, moral, and spiritual realms].
- G. The consequences of this irrational condition is illustrated in the text.
1. Romans 1:29-31: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."
  2. Murder: How much sense is there in a drive-by shooting? Or in the average murder?
  3. Haters of God: Mrs. O'Hair hated God so much that she pressed her suit through the legal system; the result was the banning of the Bible from public schools. What was the aftermath? Even schools are not safe!
  4. Inventors of evil.
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- a. There is no new way to commit sin.
  - 1) Ecclesiastes 1:9-10: "The thing that hath been, it *is that* which shall be; and that which is done *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun. Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."
  - 2) 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."
  - 3) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
- b. But there are many new renditions of sin; many new features of transgression.
- 5. They were without understanding: this concept is stated four times in the context.
  - a. Vain in their reasoning—verse 21.
  - b. Senseless (foolish) hearts—verse 21.
  - c. Reprobate mind—verse 24.
  - d. Without understanding—verse 31.
- 6. The passage describes our situation today.
  - a. Society in general has lost its fear of God, and must live in daily fear of man.
    - 1) Our streets are unsafe.
    - 2) Locks and security devices are everywhere.
    - 3) Security measures abound in airports, courthouses, schoolhouses, and church houses.
  - b. These security devices and measures merely treat the symptoms of the problem.
- 7. The only solution is to get people to fear God, otherwise the condition can only worsen.
  - a. What is needed is knowledge, belief, reverence for God, and love for his word.
  - b. We further need obedience in life, in speech, in motives, and in thinking.
- H. Is unbelief and evolution serious?
  - 1. Romans 1:18-32 shows emphatically that it is!
    - a. It repudiates God.
    - b. It refuses to have God in the knowledge of its adherents.
    - c. It rejects the Bible.
    - d. It denies spiritual realities: soul, heaven, hell, salvation.
    - e. It shuns God's spiritual and moral standards.
  - 2. It is taught openly, without serious opposition in our public schools.
  - 3. It is believed and promoted by prominent denominations.
    - a. The Presbyterians re-wrote their creeds some years ago to accommodate evolution.
    - b. The pope has made a public proclamation in support of evolution: John Paul II said that "new knowledge has confirmed that Charles Darwin's theory of evolution is 'more than a hypothesis.'"

### III. CONCLUSION.

- A. God created an orderly universe and gave man the ability to live orderly lives.
  - 1. Samson destroyed a pagan temple by pulling down the two main pillars (Judg. 16:26-30).
  - 2. God gave man two pillars for an orderly society.
    - a. Recognition of God.
    - b. The order that results from honoring God.
  - 3. Atheism and evolution have helped destroy the first pillar [in the thinking of many], and the second is crumbling.
- B. Power without character is always dangerous.
  - 1. There is nothing wrong with a rifle or dynamite; but a man without character can wreak havoc if he has the power of a rifle or dynamite at his disposal.
  - 2. God's power is infinite, but we have no reason to be terrified that he will misuse his power. Why?

He has character. He is guided by infinite wisdom, has absolute control, and a perfect sense of what is right and wrong.

3. Today, we teach children all kinds of information about how to perform their jobs, but we fail miserably in teaching them character.
4. God gave up ancient Gentile societies and penalized Israelite generations; America will suffer a similar fate unless we make a change for the better.

C. What can we do?

1. Parents: Teach their children God's word, and set a good example for them. Grandparents can have a powerful influence in this.
2. Churches need to quit their entertaining and get busy teaching people (young and old, in and out of the church) the eternal precepts of the Bible.
  - a. Our work is too serious to spend time on fun and frolic.
  - b. Satan interferes so much that our efforts can easily be stymied—if we lose sight of our duty.
3. Individuals must fill their minds with God's truth and be motivated to teach and encourage others, and each other. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

[Bob Winton: outgrowth of sermon by Franklin Camp]

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## “I Want To Be a Soul Winner”

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. Survey 2 Kings 6:24—7:16.

1. Benhadad besieged Samaria until a dire famine was on the people: "And it came to pass after this, that Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria" (6:24).
2. The price of donkey's head was 80 pieces of silver; small part of dove dung sold for 5 pieces of silver; two women agreed to kill their sons for food: "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" (6:25-29).
3. King of Israel blamed this great trouble on Elisha, and sought to kill him: "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. Then he said, God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day" (6:30-31).
4. Elisha predicted that normal prices would be in effect within twenty-four hours: "Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, To morrow about this time *shall* a measure of fine flour *be sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, *if* the LORD would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see *it* with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof" (7:1-2).

#### B. Four lepers sat at the gate of Samaria, contemplating their lot.

1. "And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die" (2 Kings 7:3-4).
  2. They went into the Syrian camp and found it deserted; God had caused the Syrians to hear a great noise of chariots, horses, and army; they forsook their equipment and food, and fled: "And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, *there was* no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it *was*, and fled for their life" (2 Kings 7:5-7).
  3. The lepers hid some of the gold and silver; when they realized how selfish they were acting, they reported the good news to the Samaritan king: "And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid *it*; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence *also*, and went and hid *it*. Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day *is* a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, *there was* no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they *were*. And he called the porters; and they told *it* to the king's house within" (2 Kings 7:8-11).
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4. Elisha's prophecy about lower prices was fulfilled, and relief was given to the starving population: "And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, *if* the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died" (7:17-20).
5. But what if these lepers had remained silent? How many others would have died of starvation? Great misery would have been continued!

## II. YOU AND I ARE IN A SITUATION TODAY SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE LEPERS.

### A. The world is starving to death spiritually.

1. Many of your friends and relatives are lost in sin and are bound for torment!
2. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
3. 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."
4. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
5. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

### B. We have in our hands the pure message of the gospel which is able to save them from this terrible fate!

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. James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

### C. What if we do not make a sincere, diligent effort to show them the unpolluted gospel message?

1. Precious souls will be lost as surely as the people of Samaria would have starved!
2. It is not enough to present the problem; solutions and motivations must be offered for our neighbors to be saved and for us to do our duty. To accomplish these ends, this series of studies is presented.

## III. WE NEED TO BE IMPRESSED THE AWESOME NATURE OF OUR OBLIGATIONS.

### A. The population of our world is increasing at a fast rate.

1. Several years ago, the world's population was increasing at the rate of 62 million per year; 170,000 per day; 7,000 per hour; 120 per minute; 2 per second. India had an increase of one million each month.
2. Membership of the Lord's church is estimated to be about 2.5 million souls.
3. It has been estimated that we are growing by about 100,000 per year. But the birth rate in India is ten times greater than our growth! There are ten times as many births in that country per month than we convert in a year.
4. Around the world, there are more than 100,000 people who die every 24 hours. That is equivalent to the number we baptize in a year.
5. Others have estimated that about 50% of our converts fall away. This is alarming, but we know that a great many of these are restored.

### B. Add to this severe challenge the fact that the Lord's church is in the midst of another great apostasy.

1. We suffered the first apostasy beginning in the latter part of the first century. Most of the church fell away.
  - a. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-7: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who

opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way."

- b. 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."
2. We suffered another apostasy about 100 years ago when the majority of our brethren decided they did not want to have Bible authority for all they do, thus they introduced the mechanical music in worship and relied on a missionary society to do the work God gave the church to do. These brethren took most of the buildings and members, but after a few years, their numbers diminished sharply while our numbers grew dramatically.
3. The present apostasy involves a number of issues and practices, but basically it is again over the matter of having Biblical authority for all we do and teach.
  - a. Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
  - b. 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."
  - c. Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
  - d. 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."
4. In the face of even this great tragedy, we must "gird up our loins", and prepare ourselves for the greatest challenge of our lives—that of converting the world with a depleted membership.
5. Divisions are essential from time-to-time that those who are approved of God may be made manifest. "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11:19).
- C. These statistics may make the problem to appear impossible of resolution.
  1. We are a mere handful in comparison to the 6 billion now living on earth! But look at what the Lord did with 12 lowly men in the first century!
    - a. "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" (Rom. 10:18).
    - b. "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" (Col. 1:23).
  2. A small number of dedicated soldiers can accomplish far more than an large army of disorganized, indifferent, unmotivated men. The Battle of Thermoplae [480 B.C.], from ancient Greek history comes to mind. A band of 300 Grecian soldiers under Leonidas stymied an invading Persian army, which numbered a million or more in the aggregate. "Leonidas and his three hundred elders (for he had chosen only fathers of sons to go with him, lest any Spartan family should be extinguished) died almost to the last man...The Greek historians assure us that the Persians lost 20,000, the Greeks 300" (Will Durant, *The Life of Greece*, p.240). This famous battle paved the way for the ultimate defeat of the Persians.
  3. A small number of dedicated workers who are poorly equipped can out-perform a much larger number of undedicated shirkers who have all the equipment money can buy.
  4. All the forces of the pagan Roman Empire were marshalled against the spread of the gospel in the first century, but our brethren won. Their victory was not decided by their miraculous endowments, but by the power of the mighty gospel in the hands of men and women, and boys and girls, who were

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committed to it. They were willing to die rather than surrender to the enemy!

#### IV. THE WORK OF EVANGELIZING THE WORLD IS TRULY A GREAT WORK.

- A. The great importance of saving souls is pictured as snatching men from a fire.
    - 1. Jude 23: "And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."
    - 2. If a loved one were dangling above a raging fire, we would be extremely impressed with his great, immediate need. He would be likewise impressed.
    - 3. We would be willing to take any action and accept any risk to deliver him.
    - 4. He would be ready to accept any offer of help, without any quibble.
  - B. But many saints and most sinners do not see the grave danger of someone losing his soul in hell.
    - 1. We often sit idly by, and they offer every excuse.
    - 2. Men must believe or be banished from heaven.
      - a. Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
      - 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."
      - c. 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."
      - d. 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."
    - 3. Men must repent or perish—they must turn or burn.
      - 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:"
    - 4. Men must confess Christ or be rejected by him.
      - a. Matthew 10:32-33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."
      - b. 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."
    - 5. Men must be baptized into Christ or continue in their lost state.
      - a. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
      - b. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
      - c. Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
      - d. 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. Christians must be faithful to the end or be eternally lost.
      - a. Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
      - b. 1 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."
      - c. Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast
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*some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

C. We must snatch them out of the fire for good reason.

1. Because we are commanded to do so.
  - 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. Jude 23: "And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."
2. Because it is cruel and criminal to ignore their plight: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:36-38).
3. Because of the awful nature of the fire.
  - a. Mark 9:42-44: "And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
  - b. 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. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 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. Revelation 20:14-15: "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."
4. Because if we do not, who will?
  - a. Angels cannot.
  - b. Satan will not.
  - c. Atheists and other unbelievers are unable.
5. Because if we do not do so now, it will soon be too late.
  - a. Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
  - b. James 4:13-14: "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."
6. Because we have been snatched out of the fire by someone.
7. Because if we do not try, we will slip back into the fire ourselves.

D. But many do not want to be snatched from the fire!

1. This would be unthinkable if they were in danger of a literal fire.
  2. But many do not know they are in any danger of the fires of hell.
  3. Because they cannot see the fires of hell, many do not believe they are in peril.
  4. Because many have been deceived by error, they do not think they are in danger.
  5. Because many have rejected the truth about sin, the Judgment and hell, they will not admit there is any danger.
  6. Some think they can get out of the fire by themselves by "good deeds." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit. 3:5; cf. Acts 10:2,22,30; 11:14-15; Rom. 1:16-17).
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7. Many think there is plenty of time to escape. "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" (2 Cor. 6:2; cf. Jas. 4:13-14).

E. We will be able to snatch men out of the fire if we:

1. Have love and genuine concern in our hearts. "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" (Mark 12:30-31; cf. John 3:16).
2. Have a sense of great urgency. Today and now is all we have.
3. Use wisdom. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).
4. Use the right "tools."
  - 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 1:22-25: "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."
5. Do not fall into the fire ourselves.
  - a. Romans 2:21-24: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preacheest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written."
  - b. Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."
6. Have great courage and strength.
  - a. We cannot teach the lost unless we are courageous enough to show men their sinful condition.
  - b. We must have the strength to withstand their erroneous arguments and excuses.
  - c. It hurts them and us to expose their true condition; our natural tenderness stands in our way. But how much more hurtful it would be to see them cast into hell due to our negligence!
  - d. "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek. 3:17-19).
7. Are willing to pay the heavy price in time, effort, money, and strength.

V. **THERE IS A WIDE GAP BETWEEN GOD AND SINFUL MEN.**

A. That division was caused by man's individual violation of God's law.

1. The original transgression took place in Eden.
  - 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 3:6: "And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."



- c. Genesis 3:22-24: "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."
- d. 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. We become guilty of sin when we reach an age when God holds us responsible for our actions.
  - a. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
  - b. James 1:12-15: "Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."
  - c. 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
3. As the transgression that separates us from fellowship with God is done personally and individually, so the reconciliation must be done personally and individually. The departure occurred when we took certain well-defined steps, and so the return is done by taking certain well-defined steps, as the chart below illustrates:

## ADAM & EVE'S FALL and OUR RESTORATION

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

- B. God is able to bridge that gap and bring us back into his fellowship.
  1. As the separation was done individually and personally, so the return must be done individually and personally: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).
  2. The reconciliation is accomplished through teaching.
    - a. John 6:44-45: "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."
    - b. 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."
- C. Therefore, there is a great need for teaching God's word.
  1. God emphasized the teaching of his word in the Old Testament: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God

is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart" (Deut. 6:4-8).

2. Jesus commanded the teaching of the gospel.
  - a. Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."
  - 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."
3. It is the drawing power God exerts on human hearts: "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).
4. It is the means by which souls are saved.
  - a. Acts 11:13-14: "And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."
  - b. Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
  - c. James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
5. It is the means by which individuals and congregations are strengthened.
  - a. Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
  - b. 1 Peter 2:2: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"
  - c. 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."
6. We must teach the word of God to avoid a repetition of Israel's sins.
  - a. Judges 2:10-12: "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger."
  - b. Judges 2:7: "And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel."

## VI. IN GOD'S ARRANGEMENT, WHO ARE THOSE CHARGED WITH TEACHING THE LOST?

### A. The whole church has the obligation.

1. Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
2. Acts 5:42: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."
3. Acts 8:1,4: "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles....Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

### B. Every Christian is to be like salt and light in the world.

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1. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
    - a. Light and salt are positive forces; they are not passive or inactive.
    - b. Where light is, darkness is dispelled; where salt is applied, a preserving and flavoring effect is exerted.
  2. Older women are to teach younger women, especially through private discussions. "The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children" (Tit. 2:3-4).
  3. Christian husbands and wives are teachers: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:24-26).
  4. Every preacher.
    - a. 2 Timothy 4:1-5: "I charge *thee* in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry" (ASV).
    - b. Philip did (Acts 8:26-39).
    - c. Ananias did (Acts 9:1-18).
  5. Older preachers are to teach and encourage younger preachers: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).
  6. Younger Christian ladies can teach: "And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts 21:9).
- C. Those who are spiritually mature have been given and have developed certain talents.
1. Most Christians have the knowledge and ability to convey some truths of the gospel to others. Thus, to the extent of our abilities and opportunities, every saint bears responsibility in this unending, universal work!
    - a. Romans 12:4-8: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, *let us wait* on *our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness."
    - b. Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."
  2. These instructions are directed to individual Christians, not to some selected group.
    - a. Philippians 1:14: "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."
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- b. Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
- c. Hebrews 5:12-14: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
- d. 1 Peter 3:15: "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."
- e. 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."

## VII. THE GOSPEL THAT WAS USED IN THE FIRST CENTURY IS AT OUR DISPOSAL TODAY.

### A. God has preserved his word in its pure state down through the centuries.

- 1. It is the same message today as in the beginning; it still retains the same powers and truths it originally had.
- 2. Thus we ought not be ashamed of the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
  - a. Some are embarrassed when some strong truth is presented in the presence of their family members or friends who are not Christians.
  - b. If we are ashamed of the gospel, we are ashamed of him who gave it! "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).
  - c. We must not be ashamed to confess Christ as the divine Son of God (Mt. 10:32-33).
  - d. We must not be ashamed to wear the name of Christ: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (1 Pet. 4:15-16; cf. Rom. 16:16).
  - e. We must not be ashamed to be in his church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23; 5:23-27).

### B. The gospel is God's good news (good tidings) to mankind.

- 1. There was no hope, but a Savior has not come—the central truth in the gospel.
- 2. It was not a last-minute substitution; centuries of plans and preparations were required before the gospel could be proclaimed.
  - 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."

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- b. 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."
  - 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."
- C. The gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16).
- 1. God's spoken word is powerful:
    - a. Psalms 33:6-9: "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."
    - b. Matthew 8:24-26: "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."
  - 2. God's written word is powerful.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 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."
  - 3. The power of God's word is exercised through teaching ["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)]; it works on the human heart when it is learned, believed, and obeyed. Our salvation does not depend on certain things:
    - a. Not the personality of the preacher or teacher.
    - b. Not the persuasive ability of the preacher or teacher.
    - c. Not the loudness with which the message is presented.
    - d. Not the meanness with which the message is offered.
    - e. Not weakness or generalities common in liberal circles.
    - f. Not in high-pressure tactics used by sectarians.
    - g. Not in placing the emphasis on sensational subjects.
    - h. Not in presenting dramas, skits, or other forms of entertainment.
- D. The gospel is able to save.
- 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. 1 Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."
  - 3. 1 Corinthians 15:2: "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."
  - 4. 2 Corinthians 4:3-7: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 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. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 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
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of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

5. James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
  6. 1 Corinthians 1:18,21: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God....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."
- E. It is able to save those who believe and obey.
1. John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name."
  2. John 3:18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."
  3. John 12:42-43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."
  4. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."
  5. Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
  6. James 2:24,26: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only....For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
  7. 2 Corinthians 2:15-16: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?"

### VIII. **WE MUST TRAIN WORKERS BEFORE THE WORK CAN BE DONE.**

- A. Christ selected and trained 12 men (Matt. 10:1-15), who met certain qualifications:
1. They were with Christ from John's baptism: "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" (Acts 1:21-22).
  2. They were good workers even though uneducated in Rabbinical schools: "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).
  3. They were well trained by the Lord: "Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:38-42).
  4. Paul was added to this group (Acts 26:9; 23:1; Phil. 3:1-14).
  5. These apostles were supernaturally guided (John 16:13; Acts 2:1-4; 2 Cor. 12:11-12).
- B. Christ sent out 70 other miraculously-endowed and trained men (Luke 10:1-16).
1. These were from every walk of life; they were not professional preachers.
  2. But they had been given instructions suitable for the task.

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- a. Luke 10:9: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."
  - b. Acts 8:12: "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."
  - C. Paul trained Timothy.
    - 1. He discovered him in Derbe (Acts 16:1-3).
    - 2. Paul saw fit to take him with him: Acts 16:4.
    - 3. The apostle undoubtedly spent many hours personally teaching that young man, and also gave him much instruction in written form.
      - a. Instructed him to abide at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3).
      - b. Instructed him to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:14-15).
      - c. Instructed him to develop himself: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 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" (1 Tim. 4:13-16).
    - 4. Marshall Keeble trained many young men; older preachers should do the same today.
  - D. Training workers is one of the obligations of the Christian home.
    - 1. Moses' mother gave him basic training in serving God (Ex. 2:1-10; Heb. 11:23ff).
    - 2. John the Baptizer was brought up to know his calling in life (Luke 1).
    - 3. Timothy's mother and grandmother brought him up to know his obligations to God, even though his father was a Gentile.
      - a. Acts 16:1: "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father *was* a Greek."
      - b. 2 Timothy 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."
    - 4. Parental responsibility in training children to know God is stated elsewhere in the Bible (Dt. 6:6-7; Eph. 6:4; Tit. 2:3-4).
  - E. Training workers is the responsibility of the church.
    - 1. The church is charged with the duty to bring its members to spiritual maturity, in doing benevolent work, and in evangelizing the world: "For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error" (Eph. 4:12-14, ASV)..
    - 2. The whole church was involved according to each member's ability and opportunity: "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles....Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:1,4).
    - 3. The church is to be the pillar and support of the truth (the gospel): "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).
    - 4. The church is obligated to support workers according to its ability (1 Cor. 9:7ff).
    - 5. Therefore, it is as much the obligation of the church to train teachers, preachers and elders as to use them after they have been trained.

## **IX. BIBLICAL METHODS OF WINNING SOULS WILL STILL WORK TODAY.**

- A. Jesus spoke with people where he found them.
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1. He was as apt to teach the lowest members of society as the highest. There was no prejudice in our Lord. "But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matt. 9:12)."
  2. The Samaritan woman is an excellent case (John 4). Though he was terribly tired from the work, the travels and the contentions, he still found the strength to teach this sinful woman. He won her and a great number from her village. It was to this lowly woman that the great truth about worship was given (4:23-24).
  3. The Lord talked at length with Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews (John 3). It was to this man that the great truth of John 3:16 was given.
  4. Jesus also talked with Zacchaeus, a despised publican (Luke 19:5-9).
  5. He taught that a single soul, any soul, was valuable.
    - a. There is rejoicing in heaven over the salvation of one soul (Luke 15, 16).
    - b. A soul is more precious than the whole world (Matt. 16:26).
  6. The Savior taught many others in a one-to-one situation: Nathaniel (John 1:46); Mary (Luke 10); rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-21).
- B. Christ taught assembled groups.
1. He addressed great audiences, as he had opportunity (Matt. 5:1—7:28).
  2. He taught those who gathered in private homes (Matt. 9:10-13).
  3. He taught in public places when he saw interest (Matt. 23).
  4. He openly discussed the truth when people asked questions (Matt. 22).
  5. He was able to teach many when he was confronted by the false teachers (John 8).
- C. Some notable examples of simple ways to teach others are given in these cases:
1. Andrew brought his brother Peter to the Lord: "One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone" (John 1:40-42). We know little of the life and work of Andrew, but here he shines brightly. We may not have many talents, but what if we are able to bring someone like Peter to the Lord!
  2. Philip was willing and able to present the gospel story to the man from Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-39). As far as we know, this was the only occasion these two met and the only time the eunuch had the privilege of hearing the gospel. Think of the great work the eunuch likely did when he returned home.
  3. Paul and Silas taught Lydia and the jailor (Acts 16). These were the nucleus of the great Philippian church of Christ (2 Cor. 8:1ff).
  4. Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos (Acts 18:24-26).
- D. In our times there have been many discussions about successful methods of winning souls to Christ.
1. Some maintain that the best method is to use psychological, manipulative mind control (the Crossroads and Boston theories). There is no such method employed in the Bible. Such a method will certainly win converts to the "system," but it will not convert one to Christ!
  2. Many today think that the way to convert souls to Christ is through entertainment and sweetness. Where was such an approach ever used in the New Testament?
    - a. But some say, "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."
    - b. That is true, but we are not trying to catch flies; we are trying to save souls.
- E. The Gospel is the only means by which souls can be saved.
1. The process by which the Gospel saves is: if the individuals are so taught that they understand and believe the truth, are able to see their sins, and are willing to repent and obey the gospel:
    - a. Acts 3:36-38: "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,
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- Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
- b. Acts 15:7: "And when there had been much disputing, 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."
  - c. Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."
  - d. Acts 4:4: "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."
  - e. Acts 5:14: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."
  - f. Acts 6:7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
2. People were converted to Christ when the truth was presented by faithful saints, and was believed and obeyed by sincere, honest people. There is no way anyone can be converted to Christ but by this process. We are mistaken if we think we can bring people into the assembly, and never discuss the significant themes of the Bible, and expect people to be converted.
    - a. John 6:44-45: "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."
    - 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 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."
- F. Consider the methods used by the early church in saving the lost.
1. They taught daily in every house: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42).
  2. When they were scattered by persecution, they continued to preach the word: "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles....Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:1,4).
  3. They did a lot of the work individually (Philip, Ananias, Paul, Aquila and his good wife).
  4. They taught the word publicly: Jerusalem (Acts 3); Antioch (Acts 11); Athens (Acts 17); before rulers (Acts 26).
- G. We must realize that we have met with success if we have faithfully presented the word of God.
1. Individually, we talk with our friends, relatives and associates; we offer to teach them the Bible in a private setting; we invite them to attend services where they can learn the truth; we offer them gospel literature; we encourage them to listen to gospel messages on radio and television.
  2. Collectively, we as the church schedule services where the Bible is taught; we plan gospel meetings; we put out good literature; we offer the gospel over radio and television.
  3. Our job, plainly stated, is to give others the opportunity to learn the truth; it is not our job to effect their conversion. We make a genuine effort to get men to see the will of God; we encourage them to obey; but the decision is theirs.
  4. God gave us the means of converting people; he provides us with the abilities and the opportunities to use this means (the gospel); when people obey the gospel, it is God who has given the increase; when people reject the gospel, we can be at peace within ourselves—we have done our part! "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6).
- H. Consider some methods brethren have used effectively.
1. Printed material has excellent advantages in teaching the lost.
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- a. The spoken message is quickly forgotten. We all have difficulty remembering the sermons that are preached; but printed lessons can endure for generations.
  - b. Enemies of the truth recognize the power of the pen; they have tried many times to destroy copies of the Bible.
  - c. To a large degree, the restoration movement owes its marvelous success to the great literature written by the giants of the time: *Lard's Quarterly*, *The Evangelist*; *The Christian Baptist*; *The Millennial Harbinger*; *The Gospel Advocate*.
  - d. The power of the pen is seen by false teachers: in this country they produce thousands of papers and magazines, and print millions of tracts. Communists spend billions of dollars yearly in support of their evil system.
2. Newspaper articles can be highly effective in spreading the truth.
    - a. People are concerned about their daily paper; if the carrier misses them on one day, the office hears about it immediately!
    - b. People are hungry for information about their world; in the midst of worldly news, we can plant well-written items about the greatest news of all!
  3. Sound, well-written publications by our brethren can be effective in teaching the lost. There are several available, and we can produce our own.
    - a. In fact, we get letters and other reports from people in other states about the value of the church bulletin we publish. How many have been led to the truth by it?
    - b. Every member of the church can hand out or mail tracts, bulletins, etc., to people they know. No one can even estimate the amount of good even one well-placed tract can accomplish.
    - c. Many times I present lessons in a series on great themes of the Bible; outlines of these studies are made available; these have the potential of much good.
  4. Radio programs can reach people that would never admit us into their homes for personal Bible studies.
    - a. A recent report indicated that 98% of Americans listen to radio. The average listener plays the radio an average of 147 minutes each day, about 17 hours weekly. Despite the popularity of television, radio is still widely heard.
    - b. Programs that retain their listening audience have certain characteristics.
      - 1) They have a consistent format. They do not make many changes.
      - 2) They have a relatively short introduction.
      - 3) The program is kept simple.
      - 4) Local news items generate interest: announcements about gospel meetings, funerals, civic events (bloodmobile, etc.).
      - 5) A special question or thought for each broadcast develops interest.
      - 6) The truth must be plainly presented without compromise, but it must be kept free of unwarranted harangues against the sectarians.

#### **X. THE PERSONAL WORKER MUST HAVE CERTAIN QUALIFICATIONS.**

##### **A. He must be a faithful Christian.**

1. One cannot teach what he does not believe, or does not know, or will not practice.
2. Would you buy a Ford from a man who would not own a Ford? (Cf. Romans 2:21-24).

##### **B. He must be committed to the truthfulness of the gospel.**

1. We must firmly believe it is God's inerrant word, that it must be obeyed in order to salvation, and that it is the only way to heaven (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Mt. 7:21-23; Rom. 1:16-17; Heb. 5:8-9; Rev. 22:14).
  2. We must sincerely follow the gospel in our daily lives (Rom. 2:19-24; 1 Pt. 3:1ff).
  3. We must believe what the New Testament says about the condition of those who are out of Christ (Eph. 2:12; 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:10).
  4. We must be willing to sacrifice that the gospel be spread.
  5. We must fully believe the gospel is God's power to save, and that eloquence, personality, or
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persuasive powers carry to soul-saving abilities. This attitude will dispel discouragement when we try but fail to convert someone.

C. He must love souls.

1. This love will move us to action (Mark 12:31; Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1).
2. Love will attract and draw (cf. 1 John 4:19; Luke 7:47; 1 Tim. 1:15).

D. He must have some knowledge of the Bible.

1. We do not have to know everything, or be able to answer every question spontaneously. Experience will increase our knowledge and ability to handle questions.
2. Acts 2:37: "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?"
3. 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. Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
5. 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."
6. 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."
7. 1 Peter 1:18-25: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
8. 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

E. He must have perseverance.

1. It usually takes time to change people.
2. Much time and effort must be expended to find honest people, and to develop their interest.
3. Disappointments and heartaches are commonly met in personal evangelism. We may spend many hours in preparation and prayer for a session, only to find that our student "forgot" about the appointment.
4. Larry and Jean Webb studied every Friday night for almost a year with a Catholic friend. He had good interest, but continually struggled against the truth. Some time after the studies were concluded, he suddenly sent word he wanted to be baptized. Perseverance paid off! (Cf. 2 Cor. 6:3-10; Col. 1:11; Heb. 12:1-3).

F. He must pray fervently.

1. We must pray for our own strength, courage, wisdom, and love.
2. We must pray in order to find those who may be willing to learn. "Lead Me To Some Soul Today."
3. We must pray for specific studies and for specific souls.

G. He must be humble.

1. Humility is highly valued by God (Isa. 66:2; Lk. 18:10-14; Prov. 6:17; Mt. 18:1-4).
  - a. Proverbs 6:17: "A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood."

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- b. Isaiah 66:2: "For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*"
  - c. Matthew 18:1-4: "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. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."
  - d. Luke 18:10-14: "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."
2. Christ was not haughty, but humble, in his personal ministry (Jn. 1:29; Isa. 53; Mt. 11:26-30).
  3. We must not be haughty or give the impression of haughtiness. It drives people away from the truth.
    - a. We must avoid the impression that we know everything and they know nothing.
    - b. We must avoid having a "better-than-thou" attitude.
    - c. But we must also avoid having a condescending, patronizing attitude.
- H. He must not be contentious.
1. We can contend for the faith without being contentious.
  2. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:24-25; cf. Gal. 6:1).
  3. No one likes to be around a belligerent, argumentative, quarrelsome person.
- I. He must use wisdom in planning and conducting the study.
1. If the study is with a member of the Christian Church, the primary issue at stake in the study appears to be instrumental music in worship. However, the real problem is Biblical authority. Before he can be shown that instrumental music in worship is sinful, he must learn the principles of Bible authority. One might be making a mistake in many cases to "jump on" the music question at the start.
  2. Denominational folks have not had the advantages we take for granted.
    - a. We have the benefit of studying the Bible in our classes and worship services in which there is no creed that must be defended. Whatever the Bible teaches, we are willing to accept.
    - b. Our knowledge of the Bible is extensive due to continual study; few of them have had that advantage.
    - c. We need to show the wisdom of patience as we instruct them.
  3. Before the study begins, we need to ascertain the proper beginning point.
    - a. It would be fruitless to teach the plan of salvation to one who did not believe in God, Christ, or the inspiration of the Bible.
    - b. Wisdom dictates that we start at the point where the student is, building on the knowledge and faith he already possesses (if any), and proceed in an orderly fashion toward the goal of showing him how to become a Christian.
  4. We must use wisdom in answering questions. One who does not comprehend the gospel plan of salvation, scriptural worship, and the identity of the church is not ready to study the book of Revelation.
    - a. With most questions, a brief statement that the study of those deeper subjects ought to be postponed for a while is sufficient.
    - b. Prejudicial questions ought to be delayed. Many times, we are asked: "Do you think that you
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church of Christ people are the only ones going to heaven?" A good response is: "Wait until the study is completed, and if you still need to have that question answered, I will give you a simple, plain *yes* or *no*." If the study continues to its proper end, they will have learned the answer.

# **XI. THERE ARE SOME BASIC ATTITUDES EVERY PERSONAL WORKER MUST HAVE.**

## **A. He must have the right attitude toward the lost and dying people of the world.**

1. The case of Christ:
  - a. Matthew 9:12: "But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."
  - b. Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
  - c. John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."
2. The case of Paul.
  - a. Acts 26:29: "And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."
  - b. Romans 1:14-15: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."
  - c. Romans 9:1-3: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."
  - d. 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. 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."
4. 1 Timothy 1:15: "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."
5. 1 Timothy 2:4: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."
6. We must learn to look at precious souls, not at their physical appearance, social standing, economic background, or manner of life. Even harlots can be converted!

## **B. He must be a good listener.**

1. Some will take advantage of us, but if we listen carefully to them, they ought to be willing to listen to us when the time comes to present the lesson. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12).
2. Listening to the prospect will show him we are sincerely interested in them and will likely reveal some useful information that will help us in the study.

## **C. He must practice the graces, congeniality, and good attitudes enjoined by the gospel.**

1. If we merely put up a facade of righteousness and love, our true nature will show through sooner or later. The Lord will find no use for such a "worker."
2. If our profession of Christianity is genuine, the Lord will "wear us out" in his service. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21).
3. Sincerely exhibiting the Christian graces has a powerful effect on people. I have had visitors report that they had never seen such demonstrations of friendliness, helpfulness, and hospitality as they had observed in certain members of this congregation!
  - a. Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

- b. Titus 2:10: "Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."
- c. 1 Peter 2:12: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."
- d. 1 Peter 3:1-4: "Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

D. He must be willing to put himself in the background.

1. Consider:

- 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. Romans 15:1-3: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."
  - c. 2 Corinthians 4:5: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."
  - d. 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."
  - e. Philippians 2:1-3: "If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."
2. Our attitude must be one of love: earnestly desiring to please the Lord and sincerely seeking the best good of the student.
3. Our attitude must be to let the Lord have the glory, for we have nothing of which we have the right to boast. "Look not upon me, because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept" (Song of Solomon 1:6).

E. We must understand that we can accomplish nothing without the Lord's help.

- 1. Many times we are not able to find an honest prospect without God's providence.
- 2. The information we impart is the Lord's message. The power to convert is not in us, but in the gospel.
  - a. 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."
  - 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."
- 3. Consider the song: "Lead Me To Some Soul Today."

XII. **WHERE CAN WE FIND HONEST PROSPECTS FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM STUDIES?**

A. Contacts can be found at the services.

- 1. Many times they can be found among non-Christian mates, children, and relatives.
- 2. Visitors to the services.
- 3. Children are often interested in attending services. They can be taught in public classes, and their interest can open the door to private studies with their parents.

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- B. Contacts can be found in the neighborhood.
    - 1. Children are often interested in attending services. They can be taught in public classes, and their interest can open the door to private studies with their parents. Delinquent Christians are always abundant (Gal. 6:1-2; Jas. 5:19-20).
    - 2. Interest can be developed in our neighbors and newcomers to our neighborhood.
  - C. We sometimes get referrals from other places.
    - 1. Perhaps a Christian in another state has a relative or friend who moves to our area, and asks that we contact them.
    - 2. People sometimes call the office with a question; often they make an inquiry of us in private. This shows an interest which can be cultivated into a Bible study.
    - 3. Sometimes people approach us with an objection or complaint; some of those who will take such a step are interested enough to be taught.
  - D. Contacts can also be made by:
    - 1. Hospital and nursing home visits.
    - 2. House-to-house visits.
    - 3. Benevolent visits.
    - 4. By scanning birth, wedding, and funeral announcements in the newspaper.
    - 5. Talking with our associates at work or recreation.
    - 6. Visiting jails.
    - 7. Setting up booths at fairs.
    - 8. Placing Bible Correspondence advertisements in newspapers and in public places.
    - 9. If we are genuinely converted to Christ; if we will pray for courage, wisdom and strength; if we will be alert to situations; if we will talk with people about the gospel—we will find honest seekers after the truth.

### XIII. **WHY MANY BRETHREN DO NOT TRY TO WIN SOULS.**

- A. Common causes:
    - 1. Some think that this is a duty that pertains only to the "professionals." This is a fatal mistake! Every saint has some part in this great work.
    - 2. Some do not love the Lord or their fellowman enough to make the commitment.
    - 3. Perhaps most of us procrastinate—we will do it tomorrow. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).
  - B. Many of us become pessimistic.
    - 1. Consider:
      - a. Exodus 4:1,10,13,14: "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 Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue....And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom* thou wilt send. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart."
      - b. Exodus 14:9-12: "But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. And they said unto Moses, Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? *Is* not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that
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we may serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."

- c. Numbers 13:31-33: "But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they *are* stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, *is* a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it *are* men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, *which come* of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."
  - d. Numbers 14:1: "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night."
  - e. 1 Kings 20:10,18 "And Benhadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me....And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive."
2. We try and fail; we see the gross sinfulness and error around us; we get the idea that any effort would be fruitless. But we must continue to try!
  3. Many of us do not have the patience and persistence required. It takes time and effort to find prospects, set up studies, and carry out the instruction.

#### XIV. IF WE SEEK THE LOST, THERE ARE GOOD THINGS WHICH RESULT.

- A. It will help the local congregation.
  1. It will be active, not dormant. Activity attracts attention.
  2. Effort being expended gives a sense of accomplishment and worth.
  3. Activity will defuse potential problems and divisions.
  4. It will lead to spiritual growth of the members and literal growth of the church.
- B. It will help each Christian.
  1. We will grow in strength; we will develop the graces; we will bear fruit.
  2. We will be obeying Christ; we will be like Christ; we will live better lives.
- C. It will help the community.
  1. The best way to help any community is to improve its morality and spirituality.
  2. We do this by converting the lost. A little leaven goes a long way.
- D. It will help in other ways:
  1. It will encourage soul-winning in other congregations.
  2. Precious souls that were bound for torment, are now headed for heaven!

#### XV. WHY SHOULD I (YOU) DO PERSONAL WORK?

- A. To save the lost from an eternity in hell.
    1. Consider:
      - 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 3:16-18: "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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."
      - 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."
      - d. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
      - e. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be
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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."

2. Hell is an awful place.
  - a. A place of outer darkness (Matt. 25:30).
  - b. A place where the fire is not quenched (Mark. 9:43-48).
  - c. A place of many stripes (Luke 12:47).
  - d. A place of no rest (Rev. 14:11).
  - e. A lake of fire, the second death (Rev. 21:8; 20:12-15).
  - f. A place of everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46).

B. Personal work will also:

1. Restore the erring (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20).
2. To strengthen the weak (Gal. 6:2; Rom. 15:1; 1 Th. 5:14; cf. Ps. 142:4).
3. Be an act of obedience to God for ourselves (Mark 16:15; cf. 2 Tim. 2:2; Acts 8:4).

**XVI. OUR COMPENSATION FOR WINNING SOULS IS WORTH EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT.**

A. There is personal joy to be had in so doing.

1. Psalms 126:5-6: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*."
2. Philippians 4:1: "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved."

B. We will be delivering our souls from the blood of the lost.

1. Ezekiel 3:19: "Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."
2. Acts 20:27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

C. We will be building up the spiritual body of Christ.

1. This will increase the number of God's great spiritual family.
2. It will also increase the heaven by which this world can be preserved and made more flavorful to God (Matthew 5:13-16).

D. We will have a home in heaven.

1. Proverbs 11:30: "The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that winneth souls *is* wise."
2. Daniel 12:3: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."
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."

**XVII. CONCLUSION.**

A. If we do not try to convert the lost, there are frightful consequences.

1. We will be disobeying God: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).
2. The disobedient were punished in ancient days (cf. Gen. 6-9; Israel).
3. Disobedience under the gospel is punished.
  - a. Luke 12:47: "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*."
  - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
  - c. 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?"

B. We will be failing to do good.

1. James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin."
2. Luke 6:31: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."
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."

C. We will be allowing people to lose their souls in the Devil's hell.

1. Acts 20:26: "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*."
2. Romans 1:14-16: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. *16* For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
3. The principle of Ezekiel 3:17-19 still pertains: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

D. We will be failing to discharge our God-given trust.

1. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (1 Thess. 2:4).
  2. We will be showing a lack of love.
    - a. For Christ (John 14:15; 15:14; 1 John 5:3).
    - b. For the lost (Luke 15; Jude 23).
    - c. We will be failing to be like Christ (Luke 19:10).
  3. We will lose our own souls if we do not try (Rev. 22:14; Heb. 5:8-9; Mark 16:15-16).
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# Perilous Possibilities Facing the Lord's Church

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Matthew 10:32-39.

1. Christians are to be peacemakers, but when they live and teach the truth, enemies are often made, and where an enemy is present, danger exists.
  - a. That we are to be peacemakers is stated in Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:18, and Romans 14:19.
    - 1) Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."
    - 2) Romans 12:18: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
    - 3) Romans 14:19: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."
  - b. That we are to preach the truth in love but with firmness is shown in Ephesians 4:15, Jude 3
  - c. That we incur the wrath of unbelievers when we preach the truth is seen in 1 Peter 4:4 and 4:12.
2. The Lord's church is a peace-loving, peace-promoting institution, but because it stands opposed to the devil and his henchmen, there are many attacks made upon us. Thus our brethren in previous centuries met with many dangers, and we are presently encountering many dangers. There has never been a more dangerous climate for the Lord's church than the present!

### B. The dangers the Lord's people face come from two directions, from within and from without.

1. We have always been able to meet outward assaults with success. We recognize the enemy and are able to unite in a common bond to resist the attack. The strong assist and encourage the weak, and together our brethren were able to stand up to the persecutions, growing stronger, spiritually and numerically, in the struggle.
2. We have always had difficulty in handling the dangers that arise within our own ranks. It is hard to identify the enemy, who is wily, personable, educated, and persuasive. We like them, and do not want to acknowledge that the individuals involved pose a serious danger to our souls.
3. In this study, it is our aim to identify some of the prominent dangers the Lord's church faces, which this local congregation faces. This study will help us to see why many lessons and other reminders are continually needed on these themes here considered.

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. The Danger Posed by Modernism and Liberalism.

1. Modernism is defined as the rejection of the supernatural nature of the Bible and Christianity. It takes the very heart out of the gospel.
    - a. It attempts to explain away fulfilled prophecy.
    - b. It rejects the Virgin Birth of Christ, the Lord's miracles and the resurrection of Christ, thus making Jesus only a mere man who had misguided visions of grandeur.
    - c. It repudiates the divine inspiration of the Bible, making it just another book.
  2. Modernism has made tremendous headway in the sectarian world in the past 100 years, especially in the past 60 or 70 years.
    - a. It has led to their giving up any serious attempt to justify their actions by the Bible.
    - b. It has led some of them to try to justify many vile sins, including every form of fornication, drunkenness, divorce, gambling, etc. The newspapers carried an article on April 29, 1975 of the First Unitarian Church in Richardson, Texas, which featured a strip-tease act as part of their worship service. This is the logical direction a rejection of the supernatural leads people, and this is not the last step.
    - c. It has caused these liberal denominations to lose membership rapidly in the past several years; but these upset members have largely turned to liberalism, which is just as deadly and wrong as modernism.
  3. Liberalism pays lip-service to the Bible, while rejecting many key ingredients of the gospel.
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- a. It perverts the gospel plan of salvation, teaching that salvation is by faith only, by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, that God has unchangeably ordained the salvation or damnation of every individual, etc.
  - b. It perverts the Bible pattern for the worship of God.
  - c. It perverts the biblical pattern of the church, its nature, identity, work, and destiny.
  - d. It perverts the morality given in the Bible. Homosexuality was uniformly rejected by all the sectarian groups a generation ago, but many of them today openly accept such people into their membership and pulpits.
4. The Lord's church has not escaped the influences of modernism and liberalism. A very strong movement has been operating for the past 30 years to turn us into just another human denomination. Such publications as *Mission Magazine* and *Wineskins* have been eroding the faith of many. Such popular preachers as Rubel Shelley, Mike Cope, and Max Lucado are even now destroying tens of thousands of precious souls by their perversions of the Scriptures.
  5. Only by having a well-taught membership can the Lord's church avoid the dangers of modernism and liberalism.
    - a. The cure for modernism is a thorough knowledge on our part of the divine inspiration of the Bible, a firm and unshaken belief in the virgin birth of Christ, the reality of his miracles, the authority of his word, the fact of his resurrection, and the promise of his return.
    - b. The cure for liberalism is a thorough knowledge of the holy scriptures, together with a firm belief in the all-sufficiency of God's word, a full acceptance of the supreme authority of the Bible, and a commitment to living by the divine standard of the scriptures.
- B. The Danger of Losing Sight of our Distinct Plea.
1. Our plea is stated in 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."
    - a. Believing this, and that God's word is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11), we plead with men to return to the unadulterated New Testament, to go back to the truth itself, back beyond Catholicism and Protestantism, to the original pure, unpolluted Christianity of the gospel for all our beliefs and practices.
    - b. Therefore, we implore men to speak where the Bible speaks and to remain silent where the Bible is silent.
    - c. We teach people to be united in all matters of faith, to maintain liberty in all matters of opinion, and to have love toward each other in all matters. Only through an open-minded study of the Bible can we learn what is a matter of faith and what is a matter of opinion; but we can learn the difference.
  2. Roman Catholicism resulted from the great apostasy which began to develop after the apostles died. The Protestant movement grew out of an effort to reform Catholicism.
    - a. The Protestant Reformation corrected some of the errors of Catholicism, but it started out with the wrong aim: to reform Catholicism.
    - b. The Restoration Movement that started in many parts of the world a few hundred years ago had the right aim: to go back beyond Protestantism and Catholicism to the New Testament itself, and restore the original faith. This we have done.
  3. But we are in danger of losing our distinctive plea. Liberal and modernistic teachers in our universities and in various publications are trying to modernize and liberalize the faith once for all delivered to the saints.
    - a. They claim that love ought to cause us to fellowship those who use musical instruments and choirs in their worship, who have developed missionary societies to do the work of the church, and the other paraphernalia of sectarianism. But this is not love, but a compromise of God's truth with human error.
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- b. The New Testament church is comprised of all the true children of God; it is the Lord's church. A faithful member of Christ's church is distinctive from the world, from sectarianism, from all human churches and religions. "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. 2:9).

C. The Danger of an Unconverted Membership.

1. There is the danger that our children respond to the invitation, not out of conviction, not from personal faith in the truthfulness of the gospel, but because they are expected to respond. Some have admitted that this was the case with them.
2. Many in the denominations are what they are religiously for no greater reason than that their parents were members of that denomination. "What was good enough for grandma and mama, is good enough for me." But the question is, what does God want? What is his will?
3. Christian parents, Bible school teachers, and other concerned Christians should do what they can to instruct children in the truth. Children must learn that their decision to obey the gospel is for the purpose of being forgiven of their own personal sins; obedience must be done from the heart (Rom. 6:16-18), a heart that knows what is to be done, and believes fully that what is being done is right, and fervently desires to do that which is required.
4. Without sincere, personal faith and obedience, there can be no salvation or hope.
  - 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 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 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Cf. Luke 13:3, 5.
  - d. 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."
  - e. 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."
  - f. 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."
  - g. 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."
  - h. 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."

D. The Danger of Worldliness within the Church.

1. A ship in the ocean is safe, but if the ocean gets into the ship, disaster is the result. The church is in the world, for that is the sphere of its work. But if the world gets into the church, disaster is certain.
2. In recent years, there have been many evidences of worldliness within various congregation in the brotherhood. Unenlightened members are unable to see the truth on this matter. "If it entertains and makes us feel good, it must be all right."
  - a. Some have dismissed their evening services on the day the Super Bowl is played. Some have even rented big-screen television sets so that the members can enjoy the game in the place and at the time when they usually meet to worship God.
  - b. Some dismiss their regular evening services during the summer so the members can meet for fun and games at a local park. They might have a short devotional before the recreation ends to give a semblance of spirituality.

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- c. Many congregations demand that their preachers present lessons that appeal to worldly appetites, rather than those which instruct the mind and strengthen the soul.
  - 3. The way many Christians live, it is impossible to see any difference between them and the world. Profanity, evil speaking, gambling, drinking, drugs, stealing, lying, and immodest dress—these are characteristic of the world, but we see many members following the same pattern of life.
  - 4. The marriage-divorce-remarriage catastrophe in our world has infiltrated the Lord's church. God's law about the issue is violated and ignored.
    - a. Matthew 5:31-32: "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."
    - b. Matthew 19:9: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."
  - 5. The moral standard of the world has never been what it ought to be, and even the usual standard in our country has declined greatly over the past 25 years. A sinful world should never be the standard-setter for the children of God. The gospel standard for morality is far greater than the world's standard.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Compare: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).
  - 6. If God approves of one member living a worldly life, then he approves of all members so-living. What difference would there then be between the church and the world? Therefore, God does not approve of even one member living as the world lives.
- E. The Danger of Compromise.
- 1. There is a danger that we will compromise our preaching.
    - a. A preacher will be far more popular if he gives the people what they want to hear, rather than what they need to hear. His economic welfare may depend on his preaching soft, pleasant sermons which upset no one. But he operates under the divine mandate to preach the whole counsel of God, without fear or favor.
      - 1) Acts 20:27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."
      - 2) 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."
      - 3) 1 Timothy 4:13-16: "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."
      - 4) 2 Timothy 4:1-5: "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall
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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."

- 5) Preachers are charged to preach the gospel plan of salvation, the divine pattern of worship, the one true church, the biblical standard of life, the work of individual Christians, the responsibilities of the church, and the divine origin, inspiration, and authority of the sacred scriptures.
- b. There is a danger that we will compromise Christian living. We must compromise the high moral standard set by the gospel.
- c. There is a danger that we might be inclined to sacrifice truth to protect the feelings of another person. It may be hurtful to someone to hear a truth from the pulpit which contradicts something he does or some doctrine he believes; but if his actions or beliefs are erroneous, he needs to be told! If we do not tell him, he will die lost, and we will be partially to blame!
  - 1) Ezekiel 3:17-19: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."
  - 2) Acts 18:6: "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."
  - 3) Acts 20:26: "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*."
- d. We all like to be liked and to be well-thought of, but if we love God and his word, and if we value our souls and the souls of others, we will not compromise any part of the truth.
  - 1) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
  - 2) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
  - 3) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

#### F. The Danger of Indifference.

1. Someone has said that ignorance and indifference form the two most common problems in the church: "I don't know and I don't care!"
2. Lukewarmness (indifference) describes the Christian who does religious acts out of habit instead of conviction. He goes through the proper forms, but his heart is not in it.
3. Lukewarmness is the result anytime our personal consecration for the cause of Christ is diminished.
4. Lukewarmness will result in the loss of personal zeal for assembling with the saints, in trying to reach the lost with the gospel, in failing to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

### III. **CONCLUSION.**

#### A. The Lord's Church is in the world.

1. Sin is also in the world;
2. As long as the church opposes sin, it will have enemies and will live with danger.
3. The world must be kept out of the church.

#### B. The Lord's Church will be presented to Christ in the last day.

1. To receive this honor, it must be kept pure, unspotted, and unpolluted. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-

27).

2. Are you in the Lord's Church? Are you keeping yourself pure from all defilements of sin?
  3. Are you doing what you can to resist the dangers that assail the church and your own soul?
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# EUTHANASIA

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. We need to be aware of the changes of our times.

1. The world is rapidly changing; those who lived 50 years ago could scarcely be able to recognize the world that now exists, with the myriads of changes for good and evil that have developed.
2. We are grateful for advancements in science and medicine, the breakup of Communism, the ease with which we can accomplish great feats, the personal computer, etc.
3. But there are many evils that are being foisted off on an unsuspecting world.

### B. There are many tragic developments in place or being readied for the future.

1. More than a million innocent unborn babies are being ruthlessly slain each year in our nation; 22,000 babies aborted in Tennessee annually; 82,000 in Florida.
2. Powerful voices are advocating that the chronically ill, the senile, the handicapped people be put out of their misery. These calls are from influential people in medicine, in education, in the legal professions, and in law and politics.

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. God spoke in the long ago from the smoke covered top of Sinai.

1. Exodus 20:13: "Thou shalt not kill." Our Lord interpreted this to mean, "Thou shalt do no murder" (Matt. 19:18).
2. He warned the Hebrews to keep his will or face the penalty he prescribed in Deuteronomy 28:50: "A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young." These were the Assyrians and Babylonians. This description sounds like some today who have no pity for the aged or the unborn.
3. It sounds also like Nazi Germany. *A Sign for Cain* (by Fredric Wertham), a book written several years ago, has two chapters on how violence became an accepted attitude in Germany.
  - a. Hitler did not introduce the problem of extermination with which we have become so familiar. It started in the medical and legal professions during the 1920s. Learned men sat in their ivy-covered universities and debated such abstract questions as: "Is life worth living?" They concluded that some life is not worth living.
  - b. In 1938, a group of psychiatric doctors **resolved** that some life was not worth living, and decided to offer a means of dying to these "useless lives." They petitioned the Third Reich, and were permitted to build the first experimental gas chamber.
  - c. They randomly selected a man, and watched him die. They were so thrilled with it that they decided they ought to give everyone the opportunity to thus die! In a few months, they had emptied the hospitals of the hopelessly insane.
  - d. They then dealt with those who were handicapped; and children who were less than perfect; and old people; even soldiers who had lost limbs in battle; and babies who wet the bed; babies who were born with wrinkled ears; grandparents who lived with their offspring. These were given the "good death!"
  - e. Our troops found the hospitals for the insane and the handicapped empty—their patients had all been given the good death!
4. Hitler did not force these men to do this; they volunteered. He did not use it on the Jews until long after it had become an established policy toward his own people.

### B. We are seeing the same trends in our society.

1. Such monsters are not satisfied with killing innocent babies in the womb, but want to extend their power to those whom they consider to have a less than perfect life.
  2. A British doctor, John Goundry, wrote that he expects that a "death pill" for old people will be available and perhaps obligatory by the end of the century. (St. Louis newspaper, 8/6/77).
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- a. He stated that society's view of life will change from the sentimental to the calculated and sophisticated, and the overriding policy will be the survival of the fittest. Further, he said that he envisioned the state taking over and insisting on euthanasia.
    - b. What happens in England and Europe appears in America about 10 years later.
  3. In 1938, Charles Potter founded the Euthanasia Society of America.
    - a. A few years ago, the notorious Dr. Joseph Fletcher, the father of situation ethics, became president of this organization, which is now called the "Society for the Right to Die, Inc."
    - b. Fletcher teaches medical ethics at the University of Virginia.
    - c. Efforts are being made which are designed to pave the way and weaken public resistance to euthanasia. We are being lulled to sleep. We are being manipulated by unscrupulous men.
  4. Winston Duke: "With regard to the specific question of humanity in homo sapiens infants, much is already known. There is little evidence that termination of an infant's life in the first few months following extraction from the womb could be looked upon as murder...It would seem...to be more 'inhuman' to kill an adult chimpanzee than a newborn baby, since the chimpanzee has greater mental awareness. Murder cannot logically apply to a life form with less mental awareness than a primate."
  5. Joseph Fletcher says it is ridiculous to give ethical approval to the ending of a "subhuman" life by abortion while refusing to give approval to the ending of a "subhuman" life by positive euthanasia.
    - a. But what is subhuman? Who is to decide? Who is less than perfect? Would you volunteer to be tested for perfection?
    - b. A young lady attended FHC several years ago; she had been born without arms. She drove her own car; lived in own dormitory room; fed herself; took notes with her feet on a typewriter or with a pencil, using her feet; dressed herself. She was described as beautiful, pleasant, happy and inspiring.
  6. George Paulson: "How long shall life be preserved when there is no redeeming social value? If life has no apparent purpose, perhaps it is to the benefit of others that such lives not be salvaged." Thus, if you offer no benefit to others, the others should have you killed!
  7. Robert Williams, who trains young doctors, gave the following criteria for determining when someone should be put out of society's way:
    - a. The individual will be dying naturally before too long, anyway.
    - b. One who has such mental damage (by a stroke, etc.) that he cannot express his wishes due to diminished capacity, he should be put out of his misery. In other words, "If you cannot make the decision, I will make it for you!"
    - c. One who has a good mind, but his body is paralyzed or crippled; for such a man to continue to live would be a burden on society, so he should be slain.
  8. Walter Alvarez: "It will probably be many years before we (physicians) in America can bring ourselves to chloroform an idiotic infant or to permit a slowly dying patient to take an overdose of medicine. What we will first have to train ourselves to do will be to leave by the patient's bed a lethal drug, which he can take some night if he so desires."
  9. These are influential men; they are leaders in society; their writings are widely read; they are featured in prestigious journals; they are respected and famous.
  - C. If one does not accept the reality of God, he will not have respect for human life.
    1. Russian philosopher Dostoyevsky: "If God is not, then nothing is morally wrong."
      - a. Many religious groups no longer believe the Bible; they have a perverted view of God; some even think that Jesus may be a myth. They go along with almost anything the Bible opposes.
      - b. When men reject the Bible as God's final and only authority for man, they renounce the moral code of God, and eventually will adopt whatever moral views and practices that fit their subjective thinking.
      - c. We now have a generation of people on the scene who have been taught from first grade through graduate school that men are only highly-evolved, tool-using animals.
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2. The image we hold of a man cannot fail to affect our attitudes and influence our behavior in the world of action.
    - a. If we think of a man as an animal, we will treat him as the same; if you think of yourself as an animal, you will act as an animal acts.
    - b. We do not shoot grandparents when they get old and infirm, as we put a horse with a broken leg out of its misery. The difference is the sanctity of human life.
  3. But since there is a God in heaven, and the Bible is his word, then abortion and euthanasia are horribly wrong! There is sanctity to human life.
    - a. 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." One who strikes out on his own in morality, without moral restraint and responsibility, will end up in extremes in fleshly pleasures; he will feel little or no compunction about destroying the unborn life that might embarrass or hinder his way of living.
    - b. Once a man gives up the belief that all life is sacred, he has crossed the line; he will make moral judgments as to whose life is expendable. He is without chart and compass. He has only the fallible standard of human thinking to give him guidance.
      - 1) Judges 21:25: "In those days...every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes."
      - 2) Proverbs 16:25: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
  4. Anti-life philosophy originates with doctors, educators, and public officials.
    - a. Thomas Merton: "We rely on the same people of the world to preserve it from barbarism, madness and destruction. Now it begins to dawn on us that it precisely the same ones who are the most dangerous."
    - b. Rene Dubos: "A society that blindly accepts the decision of experts is a sick society on its way to death." A farm boy has a better conception of and value for human life than many doctors of philosophy.
    - c. It was the sophisticated legal, medical and psychiatrists professors of pre-Nazi Germany who planted and nurtured the anti-life movement that blossomed later in the Third Reich. They were not barbaric, unlearned savages; they were the most enlightened in modern education and thought. Those men who ran the death camps would go home and read poetry, sip wine, listen to classical music—they were sophisticated and cultured. These had strong religious backgrounds: in Catholicism and Lutheranism.
    - d. God-fearing, Bible-believing people oppose abortion and euthanasia; liberals and worldly-minded people favor one or both.
  5. Can you still trust all doctors?
    - a. Expectant women should to ask their doctor: "Do you believe in killing unborn babies? Some will deliver babies in one room and kill unborn babies in another room. What would he do if there were complications?"
    - b. Other patients should be willing to ask their doctor what he would do if you became mentally or physically handicapped while under his care.
    - c. The motivations of men who practice abortion and believe in euthanasia include material gain. Every crime and every sin has been done for financial gain.
    - d. Santayana: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."
- D. Euthanasia defined and described.
1. Euthanasia is from *eu* (well) and *thanatos* (death), thus carries the meaning of "good death."
    - a. The term was used by the Greeks to describe the art and discipline of dying in peace and dignity.
    - b. Its modern definition is applied to the practice of causing painless death to end the life of someone whose life is not worth living; mercy-killing.
  2. We properly understand that it would be morally wrong and contrary to God's word to put a friend or
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- spouse out their misery with a gun or with a dose of poison.
- a. But we wonder about the rightness of "pulling the plug" so that a loved one will die. Would this action also be wrong?
  - b. There is no law that requires that a person be hooked up to a machine when his case is hopeless. No doctor can be forced to hook one up to a machine; if you are unable to express your will, the next of kin can do so.
  - c. Refusing to be put on a life-support system is not euthanasia. "It must be made abundantly clear that the humane practice of medicine has always allowed the physician and patient (or his family) to decide what measures if any should be employed to prolong the patient's life" (Leah Curtain, R.N.).
  - d. If cancer is detected, the doctor may give you the choice of whether to undergo chemotherapy or radiation treatment. He provides you with the prognosis; it is up to you to choose or refuse the treatment. By rejecting the treatment, you may or may not shorten your life; refusal is neither suicide nor euthanasia.
3. Providing a "living will" can express to the doctors and family your desires in the case of a severe incapacitation. But it is not fool-proof.
- a. You cannot possibly anticipate every situation. The language it contains must be broad enough to allow doctors several choices, yet it must be specific enough to exclude misinterpretation.
  - b. Such documents cannot anticipate medical discoveries of the future, which might give you hope of recovery.
  - c. Living wills do not account for the inherent will to live that many people have, which provides them the strength to fight and overcome the ailment. Many parents have had the will to survive until their son came back from the wars; ailing Jews were known to live long enough to partake of the Passover.
4. The case of Karen Ann Quinlan.
- a. She did not meet the criteria for being dead: she had brain waves. For this reason, her doctor decided to keep her on a respirator. Her father wanted to remove her from the respirator so that she could die. The courts agreed to his request.
  - b. The case was whether to remove the respirator, but the real issue was the sanctity of life. Her doctors wanted to prolong her life; her father wanted to end her life. The court's decision was based on a subjective view of "quality of life."
  - c. She lived nearly ten years following the removal of the life-support system.
5. The case of Nancy Beth Cruzan.
- a. She sustained a severe injury to her brain in an auto accident in 1983. The family requested that the feeding tube be withdrawn, so that she would starve to death.
  - b. The family finally obtained a court order, despite a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court which supported the Missouri law. The court order permitted the removal of the tube; Nancy died twelve days later.
  - c. Food and water are an ordinary means of life support, and to withhold it is not the same as taking someone off a respirator. How could death by starvation and dehydration constitute "a good death?" Feeding tubes are no more medical treatment than hunger and thirst are illnesses!
  - d. Again, the issue was the sanctity of human life.
6. Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross: We are "totally opposed to any kind of mercy killing, but in favor of allowing the patient to die his or her own death, without artificially prolonging the dying process." We could agree with this sentiment.
- E. Scriptural principles affecting the abortion and euthanasia issues.
1. Exodus 20:13: "Thou shalt not kill."
    - a. Romans 13:9: "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal,
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- Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."
- b. Any time an abortion or euthanasia occurs, someone dies: a deliberate act of taking another's life has taken place.
2. Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."
- a. Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."
- b. One shows his disrespect for God when he willfully takes a human life by murder. The killer despises the victim is despised; but he also despises the God of heaven in whose image the victim was made.
- c. James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."
- 1) The purpose of the visit is to relieve their suffering, not to give them a suicide pill
- 2) We are to help the weak and helpless, to enable them to survive and live.
3. Leviticus 19:32: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD."
- a. Galatians 6:2: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."
- b. Romans 15:1: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."
- 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. If we kick out an unwed pregnant girl, the abortionists are ready to help her! But their help is worse than the original problem.
- e. A poor man enjoys life as much as the rich; the sickly as much as the well; grandma loves life as much as granddaughter.
4. Isaiah 1:23: "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."
- a. Ephesians 6:2: "Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise."
- b. Matthew 15:3-5: "But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me."
- c. 1 Timothy 5:4: "But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God."
- d. 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
- e. Romans 1:31: "Without...natural affection...." The reference is to a mother's love for her child. A mother wolf has more love for her offspring than does a mother who will abort her unwanted baby.
5. 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."
- a. Proverbs 21:13: "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."
- b. Philippians 2:4: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."
- c. Matthew 22:39: "...Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Barbarians disposed of their old
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- folks. Eskimos cut a hole in the ice and pushed them through and covered the hole; the Spartans laid their babies out to die; the Romans put their unwanted babies on the street to be eaten by wild dogs or pigs or to be picked up by slavers.
- d. Proverbs 6:16-19: "These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."
6. Job 1:21: "...Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."
    - a. Only God has the right to end lives, except in capital criminal cases in which he has given civil authorities the right to execute offenders (cf. Rom. 13:1-5).
    - b. A young lady was considered a "medical vegetable." Her doctors told her mother that there was no possible hope for recovery, and recommended that she be starved to death by removing the feeding tubes. The mother refused; today the daughter is alive; she is happily married and has a son.
    - c. "Hopeless" cancer cases have suddenly gone into remission.
    - d. Job would have been an ideal case for euthanasia!

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. Euthanasia is a natural development from abortion.

1. "Once you permit the killing of the unborn child, there will be no stopping. There will be no age limit. You are setting off a chain reaction that will eventually make you the victim. Your children will kill you because you permitted the killing of their brothers and sisters. Your children will kill you because they will not want to support you in your old age. Your children will kill you for your homes and estates. If a doctor will take your money for killing the innocent in the womb, he will kill you with a needle when paid by your children. This is the terrible nightmare you are creating for the future."
2. A cartoon appeared in a paper several years ago with this presentation: an old woman was lying on the bed; there were cobwebs above the bed; the son was beside her bed, begging her to take the "death pill" he was holding: "Please take it so that things will be easier for me and my family." She replied, "Son, I ought to have aborted you along with the rest of my no-account offspring!"
3. By approving of abortion and euthanasia, we are being like the criminals who are portrayed as supreme villains in the Bible.
  - a. The Pharaoh who had so many of the Hebrew male babies drowned in the Nile.
  - b. Herod the Great slew the baby boys of Bethlehem. The entire number was probably small, but he was a vile criminal by biblical standards. An abortionist boasted of 60,000 abortions! He had made a fortune.

#### B. Euthanasia has a personal application to each of us.

1. "In Germany they came first for the Communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up" (Martin Niemoller).
2. Proverbs 24:11-12: "Deliver them that are carried away unto death, and those that are ready to be slain see that thou hold back. If thou sayest, Behold, we knew not this; Doth not he that weigheth the hearts consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his work?" (ASV).

[The information in this study was derived from several sources over a period of years. Full documentation and credit was not feasible. However, the following article is taken from The Federalist Patriot, March 18, 2005, and addresses the issue of Euthanasia, by discussing a particular Florida case]:

## Top of the fold -- License To Kill

There is proof-positive this week that countless Americans still cherish our nation's Founding principle: "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness...." What else could account for all the anguished attention regarding the case of Terri Schindler-Schiavo, slated to be put to death by dehydration and starvation, commencing today under court order?

The tragedy befalling Terri and her loving parents and siblings began 15 years ago, when she collapsed under questionable circumstances and a lack of oxygen caused brain damage. Her now-estranged husband, Michael Schiavo, sought medical-malpractice compensation. However, since then he has provided Terri neither standard medical care, nor aggressive therapies to bolster her recovery, nor recent improved neurological tests to determine her actual capabilities. And yet her family's pleas that Terri be returned to their care have been rebuffed by Schiavo and the Florida courts.

The tube that delivers nourishment and fluids to Terri's body is akin to a heart pacemaker. It is a device that assists impaired physiological functions, rather than a machine that unnaturally performs bodily processes for a patient who may never recover (such as a ventilator continuing respiration after apparent brain death).

The details of Terri Schiavo's case, and concern for the precious value of her life, raise important moral and ethical questions which should concern all Americans. Who should decide the fate of a disabled person needing essential medical care and interventions? Are courts really the proper venue for resolving disputes over whether to continue or withhold life-preserving treatment? Should the government be involved at all?

In 1973, the Supreme Court discovered a constitutional "right" for a mother to end the life of her child before birth. Today, in the case of Terri Schiavo, the courts are similarly bent on discovering a right for one person to end the life of another person suffering severe injury or illness after birth.

The Schiavo case has much to do with the judiciary's expansion of its purview and the attendant claims to supremacy over the executive and legislative branches, as well as the lives of the citizenry. The judges in this case appear so intent on expanding judicial power as to be resistant to evidence that might prove prior rulings wrong. Preservation of the judiciary's powers thus trumps preservation of Terri Schiavo's life, and that of anyone else who might encounter such circumstances.

If the intentional taking of an innocent human life is defined as murder, does this definition somehow change if the taker of life is the victim's spouse, guardian, or physician? If one person says to another, "Here's a knife; please stab me to death, as I want to die," does this then absolve the knife-wielder from culpability for murder? Is it really murder if and only if the victim says it's murder?

These are the questions before the courts. As noted above, when the Supreme Court ruled on *Roe v. Wade*, it accepted without question the belief that the lives of unborn children could be forfeited if adults so desired. This was the legal construction of a class of persons who could be killed if another legally recognized class of persons chose to do so -- a license to kill.

Indeed, the courts created a new group of persons for whom customary protections do not apply. In the Schiavo case, they seem poised to create another such group. This was perhaps inevitable, given the widespread belief that these issues belong to an ill-defined collection of "liberties" that trump all other principles. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote in a 1992 decision striking down minimal abortion restrictions, "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life. Beliefs about these matters could not define the attributes of personhood were they formed under

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compulsion of the State."

Of course, Kennedy was not referring to the unborn child's heart. Nor do we know the heart of Terri Schiavo. What we do know is that she has a family that wants to care for her. But judicial activists are wont to apply their abortion argument in affirmation of those who want to end the lives of others like Terri Schiavo.

Ironically, the courts have instituted many more safeguards in the appeals system for death-penalty cases -- including clemency -- than for the vulnerable innocent like Terri Schiavo. Both the U.S. House and Senate have passed bills ostensibly rectifying this injustice in cases concerning the long-term care of incapacitated adults, but Senate opponents like Minority Leader Harry Reid made sure that the wording of the Senate version is sufficiently different from the House version. The language of those bills will not be reconciled for at least a month. Similar legislation is stalled in Florida's state senate and will not be resolved in time to prevent Michael Schiavo from removing Terri's food and water supply at 1300 E.S.T. today.

Within our nation's pre-eminent founding document, The Declaration of Independence, as upheld by its subsequent guidance, The Constitution, there is a telling term, "unalienable." It's a term that defines certain of our rights as incapable of being alienated, surrendered, or transferred -- not even under court ruling. Life itself is one such unalienable right, and no good government can transfer the right to life for a category of persons into the control of another category of persons.

The same Thomas Jefferson who trembled for this country, in reflecting that God's justice cannot sleep forever, warned, "The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time; the hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them." And for all the pretty speeches about life's giving way to advance liberty, these unalienable rights will either flourish together, or perish together.

Terri Schiavo deserves to be cared for by her parents. Clearly, they love her best. "The measure of a society is how they treat the least of us," says Kate Adamson, a former "vegetative state" patient who reports that the eight-day removal of her feeding tube caused her excruciating pain. "Life is sacred or meaningless," she says. "There is nothing in between."

#### **Quote of the week...**

"The case of Terri Schiavo raises complex issues. Yet in instances like this one, where there are serious questions and substantial doubts, our society, our laws, and our courts should have a presumption in favor of life. Those who live at the mercy of others deserve our special care and concern. It should be our goal as a nation to build a culture of life, where all Americans are valued, welcomed, and protected -- and that culture of life must extend to individuals with disabilities." --President George W. Bush

#### **On cross-examination...**

"Do we want to reinforce the fear that the infirm are no more than a burden on the healthy? We need to send a message that even in our darkest hours, life is still worth living, that loved ones will come alongside to help, and that doctors will treat pain effectively and compassionately -- not with a lethal prescription." --David Stevens, M.D., executive director of the 17,000-member Christian Medical Association, an alternative to the American Medical Association, which long ago abandoned the Hippocratic oath, especially the part, "First do no harm..."

#### **Open query...**

"Terri Schiavo, and men and women like her, deserve the same due-process rights that death row inmates are granted. When a court is making a life-or-death decision for a disabled person who has been charged with no crime, shouldn't they be afforded independent counsel to speak on their behalf?" --Florida Republican Rep. and

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physician Dave Weldon, sponsor of the House of Representatives version of the "The Incapacitated Person's Legal Protection Act," which extends federal habeas-corpus protections -- now available to convicted felons -- to innocent disabled persons set to be executed by legal order. [The Federalist Patriot (FederalistPatriot.US); All Subscribers and/or Users of any information, products or services from Publius Press, Inc., or its Affiliates, agree to the terms of the Publius Press, Inc. user/subscriber disclaimer. The opinions expressed in this publication and it's host website are not necessarily the views of Publius Press, Inc.].

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## A Christian and His Nation

### I. INTRODUCTION.

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

1. The home is his oldest institution, and is designed to furnish mankind the companionship, protection and training to be productive and happy citizens of this world (cf. Gen. 2:18-25). The husband and father in the average case is given primary authority in the family: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God" (1 Cor. 11:3).
2. The church is God's spiritual institution, and is designed to forward God's work of converting the lost and edifying the saved (Eph. 4:12). Authority in the church is vested in Christ, its head and founder, and is expressed in the New Testament. In local congregations, elders are appointed to oversee the affairs of the congregation (Phil. 1:1; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
3. Civil government was likewise appointed by God, with authority divided according to the type of rule decided upon by the controlling force. That a society of men needs some kind of directing force is clear. God ordained the original principle of civil government, but has given mankind latitude to select the type that they deem best. However, a repressive rule does not meet with God's approval, nor one which hinders morality and godliness or which promotes immorality and unrighteousness. He may permit such a rule for a while, to accomplish some objective, but will bring it down when that purpose has been served. Hitler's Germany, Hirohito's Japan, Stalin's Russia, and Saddam Hussein's Iraq were allowed to function for a time, but have since been dismantled and have disappeared into the dust of history.

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

1. Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
2. In the first century, persecution frequently was directed against the church by civil rulers. How should a Christian react? If he could not flee, he was to submit humbly. In many cases, flight was the proper thing to do. Paul fled from his tormentors at Damascus (2 Cor. 11:32-33).
3. In ordinary cases, when a civil authority issues a decree, Christians are to be submissive to that order, as are all other citizens. It is in the best interest of mankind to have some power in control, to make decisions in behalf of all, to provide protection for the whole. Democracy was established so that the individuals could express their wishes in regards to how they were to be governed. The democratic form of government provides for the well-being of the whole nation, while insuring the rights and privileges of the individual.
4. The passage under consideration places on all the citizens of a nation (or state) the obligation to obey the decrees of its rulers. We are to render unto Caesar the things that pertain to Caesar, and unto God the things that pertain to God (Matt. 22:21). We are to pay taxes, and in all other ways to show that we are loyal subjects of those earthly rulers who are over us. Only when obedience to a civil law would put us in disobedience to God's law, are we to disobey civil authority.
  - a. Acts 4:19-20: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight

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

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

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

1. Unbelievers in the first century falsely accused Christians of being lawbreakers. These saints were told to be obedient to civil rulers and give no occasion for the enemy to speak evil of them.
  - a. 1 Peter 2:12: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."
  - b. 1 Timothy 5:14: "...Give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."
2. We are to be characterized by "Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:8).
3. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
4. Philippians 2:12-15: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure. Do all things without

murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

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

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

**1. Individuals:**

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

**2. Nations:**

- a. Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
- b. Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people."
- c. A nation is righteous only if its citizens are righteous and it enacts righteous laws and follows a righteous course of action in its administrative and judicial operations.
- d. The Bible teaches the following truths regarding nations.
  - 1) The destiny of nations is ultimately in the hands of the Almighty.
  - 2) God expects all nations to conform to certain moral standards.
  - 3) When the moral status of a nation declines to a certain point, God can and will bring punishment on that nation.
3. If God stands opposed to a nation, it cannot long stand! If God opposes an individual, that person is in serious straits!

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

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

1. Rebelling against civil authority is contrary to God's will for Christians. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1).
    - a. **Let** prefaces an imperative sentence which is equivalent to a command. The "higher powers" are the civil authorities, at any level. It is certain that church authorities do not bear a sword, which these rulers have: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
    - b. Peter gave similar directions regarding civil obedience in 1 Peter 2:13-17: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
  2. One who resists civil rulers also resists God's law. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (Rom. 13:2).
    - a. Because the statement of verse one is true, the fact of this verse is also true. One who resists the authority of a civil ruler, who is operating within his God-given sphere, also resists the ordinance of God. He requires that we obey our civil rulers; when we disobey the civil ruler, we disobey God.
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- b. There are questions which are difficult, if not impossible, for us to answer satisfactorily.
  - 1) What about the anti-war demonstrations of the 1960s and 1970s? Were those people who conducted *sit-ins*, or who blocked traffic, or who interfered with the normal activities of other people, in violation of God's decree? Is it right for Christians to try to force their will on the general population by "civil disobedience?" Does the end justify the means?
  - 2) Were our founding fathers wrong when they fomented rebellion against their British overlords? The opposition against England was conducted, not by Christians, but by citizens. We enjoy the benefits of the outcome of the War of Independence; the world has been greatly blessed by our nation winning its independence.
  - 3) Were Christians in the North wrong, during the War Between the States, when they sought to overthrow the Confederacy? That struggle was not fomented by Christians, but by citizens. If that war had not been fought, it may have been the case that, if the gospel had had free course in American society, the issues which divided the nation may have been settled without a war.
  - 4) Were the Christians who lived in the south wrong when they rebelled against the federal government by seceding from the union? Again, it was not Christians who made the decision to pull away from the union, but citizens.
3. Our mission as followers of Christ is to change the world. The means by which we are to effect this change is the gospel. Positively, we can bring about the change by preaching the gospel; indirectly, we can encourage the change by influence, as the gospel lives in us and as we teach it.
  - a. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
  - b. Ephesians 5:6-11: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
  - c. Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
  - d. 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
4. David Lipscomb was strongly opposed to a Christian taking part in war. When the War Between the States came, "He publicly spoke out against the war, and took no part either in Southern or Northern politics. He was, however, denounced by men of both sides, but this did not deter him from preaching his convictions" (West, Vol. 2, p.13). "A military officer was sent one Sunday to hear him preach. He took a seat near the front and listened attentively. At the conclusion he said: 'I am not sure that the sermon is loyal to the Southern Confederacy, but I am profoundly convinced that it is loyal to the Christian religion'" (Boles, p.245).
5. Christ did not fulfill his earthly mission by making disturbances in the streets. That would have been more like a *rabble-rouser* than the Savior of the world! Our Lord's work was too holy and majestic to be accomplished by ignoble methods. Our work as Christians is not to be done through circus-like tactics. The Lord never employed base procedures; he had too high a regard for his great work. And we should not demean our great mission by resorting to disgraceful methods. "That it might be

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

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

**B. He owes his country obedience to its laws.**

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

his God-given realm, he is a minister (servant) of God. The verse does not address the spiritual condition of the ruler; it merely states that the official is filling a role assigned to him by the God of heaven.

- a. If he is operating within the authority God has delivered to him, his work will be productive of good for all his subjects, Christian and non-Christian.
  - b. However, if a citizen (believer or unbeliever) violates the law, there is reason for that lawbreaker to be afraid. Why? The ruler does not have a sword at his disposal merely for show! He has the God-given right to execute lawbreakers found guilty of a capital offense. The government has been charged with the requirement to enforce the law. *Sword* is symbolic of all the authority which civil rulers are given. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6).
  - c. Civil rulers are servants of God in the civil arena; they are charged with the responsibility to maintain law and order. This requires them to punish criminals and others who break the law. Punishment is often thought of as an expression of wrath, but in the case of judges who mete out penalties for criminal activities, their disposition is one of judicial sobriety, not anger. When a criminal is thus punished, the process may properly be viewed as the wrath of God being brought to bear upon the outlaw.
4. In verse five, two reasons for a Christian being obedient to the civil authority where he lives are given.
- a. The first reason is because of **the penalty** that he may receive if he violates the law. The second reason pertains to **his conscience**. Obeying the law only to avoid punishment may be good enough for the non-believing citizen, but it is insufficient for the child of God. A Christian operates in the spiritual realm, as well as the physical. He must please civil authorities if possible, but of greater importance is the requirement that he please God! Obeying the law of the land because of fear is one thing; obeying the law because it is God's will is an entirely different motive.
  - b. God requires that his people maintain a pure conscience. To do so necessitates that we live up to what we know or believe to be right. To violate one's conscience is to do wrong (Rom. 14:23). Thus, to have God's continuing approval, a Christian must follow God's will—from the heart. In doing this, he will keep himself well within the requirements of civil law.
  - c. We want to avoid falling under the penalty the law imposes on law breakers, but we especially want to retain God's approval, which includes being obedient to civil law.

C. Each Christian is obligated to pay taxes.

1. "For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing" (Rom. 13:6).
2. Because of the truths just presented, Christians are to pay their taxes. We are not responsible for the way government spends the tax money; they will be held accountable for any misuse. This passage places the obligation on saints to pay their taxes (tribute) as prescribed by law. The reasons Paul assigns for this are those stated in verse five: to avoid penalty and for conscience sake.
3. There is no *free ride*. Money is necessary for government to accomplish its mission. We might not agree with the way government spends tax revenues, but that does not give us the right to refuse to pay taxes. Therefore, render tribute to whom tribute is due. Every government must levy taxes; in our case, we pay county, state, and federal assessments. All of these are our God-given duty to pay.
4. Matthew 22:15-22: "And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree

withered away. And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

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

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

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

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

1. During World War II, virtually every citizen supported the war effort, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Every productive member of American society contributed to the



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

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

##### A. The case of the Amorites.

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

##### B. The case of Sodom and Gomorrah.

- 1. Genesis 18:20: "And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous."
- 2. They had crossed the line and must be destroyed! God's mercy and patience have a limit. Compare: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:3). But for Abraham's sake, he would spare Sodom and Gomorrah if ten righteous people were found therein.
- 3. Only four were discovered (Lot, his wife, and their two daughters). For lack of six people thousands were destroyed! You are important: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

##### C. The case of Nineveh.

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

1. Throughout their history as God's chosen people, they ran hot and cold. They reached a point in rebellion that God disowned them after they rejected Christ; he had no further use for them.
2. They were overthrown by the Roman army in 70 A.D. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:35-39; cf. Matt. 24:1-35).
3. A remnant obeyed the gospel in the first century—the majority rejected the gospel; a remnant is now in Palestine—the majority is scattered as a reminder of God's sovereignty and as proof of inspiration: "For I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11).

E. God does not change in his righteous character.

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

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

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

V. **CONCLUSION.**

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

1. We can commit ourselves to godly, scriptural lives; the influence of a few godly people is tremendous. The presence of only six more righteous souls could have spared Sodom.
  - a. Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of

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

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## Bible Miracles

- I. The study of Bible miracles is essential to our comprehension of God's word.
  - A. There are notable reasons why this study is deserving of our most discerning attention.
    1. 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).
    2. 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.
    3. 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.
  - B. In order to understand the subject, it is vital that we understand what is meant by *miracle*. People often uses the term too loosely, describing common occurrences of life as miraculous.
    1. *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."
    2. Robert Milligan, a gospel preacher of the nineteenth 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).
    3. A miracle is above the laws of nature, and above the finite abilities of man, and beyond human comprehension.
      - a. 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?
      - b. 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.
      - c. The creation of the universe and the earth was a miracle.
      - d. 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).
  - C. 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.
    1. All kinds of diseases were miraculously cured. Modern medicine cannot even approach such a result.
    2. 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.
    3. Individuals who had died were resurrected to life again.
    4. 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.
    5. Demons were expelled from many who were afflicted thereby.
    6. Future events were accurately foretold.
    7. The miracles of the Bible are factual and extremely impressive!
  - D. Many use the term "miracle" too loosely and wrongly.
    1. The recovery from some illness is not miraculous. It would be miraculous if the healing was instantaneous, without medicine, doctors, or hospitals.

2. A mere coincidence is often called miraculous, but that does not fit the pattern of biblical miracles.
3. 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.

II. Various terms are used to describe supernatural works: (2 Cor. 12:12; Acts 2:22 ASV).

A. Passages:

1. 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works" (ASV).
2. Acts 2:22: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know" (ASV).

B. Some are called *wonders*.

1. 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).
2. 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).

C. Some are called *signs*.

1. 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).
2. As a sign, a miracle was a token of the near presence and working of God.
3. They validated the message spoken:
  - a. 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*."

- b. 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."

D. Some were called *mighty works*, or simply *miracles*.

1. In the following passages, the same Greek word is translated as "mighty works" and "miracles" and "mighty deeds."
  - a. Matthew 11:20: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not."
  - b. 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."
  - c. 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."
2. The emphasis of this term is the power of him who is the source of these works.
3. 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.

E. 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.

1. 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.
2. The 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."

III. It is important in understanding New Testament miracles to see how this power was obtained.

A. 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).

1. This great prophecy began to be fulfilled for the Jews on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2. The power came upon the apostles (all of the twelve were 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)—the one baptism is the immersion in water of a penitent believer into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:27)].
  - a. 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 (2 Cor. 5:20; Matt. 19:28).
  - b. 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).

2. 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.

B. Acts 8:14-18, Rom. 1:11, and Acts 19:1-6 illustrate the fact that the apostles had the ability to confer spiritual gifts upon other saints.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

C. 2 Corinthians 12:12-13 also shows that this conclusion 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.

1. 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.
2. 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:
  - a. Miraculous powers can be given only through an apostle.
  - b. You received miraculous powers through me.
  - c. Therefore, I (Paul) am an apostle.
3. Many today say that miraculous gifts come through other sources. If their assertions are so, then Paul's argument is invalid.

#### IV. Bible miracles occurred to fulfill certain specific purposes.

A. Jesus performed miracles to prove that he was the Messiah.

1. 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).
2. 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).
3. 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).

B. Miracles also accredited a messenger as bearing God's truth.

1. John 2:18: "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?"
2. John 6:30: "They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?"
3. 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."
4. 2 Corinthians 12:12: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."

C. Miracles were intended to build faith by verifying the word of the messenger.

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 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."

D. Miracles were given to confirm the word presented by inspired spokesmen.

1. Mark 2:1-12: "And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) 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." 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).
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." The word spoken by these preachers of the gospel was confirmed by the signs which the Lord provided for that purpose.
3. 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 the Holy Spirit.
4. 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.
5. 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: "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." [Notice the past tense of the verb: "was confirmed"].

- a. When a higher court in the land confirms a ruling of a lower court, it is confirmed for all time.
- b. 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).

E. 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.

F. Miracles were essential in order for the gospel to be revealed and delivered.

1. The apostles could not appeal to the written New Testament for authority; it had not been revealed and recorded. They had supernatural guidance in receiving and communicating the new covenant.
  - a. Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
  - b. 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."
  - c. 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."
  - d. John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
2. 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.
  - a. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
  - b. Revelation 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).
3. 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!

V. There are significant differences between modern "miracles" and real Bible miracles.

- A. The purpose of miracles in the first century was not the same as the purpose of the so-called miracles of today.
  1. 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.
  2. The Lord and his apostles never healed merely for the purpose of healing the body! The healing was for the purpose of confirming truth.
    - a. 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."
    - 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."
    - c. 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 recompence 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. 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, to the individuals involved.
  4. 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.
  5. 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). Suffering for righteousness' sake produces greater spiritual strength.
- B. Genuine Bible miracles were never for show or display.
1. 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).
  2. 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.
    - a. 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).
    - b. 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).
    - c. 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?
    - d. 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?
- C. 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!
1. Modern-day examples are often long, drawn-out affairs.
  2. 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.
    - a. This is the only such incident of this nature; all the other cases were instantaneous.
    - b. This example only proves that the Lord could heal by degrees or instantly by one word or action.
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Will the pretenders give us a clear example from both methods?

- c. 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.
- D. 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.
  1. 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.
  2. 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").
  3. Many in the Bible were healed without any faith on their part.
    - a. The lame man in Acts 3 was healed by the apostles' faith.
    - b. The palsied man of Mark 2:5 was healed on the faith of his friends.
    - c. 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).
    - d. 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.*).
- E. The greatest distinction between the "miracles" of modern times and the genuine miracles of the Bible 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.

#### VI. Bible miracles were genuine.

- A. Jesus found no diseased or afflicted body that he could not heal (Matt. 4:23-25; 8:16; cf. Acts 5:16).
  1. 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.
  2. 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).
  3. But the Lord and the apostles never "screened" their prospective "patients!"
- B. Bible miracles were performed in such a way that none could doubt they were real.
  1. Everything was open and obvious; there was no backstage maneuvering.
  2. The subjects to be healed were plainly afflicted.
    - a. 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." He was known by all who knew him to have been blind from birth.

- b. Acts 3:1-11; 4:22: This man was a common fixture at the beautiful gate, well-known by all that he was lame.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Acts 4:22: "For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was showed."
  - c. No one could deny that Lazarus was dead and in the tomb four days (John 11).
  - d. Acts 14:8: "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked." This man never had walked.
3. The results of Bible miracles were beyond denial.
- a. The blind man of John 9 was born blind, but 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).
  - b. No one could deny the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11).
  - c. The lame man of Acts 3:6-11 was widely known to be unable to walk. 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).
  - d. The crippled man of Acts 14:8-11 was known for his ailment; everyone knew he was healed. "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who
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- 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).
- C. Contrast the foregoing with the modern fakers as illustrated from these cases taken from V.E. Howard's booklet, "Fake Healers Exposed," pp.38-40.
1. "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).
  2. 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, In. 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.
  3. A woman with a lame leg went to Roberts to be healed. She came back home saying the Holy Ghost works in mysterious. 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.
  4. 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."
  5. 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.
- D. While the results of Bible miracles were beyond reproach, today's so-called miracles are subject to much skepticism, to say the least.
1. 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).
  2. 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).
- E. The changes that were made on the eyewitnesses of Bible miracles show that these were truly supernatural works.
1. 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).
  2. Paul was never the same after seeing the resurrected Lord.
    - a. 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
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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.*"

- b. 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."
  - c. Acts 26:19: "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."
  - d. 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."
3. Many Jews were changed.
- 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 11:45: "Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him."
4. 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).
- F. Every kind of disease and affliction was healed.
- 1. Jesus healed all kinds.
    - a. 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."
    - b. Matthew 12:15: "But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all."
  - 2. 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).
  - 3. 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!
  - 4. The cases today invariably involve ailments that are beyond testing.
- VII. There are many arguments made by those who believe in modern miracles.
- A. It is argued that since 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?
- 1. Certain dead people were raised to life again in Bible times. Why are not some being resurrected today?
  - 2. 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?
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3. Why does not God send Christ to suffer and die in every generation?
  4. If God must continue to work miracles to remain unchanged, why does he not give a revelation to supersede the New Testament as the New Testament superseded the Old Testament?
  5. Why does he not multiply fish and bread to feed the starving masses in famine-stricken lands today?
  6. 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.
  7. God has not changed in his attributes or abilities, but his manner of dealing with man has changed.
    - a. He dealt with Noah and his generation differently from his treatment of us.
    - b. He required things of Abraham and others under the Patriarchal Age that he does not demand of us.
    - c. He required things of the Jews under the Mosaic Age that do not apply to our time (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8).
    - d. God miraculously preserved the shoes and clothing of the Israelites in the wilderness, but he is not doing so for us today.
      - 1) Deuteronomy 8:4: "Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years."
      - 2) Nehemiah 9:21: "Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not."
  8. The argument has no logical or scriptural connection with whether miracles are still available today.
- B. 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.
1. 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?
  2. Only a relative few saw the resurrected Lord. Is that showing partiality?
  3. 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?
  4. We have not been translated into glory as were Enoch and Elijah. Does that make God partial toward them?
  5. Since these illustrations do not constitute acts of partiality, then God did not show favoritism by giving miracles only in those ancient days.
  6. Our Lord told the apostles that believers would do greater works than they had seen him do: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).
    - a. "Those who did accept him would eventually enter upon a ministry even greater than that of teaching, of ministering to the needy both spiritually and materially; and they would be greater than his own; not in power or extent, but in quantity, since these apostles, through whom these works were to be done, would soon enter upon a world-wide mission extending far beyond the pale of Jewry to which Jesus had limited himself in his public ministry. The works of the apostles—and the promise must be limited to them—were greater than those of the Lord because of the number involved; there were more converts to Christianity on the day of Pentecost than there were people espousing his cause during the whole of his three years' ministry. He converted about five hundred in three years; three thousand obeyed the gospel on the day the church began. His labors were limited to an area no bigger than some counties; the apostles were to carry the gospel to all of Asia and Europe and to influence others to take it to the uttermost parts of the earth" (Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on John*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1981. P.309).
    - b. At least part of the meaning of this passage involves the difference between the miraculous actions of the Lord during his public ministry and the preaching of the full gospel of salvation to the whole world by the apostles. The greater work would be in saving souls; miracles were merely a means
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of verifying the message which produced salvation.

- C. It is argued that we are cutting out part of the Bible when we do not accept miracles for our time.
1. But Christ is not here in the flesh today; does that mean we have cut him out of the Bible?
  2. 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).
  3. 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.
    - 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. 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. 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?"
- D. An argument is made on Mark 16:17-20 to justify modern miracles.
1. 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 first century saints.
    - a. 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).
    - b. 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 one. If every saint had a miraculous gift, then each one would have had to have an apostle of Christ to lay hands on him (or her) directly and personally. There is no proof that **every** first century Christian even saw an apostle. There were very likely hundreds of thousands of saints; the apostles would have been spread mighty thin—they were already overworked in spreading the gospel—to have the time and be in the presence of each one who obeyed the gospel so as to impart a spiritual gift. Remember, Paul showed that he would have to go to Rome in order to impart spiritual gifts to those brethren: "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).
  2. 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 says that the signs would follow the believers (the whole of them); it does not say that the signs would
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- be performed by each of them.
3. 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.
  4. 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.
- E. Luke 11:13 is said to support contentions of modern miracle workers.
1. 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 1st 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).
  2. 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 punctuation. 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 7:13.
  3. 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 apostles died, and the last person died on whom the apostles had laid hands, the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit ceased.
- F. James 5:14-16 is used in an attempt to prove miraculous gifts still continue.
1. 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.
  2. 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)].
  3. 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).
- G. 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: "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:6-8).
1. 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.
  2. But even if the reference is to spiritual gifts, the passage no more says that the miracles would con-
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tinue to the coming of Christ any more than it says that the Corinthians would continue on earth until his coming.

3. 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.

H. It is argued that the Lord is just as powerful today as he was in the 1st 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.

- I. 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!

#### VIII. Each of the three dispensations was revealed, established, and confirmed by miracles.

A. The Patriarchal Age began with the miracles of creation.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

B. The Mosaic Age was ushered in by miraculous demonstrations.

1. Several miracles were wrought when God delivered Israel from Egypt and while he led them through the wilderness.
2. Miracles were associated with the giving of the Law at Sinai and in the construction of the tabernacle. Miracles were involved in conquering Canaan.
3. 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.
4. 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.

C. The Christian Age was ushered in by powerful miraculous demonstrations.

1. Miracles were associated with the birth of John the Immerser and of Jesus.
  2. Miracles were present during the personal ministry of Christ; the disciples were given limited power to perform miracles during the limited commission.
  3. 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.
  4. 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.

5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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. The gospel of Christ is God's power to save souls.
  - a. 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."
  - b. James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
9. "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).

#### IX. The Bible teaches that miracles have ceased.

- A. 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?
  1. 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."

2. 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."
  3. 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 (Acts 5:1-11).
  4. 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!
  5. No inspired person in the Bible ever used miracles for financial gain.
- B. 1 Corinthians 12.
1. 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." 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. 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 (1 Cor. 14:22; 14:12; Eph. 4:8-12). Just because one had a spiritual gift did not mean his eternal salvation was certain:
    - 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?"
  2. 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 to 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).
    - a. 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).
    - b. Knowledge—the revealed truth of the gospel. Possessors of this gift would have the inspired information which they would be able to communicate.
    - c. 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 (cf. Acts 3:1-11).
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- 1) 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."
  - 2) 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."
  - 3) 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."
  - 4) Matthew 14:3: "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"
  - 5) 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."
  - d. Healing—miraculous healing (Mark 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.
    - 1) Mark 16:18: "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."
    - 2) James 5:14-15: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 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."
  - e. 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).
  - f. 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.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 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."
    - 4) 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.”

- g. Discerning of spirits—this was the ability to test teachers to determine whether they were true or false. Peter could know that Ananias and Sapphira were lying by this or another of the gifts.
  - 1) 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.”
  - 2) 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.”
- h. Tongues—the ability to speak in a language which the recipient had not learned in the ordinary ways.
- i. 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.

#### C. 1 Corinthians 13.

- 1. 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.
- 2. 1 Corinthians 13:8 shows that the gifts of prophecy, of tongues, and knowledge would cease: “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.”
  - a. 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 (John 16:13; Matt. 19:28; Eph. 3:5).
  - b. 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.
  - c. 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..."). The time was coming when this and the other gifts would be taken away. There would be plentiful opportunities 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).
- d. 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.
3. 1 Corinthians 13:9: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." 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. 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).
  4. 1 Corinthians 13:10: "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." 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.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 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.
    - c. 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).
    - d. 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*
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- come*").
- e. 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).
    - 1) Perfect (*teleios*): "Brought to completion, complete, entire, as opposed to what is partial or limited" (Bagster). "Having attained the end of purpose" (Arndt & Gingrich).
    - 2) Notice some passages where this word is found:
      - a) Matthew 5:48: "be perfect, even as Father..."
      - b) Matthew 19:21: "if thou wilt be perfect..."
      - c) Romans 12:2: "good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."
      - d) Ephesians 4:13: "till we come...unto perfect man."
      - e) Philippians 3:15: "let us therefore, as many as be perfect."
      - f) Colossians 1:28: "present every man perfect..."
      - g) Colossians 4:12: "that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will..."
      - h) Hebrews 9:11: "perfect tabernacle." James 1:4: "patience have her perfect..."
      - i) James 1:17: "every perfect gift from above"
      - j) James 1:25: "perfect law of liberty."
      - k) James 3:2: "perfect man...if not offend."
      - l) 1 I John 4:18: "perfect love..."
      - m) 1 Cor. 2:6: "speak wisdom among them that are perfect."
      - n) 1 Corinthians 13:10: "when that which is perfect..."
    - 3) 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).
  - f. 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.
5. 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." 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. 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).

6. 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." 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.
  - a. 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 [*know*] is also in Matthew 7:16, Luke 1:3-4, Romans 1:32, and 1 Timothy 4:3.
    - 1) Matthew 7:16: "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 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."
    - 4) 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."
  - b. 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).
7. 1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 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 (although perhaps greatly increased). Neither of these three is miraculous. 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).
- D. 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.”

1. 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.
2. 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."
  - a. The church needed these miraculous aids until the full revelation was given and recorded. After that, men could learn how to be saved and what their obligations were before God by studying the Scriptures.
  - b. 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).
  - c. 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.
3. Three things were to be accomplished by the spiritual gifts: (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); and (3) To guide and assist the church in carrying the gospel to the lost, thus building up the church numerically (Eph. 4:12).
4. 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 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.
5. 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).
6. 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).

E. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and Ephesians 4:8-16 address the same subject.

1. Notice the parallels that exist between 1 Corinthians 13 and Ephesians 4:

<b>1 Corinthians 13</b>	<b>Ephesians 4</b>
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)

2. Ephesians 4:8-14 refers to the same gifts as I 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.

F. 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).

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

A. 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.

1. "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.'
  2. "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!
  3. "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. Would not some faith-healer have reveled in taking credit for that cure?
  4. "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.
  5. "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.
- B. "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 Joy of Worshiping in the Bible Way

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. Others at this retreat have been assigned to speak on various features of "JOY" in our relationship to God.

1. The Joy of Being in the Church of the Bible.
2. The Joy of Serving.
3. The Joy of Serving in Worship.
4. The Joy of Evangelism.
5. The Joy of Family Life.
6. The Joy of Short Overseas Missions.

#### B. Our message relates to the Joy of Worshiping in the Bible Way.

1. "Joy" is a word that bespeaks of happiness, gladness, contentedness, elation, and delight.
  - a. There is happiness and delight in worshiping the God of Heaven. Think of it: In worship we offer praise and homage to the one who created the universe, who sustains the universe, and who is infinite in power, knowledge, wisdom, and presence! "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD" (Ps. 122:1). David's father and other forebears for ten generations had been unable to enter into the congregation, on account of Judah's sin with his daughter-in-law (Gen. 38). An illegitimate person and his descendants through ten generations were barred from this privilege (Deut. 23:2). David was in the tenth generation, and enjoyed the great advantage of full and close communion with Jehovah in worship.
  - b. There is happiness and delight in worshiping the God of Heaven in the Bible Way. He has the right as Creator and Sustainer to set the standard by which our worship is to be offered to him.
    - 1) 1 Chronicles 15:13: "For because ye *did it* not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that **we sought him not after the due order.**"
    - 2) Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). Clearly, Abel offered his sacrifice according to God's will; it is equally clear that Cain did not do so.
2. The only way that our worship today can be acceptable to God is if it is offered according to God's mandate, which is revealed in the New Testament.
  - 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. Colossians 3:16-17: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

#### C. An interesting story is told about the brother of Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887).

1. Henry was unable to fill the pulpit on a certain occasion, so he asked his brother to preach in his place. A large audience had assembled to hear Henry, the famous orator. When his not-so-famous brother arose to begin his speech, a large number of people began to leave the building, seeing the speaker was not Henry.
  2. It was painfully obvious that they had come to hear an eloquent presentation, and not to worship God. Beecher began his sermon by saying, "All who came to worship Henry Ward Beecher may now leave; the rest of us will remain and worship God." No one left.
  3. Raccoon John Smith had a similar experience on the occasion of a great meeting. He stood before a large outdoor assembly and began to preach. When the audience saw the rude clothing he wore and his somewhat unprofessional appearance and bearing, they began to walk away. He called out to them:
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“‘Stay, friends, and hear what the great Augustine said!’ and they all stopped to listen. ‘Augustine wished to see three things before he died,’ continued Smith. ‘Rome in her glory and purity; Paul on Mars Hill; and Jesus in the flesh.’ A few now sat down, but many smiled, and started off again. ‘Will you not stay,’ he cried, in a still louder voice, ‘and hear what the great Cato said?’ Many returned and took their seats, and seemed willing to be amused. ‘Cato,’ he continued, ‘repented of three things before his death: first, that he had ever spent an idle day; secondly, that he had ever gone on a voyage by water, when he might have made the same journey on land; and thirdly, that he had ever told the secrets of his bosom to a woman.’ The people continued to come back, and began to crowd close to the stand. A few acquaintances, who had not seen him for a long time, now recognized him, and passed the word among the crowd—‘It is John Smith, from the Little South Fork!’ Seeing groups of persons still standing in the distance, he called again with all the strength of his heavy voice: ‘Come, friends, and hear what the great Thales thanked the gods for.’ ‘Let us go and hear the fellow,’ said one, ‘there may be more in him than we suppose.’ And they all, at last, sat down near by to listen. ‘Thales thanked the gods for three things: first, that he was endowed with reason, and was not a brute; secondly, that he was a Greek, and not a Barbarian; and thirdly, that he was a man, and not a woman. And now, friends, I know you are ready to ask; And pray, sir, who are you? What have you to say for yourself? I am John Smith, from Stockton’s Valley. In more recent years, I have lived in Wayne, among the rocks and hills of the Cumberland. Down there, saltpeter caves abound, and raccoons make their home...’” (Earl West, *The Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 1, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1974). These people had the wrong attitude toward the worship act of preaching: they were more interested in being entertained, than in learning and meditating upon the word of God.

D. What is our purpose for assembling on the Lord’s Day?

1. Knowing human nature, we must say that some people attend merely to hear something novel, like the Athenians. "For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there **spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing**)" (Acts 17:20-21).
2. Another type of individual may attend only to be entertained by the singing, prayers, sermon, etc. Many were disappointed in Paul’s speaking ability: "For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible" (2 Cor. 10:10).
3. Some may attend only to “put in their time” or “have their ticket stamped.”
4. There are many in our generation whose purpose for attending is to “get on a spiritual high.” Their idea of spirituality is limited to “getting their emotions pumped up.” If this is not done, they find some other place where their demands can be met, or they stay home. Is anyone justified in this? Are the worship leaders at fault if they do not provide such an atmosphere or if their presentations are not filled with emotional display?

E. What is worship? What is the purpose of worship?

II. **WORSHIP IS AN AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY AND AN EXALTED PRIVILEGE.**

A. Think of the Object of our worship.

1. Psalms 33:6-9: "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."
2. Psalms 100: "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 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."
3. 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

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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."

4. 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. Worship is disastrous if wrong.

1. Genesis 4:3-5: "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." Abel offered his sacrifice "by faith" (Heb. 11:4); obviously, Cain did not; since faith comes by learning God's word (Rom. 10:17), we can know that Abel offered the sacrifice God had appointed. But Cain did not.
2. 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." [They used fire they obtained from the wrong source].
3. 1 Samuel 13:5-14: "And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which *is* on the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Bethaven. When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. And *some of* the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he *was* yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel *had appointed*: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering. And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee." [Saul was not authorized to offer sacrifices, a privilege extended to the priests].

C. Worship must be offered with reverence and with an understanding of its purpose and significance.

1. Worship must not be allowed to become wearisome to us, and we must not look on it as a mere formality.
  2. With reverence, New Testament worship will not become dull or boring; without reverence, no worship is acceptable to the Almighty.
    - a. Psalms 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
    - b. Psalms 122:1: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD."
    - c. Isaiah 1:12: "When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" Some Israelites merely wore out the floors of the temple; they did not assemble to glorify
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God, but to go through the outward motions. It is very easy to allow ourselves merely to “mouth” the words of our songs and prayers, but our hearts must be involved sincerely (1 Cor. 14:15).

- d. The right attitude was demonstrated by Ezra and the Israelites: "And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground" (Nehemiah 8:5-6).

### III. WORSHIP IS DESIGNED TO PLEASE GOD RATHER THAN OURSELVES.

#### A. Consider Biblical cases and statements.

1. Cain: "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell" (Gen. 4:3-5).
2. Nadab and Abihu: "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).
3. Matthew 15:8-9: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men."

#### B. Why do so many people offer worship acts and methods that are unscriptural?

1. There are many such things done in the name of Christianity which have no Biblical authority.
  - a. Many worship Mary and pay homage to certain “saints.”
  - b. Many worship images.
  - c. Many use mechanical instruments of music in worship.
  - d. Many use entertainment bands in their worship.
  - e. Many dance and clap their hands in worship.
2. Why? It pleases the worshipers! But if we are to honor and please God, we must follow his will in all our activities, including the matter of worship!
  - a. 1 Samuel 15:22: "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams."
  - b. 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."
  - c. 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."
  - d. Colossians 3:16-17: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus..."
3. Israel ["Jeshurun"] was denounced by Jehovah for following their own way: "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered *with fatness*; then he forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation" (Deut. 32:15).

### IV. WORSHIP IS TO EXPRESS OUR SPIRITUALITY, NOT PRIMARILY TO AROUSE IT.

#### A. Worship defined:

1. To bow down.
  2. To venerate.
  3. To pay reverence to.
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4. To offer homage to.

B. Thus worship is an expression of our love and devotion to God.

1. But many want an emotional kick in their worship activities, otherwise they will declare them dull and boring.
  - a. Using worship as entertainment profanes that which is holy. That is exactly what certain modern “worship” activities do.
  - b. Using worship acts to set the environment profanes worship.
    - 1) Some sectarian groups serve the communion (the Lord’s Supper) at weddings.
    - 2) Some of our brethren sing during the Lord’s Supper. This confuses two separate acts of worship, and is used to merely set the environment.
2. True worshippers express their love for God in worship since their worship is offered in spirit [sincerely] and in truth [according to God’s word].
  - a. Only then can we be edified by worship.
  - b. Then our love will be intensified and our dedication enhanced.
  - c. Then we come away satisfied in our soul and are happy.
3. But this is a by-product of worship—not the main purpose of worship. The primary purpose of worship is to glorify God! We are happy to offer praise to him, and are made happy by doing so!

V. **IN TRUE WORSHIP, GOD IS THE AUDIENCE, NOT THE WORSHIPPERS.**

A. Worship is offered to God, not to any man or to ourselves.

1. The primary purpose of worship is to please, honor, and glorify God. God is the prime object of true worship.
2. Matthew 4:10: "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."
3. John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."

B. Some say, “I did not get anything out of worship?”

1. The statement shows they have missed the very point of worship.
2. The prime purpose in worship is to *give* glory to God, *not get* something for ourselves.
3. To be able to offer acceptable worship (and obtain the proper by-products of worship) we must prepare our minds beforehand.
  - a. We can do this if we pray; read the Scriptures; meditate and talk about spiritual matters before we enter into worship.
  - b. It is difficult for most of us to instantly change from thinking about sports items, worldly problems, health difficulties, and other secular subjects, to offering sincere, devout worship to God.

VI. **IN WORSHIP, PRIMARILY WE ARE TO GIVE RATHER THAN TO RECEIVE.**

A. In worship, we give (offer) praise to the Almighty.

1. Christ taught this principle during his earthly ministry: "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, **It is more blessed to give than to receive**" (Acts 20:35). Our great involvement in worship is giving praise to God.
  - a. Hebrews 13:15: "By him therefore let us **offer the sacrifice of praise** to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips **giving thanks** to his name."
  - 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."
2. We count it a privilege to attend all services! We hold it an honor to sing, to pray, to give, to listen to the message, and to eat the Lord’s Supper! We do not see it as a burdensome obligation!
3. If we come mainly to GET, we have missed the prime point of worship.

B. It is impossible to GAIN unless we GIVE healthy worship to our Heavenly Father.

1. One of the fundamental principles of the gospel is that we must give in order to get. **"Give, and it shall be given unto you;** good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men
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give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

2. It is a pity that some view worship only as a means to GET.

## VII. CONCLUSION:

### A. Consider these passages:

1. Psalms 30:4: "Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."
2. Psalms 50:23: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth *his* conversation *aright* will I show the salvation of God."
3. Psalms 67:3-4: "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth."
4. Psalms 92:1-2: "*It is a good thing* to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: To show forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night."
5. Psalms 105:1-2: "O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works."
6. Psalms 106:1: "Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever."
7. Psalms 116:12: "What shall I render unto the LORD *for* all his benefits toward me?" 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:"
8. Hebrews 13:15: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name."
9. 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."
10. Revelation 14:7: "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

### B. Consider these scriptural injunctions regarding worship:

1. Let us **sing** with sincerity, understanding, and purpose of heart.
2. Let us **pray**, knowing that God hears; with reverence, sincerity, and gratitude.
3. Let us **study**, knowing that God speaks to us through the Bible.
  - a. The lesson may be in the words of the preacher, but if it is true to God's book, it is God's word we are hearing.
  - b. Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
  - c. 2 Timothy 4:2: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."
4. Let us **give** freely, gladly, and with purpose of heart, knowing that God is glorified.
5. Let us **eat the Lord's Supper** gladly, with gratitude, sincerely, and with understanding.

### C. Some final statements from the Bible:

1. 1 Chronicles 29:9: "Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy."
  2. 1 Chronicles 29:17: "I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee."
  3. Psalms 19:14: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."
  4. Psalms 100: "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD *he is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and
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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."

5. 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."
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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).

#### B. He was recognized by the astute as being the Master Teacher.

1. Never man spake like this man (John 7:46).
2. "Thou art a teacher come from God..." (John 3:2).

### II. DISCUSSION.

#### A. 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.

#### B. Christ employed every known method of teaching.

1. He taught by lecture [sermon] (Matt. 5-7; Luke 6:20-49).
  2. By parables (Matt. 13:34-35)..
  3. 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).
  4. By answering questions.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 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."
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5. By telling stories, such as the report of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
  6. 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).
  7. 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).
- C. Jesus used other approaches in teaching.
1. 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. By referring to traditional practices (Mark 7:1-13).
  3. 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).
  4. By allusions to history.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 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."
  5. He taught by using the paradox.
    - a. Matthew 10:39: "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."
    - b. Matthew 16:25: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."
    - c. Matthew 19:30: "But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first."
    - d. Matthew 20:16: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."
  6. He used irony and satire.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 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."
  7. He used the hyperbole.
    - a. Matthew 23:24: "*Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."
    - b. Mark 10:25: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter
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into the kingdom of God."

8. He used metaphors.
    - a. Matthew 10:6: "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
    - b. 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?"
  9. 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).
  - D. He adapted the method to the individual and the situation.
    1. He exposed, condemned, and denounced hypocrisy (Matt. 23:1-33).
    2. He used ridicule.
      - 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. In specific cases:
      - a. To the thirsty, he spoke of the Water of Life (John 4:7-15).
      - b. To the hungry, he talked of the Bread of Life (John 6:35).
      - c. To a good moral man, he introduced the New Birth (John 3:1-8).
      - d. To the Pharisees, he emphasized hypocrisy (Luke 14:1-5; 15:1-9).
      - e. To Publicans, he spoke on penitence and mercy: "And he spake this parable unto certain which 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
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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).

- f. 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).
  8. 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.
  - E. 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! To feed an audience of people of different backgrounds, different levels of intelligence and education, and of varying ages, simple words, plain speech, and clear truths must be employed.
    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.
    4. He did not contradict on Monday what he had taught on Sunday!
    5. If one always preaches the truth he will never have to worry about any inconsistency in what he has taught.
  - F. His teaching was always truthful.
    1. His messages were never based on human wisdom, but always revealed God's truth.
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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.

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. 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. Matthew 22:33: "And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine."
  - c. 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.

#### B. 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!

#### C. 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?"
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## Teaching the Bible in Love to the Lost

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. The Lord's church is charged with the great mission of seeking to save the lost.

1. Although this is a heavy responsibility placed upon the local church and individual Christians, it is not merely a duty—it is a joyful obligation!
2. In fulfilling this great mission, it is incumbent on us to present what the Bible teaches about *the kingdom*. To preach Christ includes preaching about the church, which is also known in the Bible as the kingdom.
  - a. Matthew 16:18-19: "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 8:5,12: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached **Christ** unto them....But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the **kingdom of God**, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."
3. Our Great Mission is to *seek* the *lost*.
  - a. It is not enough for us to put up a sign and expect the lost to come to us; it is usually the case that we must put forth an effort to find the lost.
    - 1) Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
    - 2) Acts 8:4: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."
  - b. To find the lost, it is necessary that we have a means of identifying the lost.
    - 1) The New Testament is the only means of identifying either the lost or the saved. One is a Christian only if the Lord says he is a Christian; if an accountable person is not a Christian, he is lost.
    - 2) Deciding whether one is a Christian or a lost person does not violate the law of judging given in Matthew 7:1-5. Verse six requires us to identify spiritual "swine" and "dogs" so as not to waste our time and place ourselves in danger: "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."
4. Our mission is depicted in the Scriptures as "*snatching*" the lost from the fires of Torment: "And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23). The extreme danger of one who is lost in sin is thus described. The momentous nature of our work is also illustrated.
5. There are various *methods* we may employ in accomplishing our great mission.

#### B. The burden of our present message is entitled, "Teaching the Bible in Love to the Lost."

1. The first part of our study will be to consider *teaching*.
2. The second part of our study will be to consider *the Bible*.
3. The third part of our study will be to consider *in love*.
4. The fourth part of our study will be to consider *the lost*.

### II. DISCUSSION.

#### A. What does **teaching** mean?

1. To teach, of course, is to instruct—to impart significant information to another.
  - a. Nehemiah 8:8: "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading."
  - b. Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
  - c. Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every

- creature."
- 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. 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."
  - f. 1 Corinthians 4:17: "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church."
2. Teaching is addressed to the mind.
- a. 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."
  - 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."
    - 1) Luke's description of Paul's work in those gatherings is significant: he "reasoned with them out of the scriptures." The apostle presented evidence from the Old Testament Scriptures to convince the audience that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.
    - 2) He opened (from *dianoigo*: "to open up completely", Vine, Vol. 3, p.141). It is used in this verse of "opening the minds" of his auditors by presenting scriptural evidence. The word "allege" does not carry the same meaning as our modern word. Paul did not "assert without proof" that Jesus was the Christ. The word is from the Greek term *paratithemenos* ("setting forth by argument and proof," (Vine, Vol. 1, p.47). Paul set forth from the Scriptures the proof that Jesus is the Christ. The Scriptures contain **proof** of things; there is such a thing as fulfilled prophecy; we can **know** certain things; the Bible is absolute truth.
    - 3) Paul proved that it was in God's plan that the Messiah should suffer (and die), and be raised from the dead; he also proved that Jesus is the Messiah. Our teaching and preaching must follow the same pattern today: we must present the written word of God, and set forth the truth to others by sound argument and proof, thus reasoning with them from the Bible in order to open their minds to see the truth (cf. 2 Tim. 4:1-5; 1 Tim. 4:1-16; Acts 2:14-40).
  - c. The gospel is not primarily addressed to the emotions. The emotions may be stirred to a fever pitch by religious error, falsehoods, misunderstandings, psychological trickery, and prejudice.
    - 1) Zeal without a knowledge of the truth will condemn the soul: "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" (Rom. 10:1-3).
    - 2) One who is adept at manipulating emotions can lead individuals and even a great audience of people wherever he wants to take them. The chief priests manipulated the Jewish crowd into demanding that Barabbas be released and Jesus crucified: "For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him" (Mark 15:10-14). Remember that a few days earlier, the Jewish multitudes had warmly welcomed the Lord into Jerusalem with great emotion; now with equally great emotion, they were demanding his crucifixion.
  - d. Our teaching of the gospel to the lost is not to coerce, browbeat, trick, or shame them; it is to
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- address the truths of the gospel to their minds; the reception of the truth into their minds will result in faith in their hearts; and that faith will lead them to obey the Lord's will. This same pattern is to be followed in teaching the saved—we are to walk by faith, not by the cattle prod!
3. Our teaching must be plain, understandable, logical, and scriptural.
    - a. We are wasting our time and effort if our teaching is unclear, illogical, or unscriptural. It is the truth presented, understood, believed, and obeyed that saves.
      - 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 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
      - 3) Acts 8:4: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."
      - 4) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
    - b. There are two equally-important steps in the teaching process: the message of truth must properly be presented and the student must readily receive the information imparted: "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" (Acts 17:11-12).
      - 1) The teacher is under divine obligation to teach the truth clearly.
      - 2) The student is under divine obligation to examine, accept, and obey the truth.
  4. Consider the example of Acts 14:1: "And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed." Luke says that they *so spake* that a great multitude of Jews and Greeks believed. Faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17; Acts 15:7). The message of the soul-saving gospel produces faith. Faith is not produced by the *sound* of the speaker's voice, or by the *strength* or *beauty* with which the message is delivered. When we understand the gospel message, and allow its truths to lodge in our minds, faith is the result.
    - a. God, in his word, reveals what he demands of us; he reveals to us the blessings of obedience and the penalties of disobedience, by means of which he urges us to do what he says. It would have been beneath the dignity of the Almighty Lawgiver to give man the right to pick and choose which part of God's law to obey and which to reject. The Creator simply delivered his commands and prohibitions, requiring man to use his intelligence to decipher, believe, and obey.
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) John 7:17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or *whether* I speak from myself" (ASV).
    - b. The perverted religious notions of men use statues, crosses, superstition, imposing rites and ceremonies, sensational presentations, mind control tactics, entertainment, music, and other worldly or sensual appeals, to capture the interest of men, and thus bring them into submission to their systems. But the gospel shuns all such dramatic tactics, and instead, it presents the simple message of the New Testament, which produces faith in the sinner's heart, which in turn brings him to penitence and baptism; this same faith leads him on through life, and ultimately to heaven. The power that produces faith and saves is not in the teacher, but in the divine message!
      - 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) 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."

- 3) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
- 4) Matthew 12:18-20: "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."
  - a) "Jesus was no street corner egotist, bawling for attention. Techniques of the rabble rouser, the sensationalist, and the soap-box orator were beneath his dignity....In keeping with these words concerning Christ, some of the antics of certain religionists appear to be totally improper. On Times Square in New York City, one often sees screaming advocates of this or that doctrine jostling the throngs pouring forth out of the theaters; and, although their zeal may be commendable, one cannot help remembering that the Christ drew the throngs to himself. He did not invade them, beating on a bucket, and yelling for the attention of the passers-by" (Burton Coffman, *Commentary on Matthew* p.170).
  - b) The Lord never intended to foment riots by his preaching. He went about teaching whenever a situation presented itself; he taught publicly, when he had opportunity; he taught privately on many occasions. But never did he seek to arouse the multitudes against the civil authorities (cf. Rom. 13:1-7).
  - c) Our Lord's tactics are to be ours. He did not use street-corner antics; he did not call attention to himself by religious garb.
- c. Simply stated, our great job is to present the gospel to the lost, and get them to understand it. We thus plant and water, but it is God who gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:6). There is nothing in this process in which the preacher or the one who obtains faith can boast: God gave the message; the preacher merely told them what God said; the student believed what God said. Suppose one has imbibed poison which will most assuredly kill him; but someone offers him an antidote which will remove the danger; neither the one giving the antidote nor the victim of the poison has any right to boast, when the cure is effected—neither of them by their own power actually neutralized the poison: that was the function of the antidote, just as the gospel is the power God uses to save souls.
  - 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) 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. "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6). Paul and other preachers presented the gospel in an orderly fashion which could be understood by their auditors. They grasped the truths presented, and believed them. The word "believed" is used in its comprehensive sense (cf. John 3:16; Acts 11:18) to include the other elements of the plan of salvation: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). [Acts 2:38 shows that other requirements are necessary to salvation; we are not saved by faith alone].

#### B. Why are we to teach the Bible?

1. We are to teach the Bible to the lost for various reasons:
  - a. First, because that is what our Great Mission is all about (Mark 16:15); it is God's command that his word be presented.
  - b. The Bible is God's truth: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).
  - c. The Bible is inspired 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."
  - d. The Bible is fully authoritative in all matters of religion and spiritual concerns (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
  - e. The Bible is the only reliable guide in life (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
    - 1) Psalms 119:11: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."
    - 2) Psalms 119:105: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
    - 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."
    - 4) John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life." [What our spirit does for our physical body, the gospel does for our spirit—gives life].
  - f. The Bible contains the only information available about the will of God. "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).
  - g. The Bible is the only means by which we may learn the requirements for salvation from past sin, how to live acceptably in this present world, and to prepare for eternity.
  - h. The Bible is the only guide to Heaven.
  2. This addresses a problem of major proportions.
    - a. The sectarian world teaches anything and everything except the pure gospel. The following eight items are some of the common errors advocated by sectarians. They have their own attitude toward the Bible itself, such as:
      - 1) What it does not forbid, is acceptable.
        - a) We must not intrude on the silence of the Bible. No one would admit that cornbread and milk would be acceptable in the Lord's Supper, nor would anyone permit crackers and tomato juice to be used. We speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent. When the Bible reveals that unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine are the proper elements in the Lord's Supper, all other elements are excluded.
        - b) "The concealments of the Bible are as Divine as its revelations. Infinite wisdom was required as much to determine of what man should be ignorant as what man should know ....Hence it is, that the silence of the Bible is to be revered equally with its teachings, and that to intrude into things not seen and not revealed, evinces the vanity of a fleshly mind as much as to misinterpret and pervert the express statements of the Scriptures" (Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. I, p.351).
      - 2) The Bible is not the final authority.
      - 3) The Bible has contradictions.
      - 4) The Bible is not the inspired word of God.
      - 5) The Bible must be interpreted in the light of creeds and other man-made tenets.
      - 6) As long as one accepts some parts of the Bible, everything they do is acceptable.
      - 7) As long as one is sincere, he is all right.



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- 8) The Bible was produced by men and is not inspired, authoritative, or reliable, and is not to be followed by intelligent people today. [When a spiritual, moral, ethical, or religious question comes up, it is often the case that the Bible is the last authority consulted].
  - b. Among our own brethren, there are those who teach an adulterated doctrine.
    - 1) If one binds what the Lord did not bind in the Scriptures, he is teaching and practicing false doctrine.
    - 2) If one looses what the Lord bound in the Scriptures, he is teaching and practicing false doctrine.
    - 3) If one will not preach the whole counsel of God, his overall message is mutilated.
  - c. Unless we teach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, our efforts will be in vain.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 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. The methods of teaching the Bible to the lost are many.
    - a. In the public worship services via the sermon.
    - b. In gospel meetings.
    - c. In Bible classes.
    - d. In private studies with friends, neighbors, associates at work, and family members.
    - e. On television, radio, and the internet.
    - f. In literature.
    - g. In correspondence courses.
    - h. In sound books.
    - i. By godly influence (Matt. 5:13-16).
  - C. What does it mean to teach the Bible in love?
    1. Some obvious negative points:
      - a. We cannot teach the Bible in love with a mean spirit—a spiteful, unkind attitude or tone of voice.
      - b. We cannot teach the Bible in love if we overlook sin or religious error.
      - c. We cannot teach the Bible in love if we dwell only on positive subjects.
      - d. We cannot teach the Bible in love if we dwell only on negative themes.
      - e. We cannot teach the Bible in love if we water down the truth to make all people, doctrines, and practices acceptable.
    2. Consider the scriptural statement of Ephesians 4:15: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ."
      - a. *Speaking* is from a Greek word which appears in the Greek New Testament only here and in Galatians 4:16. The idea in our text is "that of *being* or *walking* in truth" (Vincent, p.859). Berry's Interlinear renders it "holding" [the truth]. The church can accomplish its divine mission (verse 12) by holding to the truth and delivering it to the saved and the lost.
      - b. The truth that is to be held to and spoken is God's full revelation, the gospel (John 8:32; 17:17; 1 Cor. 2:9-13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17). God's truth is able to bring about the conversion of sinners and to bring the saints (individually and collectively) into spiritual maturity.
        - 1) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
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- 2) 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."
  - 3) James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
  - 4) 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.*"
  - c. The truth is to be spoken in love (from the Greek word *agape*). This kind of love is the willing of good to others; it is the kind that God shows to mankind. It is the sincere desire to do good, not evil: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10). Many have promoted sin and error by using soft, pleasing words (Rom. 16:17-18). However, love does not permit or require us to condone sin or religious error. Teaching the truth is done for the good of others, not for their harm. Some things we must speak with gentle tones; some things with power.
    - 1) Matthew 3:7-8: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."
    - 2) Matthew 23:33: "*Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*"
    - 3) Matthew 23:37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!"
    - 4) Acts 13:8-11: "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 subtlety and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand."
    - 5) Galatians 4:16: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"
  3. When we teach the Bible in love:
    - a. We will teach it with large measures of kindness and gentleness.
    - b. We will teach it with the best interest of the student in mind. This is the meaning of love: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10).
  4. When we teach the Bible in love, our lives will be consistent with the Bible.
    - a. Matthew 5:16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
    - b. Romans 12:9: "*Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."
    - c. Romans 2:21-23: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?"
  5. When we teach the Bible in love, we will present any and every truth contained therein, and not pick
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out only those items that are pleasing to us or to our audience.

- a. 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."
  - b. Acts 20:26-27: "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."
  - c. Compare: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek. 3:17-19).
6. When we teach the Bible in love, we will teach it to others as we would want it taught to us.
- a. Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
  - b. We would not want to be abused, shamed, tricked, or coerced.

#### D. Who are the lost?

1. The idea of being lost implies a danger. One who has never been lost in the deep woods or mountains, or even in a great city, can appreciate the sense of fear, danger, and hopelessness of that situation. In the fall of 2003, a lady was horseback riding in the mountains with her family when she got separated. In the dark, she stepped off a bluff, and broke her elbow in the fall. She spent a cold night in the mountains before she was able, after fifteen hours, to make her way to safety. Her fear was as great as her pain. Undoubtedly, her disorientation caused her great alarm and desperation.
2. In the spiritual sense, being lost is far worse than being disoriented in the wilderness. What does it mean for the soul to be lost? We cannot cherish salvation as much if we do not understand what it means to be lost. The significance of being lost is shown by highly descriptive words:
  - a. To be Destroyed: "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" (Matt. 10:28; cf. 2 Thess. 2:7-9). The Greek word translated "destroyed" means loss of well-being, not loss of being.
  - b. To be Separated from God: Matthew 25:31-46.
  - c. To be Punished in Unquenchable Fire: Mark 9:42-48; Matthew 25:41.
  - d. To Exist in Darkness: Matthew 25:30.
  - e. To be Surrounded by Horrible Cries: Matthew 25:30.
3. The awfulness of being lost is also described in these passages:
  - a. Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
  - b. 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."
  - c. Hebrews 10:31: "*It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
4. To be lost in eternity is much worse than experiencing physical death. "Death" carries the idea of separation.
  - a. In physical death, the spirit is separated from the physical body. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26).
  - b. Being lost in eternity is to be forever separated from God. "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; cf. 25:30, 41, 46).
- c. One who is guilty of sin in this world is under condemnation now, with the official sentence to be passed in the Judgment.
    - 1) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*"
    - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
    - 3) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
  5. The grievous nature of being lost is emphasized by Paul in Ephesians 2:11-12: "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
    - a. National and racial backgrounds of other saints are of no concern to the redeemed. Little notice is taken of such distinctions by us as we try to teach the gospel to the lost. However, Paul calls their attention to the fact that prior to their conversion they were from the Gentile background. They were called "the uncircumcision" by the Jews, who spoke of themselves as the "circumcision." Under the gospel, there is no spiritual significance to either circumcision or uncircumcision; what counts now is having a faith that works by love. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6). The Gentile Christians were to remember their previous condition, for only then could they fully appreciate what they had gained in Christ. The apostle makes this very point in the next two verses. The Gentiles were well known for their profligacy and excesses (Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).
    - b. Their condition prior to obeying the gospel is described, first, as being without Christ. They were on the outside of Christ, separated from his spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3). Every lost soul is out of Christ.
    - c. Second, they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. An alien is one who is not a citizen. The commonwealth of Israel was the nation of Israel; they had received the law of God, had been taught by the Old Testament prophets, had a long history of association with God, but had very often been disobedient.
      - 1) 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*."
      - 2) The Israelites had the privilege of knowing the True God, having his inspired word, being under his special providence, and were prepared over the centuries to look for the Messiah (John 1:11-12). The Gentiles had not been blessed with these provisions, but when they heard the gospel of the Lord, many of them quickly responded to his call (2 Thess. 2:13-14).
    - d. Third, they were strangers from the covenants of promise. God's dealings with the Israelites began with the promises he made to Abraham, the progenitor of the Hebrew race. "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).
- 1) These promises did not directly affect the Gentile nations prior to the publication of the gospel. They were not part of Israel and the promises given to Israel did not pertain to them.
  - 2) If the Gentiles followed the moral precepts incorporated into the Mosaic Law, they were a law unto themselves (Rom. 2:14-15). During the period of the Mosaic Law, there were Gentiles who sought after God, and were acceptable (cf. the wise men of Matthew 2). But while the law was in effect, the Gentiles did not have the promises God had given in the covenant he made with Abraham and his descendants.
- e. In the fourth place, these Gentile Christians lived without hope before their conversion. Perhaps the bleakest, most discouraging words we are apt to hear in this life are, "There is no hope." Humanity has a history of surviving extremely harsh conditions, but only when there is some shred of hope. Hope has the power to stimulate us and keep us going despite the hardships and obstacles. But there is no hope for those who are out of Christ—as long as they remain out of him.
- 1) Matthew 7:23: "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
  - 2) Matthew 25:12: "But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."
  - 3) Luke 13:24-28: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out."
- f. In the fifth case, these Gentile Christians were without God before they obeyed the gospel. One who is without God is certainly in a hopeless condition! To be without him is to be cut off from the great spiritual bounties which are reserved for his own.
- 1) God provides for the physical needs of all men in that he has stored up in the earth those provisions which make life possible; he gives sunshine and rain, and fruitful seasons. No man has ever survived for even a second without his physical blessings (1 Tim. 4:10; Acts 14:17; Matt. 5:45).
  - 2) But to be in fellowship with God is to have his spiritual blessings and providential assistance. Those separated from God are cut off from these blessings while in their lost state (cf. Isa. 59:1-2; Psa. 66:18; Prov. 28:9).
- g. In the sixth case, they were in the world prior to their entrance into Christ. There are only two possible spiritual states an accountable person can occupy: in Christ or in the world. It is impossible to be in both at the same time; they are mutually exclusive.
- 1) Many who are in the world do not see their grave danger. "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" (1 John 2:15-17; cf. 1 John 5:19; Gal. 1:4).
  - 2) It is impossible to be *in the world* and be a follower of God at the same time (Matt. 6:24). Christians who flirt with the world, are exposing themselves to many hurtful experiences, and stand in serious danger of losing their souls! John 15:1-6; 1 Timothy 6:6-19.
- h. In Ephesians 4:13, the glorious state of being saved in Christ is contrasted with the grievous state of being lost: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."
- 1) Having described in strong language their former spiritual condition, Paul here affirms their

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present state to be highly exalted. In their previous condition they were far off from God and Christ, but now they have been brought near to them. To be *far off* is to be in a lost state; to be *nigh* is to be saved and acceptable.

- 2) The blood of Christ was the reconciling factor. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

### III. CONCLUSION.

A. The truths presented have emphasized the central point of our Great Mission.

1. We are to Teach.
2. We are to teach the Bible.
3. We are to teach the Bible in Love.
4. We are to teach the Bible in love to the Lost.

B. How can we motivate the lost to obey the gospel?

1. By showing them the awful truth about being lost.
  2. By showing them the beauties of being saved.
  3. By showing them that as faithful Christians we have fellowship with the best people on earth.
  4. By showing them that the Christian Life is the best possible way to live on earth.
  5. By showing them the grandeurs and glories of Heaven.
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## Valley of Dry Bones

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. The book of Ezekiel is filled with graphic and impressive scenes.

1. The scene in Ezekiel 37 is one of the most impressive in the Old Testament.
2. In this vision, the prophet is given a view of a valley filled with dry bones.
3. The grim reaper had done his grisly work; the vultures have long since departed.
4. The valley is one of death; a vivid picture of hopelessness and doom.

#### B. The background of the passage is Israel's Babylonian captivity.

1. God formed the nation, gave their law and leaders, provide blessings and necessary help.
2. Although they were warned against sin, they rebelled, and suffered the consequences.
3. Ten tribes were carried to Assyria; the remaining two were now in Babylonia—with no hope in sight.

### II. DISCUSSION.

#### A. The events portrayed in the first section of the chapter were in visionary form.

1. Ezekiel 37:1-3: "The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and, lo, *they were* very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest."
2. The prophet states that he was "in the spirit of the Lord" during the proceedings. This was the situation with John when he was given the great visions of Revelation: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10).
3. In the vision, God placed Ezekiel in the midst of a valley; the valley was full of dry bones. The bones covered the floor of the valley. The prophet describes them as being very dry, signifying that they were utterly devoid of life. They were in a hopeless state. Verse 11 shows that the bones are used in the vision to represent the whole house of Israel, thus their present status was utterly hopeless, as far as human power was concerned. All of the tribes had been captured and exiled by the enemy, and were even now held in hard bondage in foreign lands.
4. The prophet is asked whether these bones could ever live again. Ezekiel responds by saying, "Thou knowest." He is aware that if those bones could ever be brought to life once more, it would have to be by the power of the Almighty. Therefore, he stated, "Thou knowest."

#### B. Ezekiel is now told to speak a message to the bones.

1. Verses 4-6: "Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD."
  2. He is to announce God's intention to return flesh to them, and a covering of skin, and place breath within them. They would then know that the Lord is God. Since the bones represented the house of Israel (vs. 11), the resurrection relates to their return to Canaan and being established as an independent nation again.
  3. The purpose of the vision was to provide hope for the exiled and enslaved Israelites. No power on earth could free them; God's power and providence would be necessary. He had promised that he would return them to the land.
    - a. Jeremiah 29:10: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."
    - b. Jeremiah 50:4-8: "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and
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let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten. My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace. All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers. Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks."

4. The vision depicted God's actions to resurrect Israel as a nation, which would entail their return to occupy their own homeland, in keeping with the promises God had earlier given them.
- C. Ezekiel uttered the prophecy as he was told.
1. Ezekiel 37:7-10: "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but *there was* no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."
  2. As he expressed the prophecy, there was a sudden noise and a shaking, as the bones in the vision came together, in the proper order, to form human skeletons. This must have thrilled the prophet! The bones had been scattered, with those of each individual not being at the same place. Verse 10 shows that those whose bones were in the valley had been slain; their death had not been natural, but violent and painful.
  3. As he beheld this awesome sight, he saw the sinews and flesh come upon the skeletons, and skin to cover each individual. But at this point, there was no breath of life in them.
  4. The prophet was directed to speak to the wind, for it to come from all directions and breathe upon these bodies which had been slain, but now had been reformed. "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). As God put the breath of life into the body of Adam, so he now caused it to enter each of these lifeless bodies.
  5. The individuals in the vision were given life by God's miraculous power, and they stood upon their feet. They had their full strength returned to them, and their number was exceedingly great. They represented a vast, powerful army. This scene, although visionary, must have had a powerful impact on Ezekiel.
  6. We are reminded of the great resurrection scheduled for the end of time. All who are in the graves (*i.e.*, who have died) will hear the call and will rise from the dead. They will be given bodies, which will be changed into immortal, spiritual entities, perfectly adapted to their eternal destiny.
    - a. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
    - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
    - c. Revelation 20:13: "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."
    - d. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44: "So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."
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- e. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53: "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."
- 7. It is difficult for a worldly-minded person to understand how God could resurrect disintegrated bodies. His miraculous power can accomplish anything he wills to do, despite our inability to comprehend the action. He was able to create the bodies occupied by Adam and Eve, demonstrating his awesome power. We do not perceive how God is able to place the germ of life in a grain of corn, enabling that small kernel to produce a large plant, which bears ears which are filled with other kernels identical to the original. God has promised to raise the dead; the fact of the resurrection is therefore a foregone conclusion! The physical body is the only part of our being that dies and needs to be raised (Jas. 2:26).

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. Some lessons are suggested by the text.

- 1. The Lord's people are always faced by overwhelming odds and problems.
  - a. The weight of the enemies is great; we are always in the minority.
  - b. There are often problems among some members.
  - c. There is the problem of the majority of any society rejecting the gospel.
  - d. There is the problem of opposition and competition from the sectarians and sinners.
  - e. There is often a shortage of money to do the job at hand.
  - f. We are faced with an uncertain future and with much discouragement.
- 2. But God supplies our needs to do the work.
  - a. He aided his people of the past: Crossing the Red Sea; taking Jericho; subduing Canaan.
  - b. Although he offers no miraculous assistance today, his providential aid is manifold: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph. 4:19).

#### B. There was complete doom in Israel's thinking, but God was with them and will be with us.

- 1. Passages:
  - a. Isaiah 41:10: "Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."
  - b. Romans 8:31-39: "What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
  - c. Hebrews 13:5: "...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
- 2. We can give up in despair, quit, or deny the problem. Or we can face the problems, do our part in solving them, and rely on God for the rest.
- 3. The text shows God's power is often exerted through human agency.
  - a. Ezekiel was told to prophesy; the proper results were produced.
  - b. The lost are saved thus today:
    - 1) Isaiah 55:10-11: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the

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sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it."

- 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) 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) 1 Corinthians 1:18: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."
- 5) 1 Corinthians 3:4-9: "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building."
4. The gospel is the most powerful force available on earth.
  - a. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
  - 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. 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."

C. God has promised to raise YOU from the grave!

1. Passages:
    - 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. 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."
    - c. 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."
  2. We want to be among the number of those raised unto eternal glory.
    - a. 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."
    - b. Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
  3. He can raise to life a sin-slain soul right now! "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25).
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## “I Am Not Your Enemy”

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. We are frequently charged by our brethren and others about how to preach.

1. “Preach the word, but don’t offend anyone.” Have you ever listed the subjects in the Bible that would not be offensive to **someone, somewhere, sometime**?
2. “Preach the word, but leave everyone else alone.”
3. “Preach the word, but eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive.”
4. “Preach Christ, but leave the church out of it.”

#### B. We are charged with the universal and timeless mission of changing our world.

##### 1. Passages:

- 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. 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. James 1:21-27: "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. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is* vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world."
- 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."

2. This can only be done by changing individuals through teaching them the gospel.

3. As individuals are changed, our society, the nation and the world are improved.

#### C. But trying to effect changes arouses resistance and opposition.

1. Many thought Paul was their enemy: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16).
2. No teacher of the truth is the enemy of any man, despite the fact that the world opposes our godly efforts.
  - a. John 7:7: "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."
  - b. John 15:18-19: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."
3. Paul was their best friend; he wanted what was in their best interest.
4. Jesus had many hard things to say to the people of his generation; some considered him their enemy because of what he said, but no one could have a better friend!
  - a. John 1:11: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."
  - b. John 3:19-21: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the

light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

c. John 6:60,66: "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?....From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

d. John 8:45-46: "And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?"

D. Many think we are an enemy because truth is often unpleasant and demanding.

1. If we preach and teach only the truth of God's word, we are the enemy of no man.

2. If our motives and desires are proper, we are no one's enemy!

II. **DISCUSSION:** We are not an enemy when we tell the truth about the following items:

A. God.

1. Psalms 19:1-3: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard."

2. We mean to help and not harm anyone when we tell them the truth about the **Existence of God.**

a. This truth is offensive to atheists, agnostics, and other infidels.

b. 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."

c. 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."

3. We mean to help and not harm anyone when we tell them the truth about the **Identity of God.**

a. When we identity to living God of the Bible, Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, and the adherents of the New Age religion are offended.

b. 1 Corinthians 8:4-6: "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him."

c. The founders of our nation professed a belief in the God of the Bible, but many in modernist America are pluralistic in their religious outlook; instead of believing in the living God, many in our generation profess to believe in all "gods."

4. Many today are offended when we announce the **Justice of God.**

a. This offends their concept of the Almighty as possessing only love; it ignores the fact that he is also the God of infinite justice. When we tell them the truth on this matter, we are counted by them as enemies.

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."

5. When we proclaim the **Mercy of God**, those who are harsh and unconcerned consider this an attack against their Calvinistic disposition. The mercy (grace) of God is intended for all, not for only a hand-picked few.

a. 1 Timothy 2:4: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

- b. Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

B. Christ.

1. John 20:26-27: "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."
2. His **Virgin Birth** offends the modernists.
  - 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 1:21-23: "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."
  - 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."
3. When we proclaim **His Deity**, Jews and many others take offense.
  - a. Matthew 22:41-46: "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*."
  - b. 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."
  - c. Hebrews 1:5: "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?"
4. Many unbelievers consider us the enemy when we tell them of his **Death, Burial and Resurrection**.
  - a. 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."
  - b. 1 Corinthians 1:23: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness."
  - c. 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:"
5. When we affirm the **Authority of Christ**, there are many who take strong offense.
  - a. Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
  - 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. 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."

C. Holy Spirit.

1. John 16:12-13: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when
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he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."

2. The reality of the **Miracles in the Bible**, produced by the Holy Spirit, is offensive to many who reject the supernatural.
  - a. Mark 16:17-20: "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?"
3. The **Inspiration by which the Holy Spirit gave the Bible** is offensive to many.
  - a. 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."
  - b. 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."
4. That the Holy Spirit does not **operated directly** today offends many "direct operation" people.
  - a. Ephesians 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."
  - b. 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."
  - c. James 1:18, 21, 25: "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....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. The Bible.

1. 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."
  2. We are considered an enemy by those who reject the **inspiration of the Bible**.
    - a. It is not a human production: "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).
    - b. The only way we can know anything God has ever said is by what is revealed in the Bible.
  3. Some are offended when we speak of the **innerancy** of the Bible.
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- a. Some think that it contains errors and contradictions; even some misguided brethren have written of "clashes and jars" in the scriptures.
  - b. No one has ever been able to sustain a charge of error against the Bible.
  - c. James 1:25: "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."
  4. That the Bible is the **final authority** in religious and spiritual matters many deny today, but it still maintains this claim (with undeniable evidence).
    - 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." [The same guidance and control the Holy Spirit wrought upon those inspired men in defending the truth, was also upon them when they wrote down the revelation].
    - b. 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."
    - c. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
    - d. 2 John 1:9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
  - E. The Church.
    1. Matthew 16:18: "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."
    2. It truth about the **origin** of the church offends some.
      - a. Its beginning was on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2, not hundreds of years before or after.
      - b. It is the Lord's church; man has no right to a church of his own choice.
    3. The **exclusive nature** of the church offends many.
      - a. Man has no right to counterfeit the Lord's church.
        - 1) 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."
        - 2) Matthew 15:13: "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."
      - b. The Lord adds the saved to His church, not to some man-made religious organization (Acts 2:47; Col. 1:13-14).
    4. **Heaven's blessings** are given to the members of the Lord's church.
      - a. 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."
      - b. Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
      - c. 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."
      - d. 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."
  - F. The Plan of salvation.
    1. Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
    2. Faith in Christ is essential: (John 8:24).
    3. Repentance is required (Acts 17:30).
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4. Confessing Christ is mandated (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism into Christ is absolutely necessary (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27).
6. Nothing less will do; nothing more is required.

G. The Worship of God.

1. John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
2. Studying God's word is an avenue of worship (Acts 2:42; 20:7).
3. Partaking of the Lord's Supper is an avenue of worship (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-30).
4. Praying is an avenue of worship (Acts 2:42).
5. Giving of our means is an avenue of worship (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).
6. Singing is an avenue of worship (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19).
7. Nothing less is sufficient; nothing more is allowed: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:8-9.).

H. The Christian Life.

1. 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."
2. Some things are to be excluded: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:5-9).
3. Some things are to be cultivated and practiced: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:5-11).
4. The Beatitudes are to be adopted: "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. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5:3-12).

I. Religious Error:

1. The pure gospel is to be proclaimed: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after *their* own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:2-5).



2. Religious error condemns the soul: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Th. 2:10-12).
3. Error must be exposed, refuted, and rejected: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.... This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Tit. 1:9-11, 13).
4. The soul of each member and the church itself must be kept pure, for only those who are pure can enter heaven.
  - a. Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
  - b. 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."
  - c. 1 Timothy 5:22: "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."
  - 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."

#### J. Death.

1. 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."
2. It is once appointed for all: "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" (Heb. 9:27-28).
3. There will be no second chance for salvation after death: "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" (Rev. 22:11).
4. Death fixes our eternal destiny: "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" (John 5:28,29).

#### K. The Judgment.

1. Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
2. The Judgment will include every accountable human being.
  - 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."

3. Only two destinies are available: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).
4. Our destiny will be determined by comparing our lives with God's 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).

#### L. Hell.

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. Hell is unspeakably awful!
  - a. Matthew 25:30: "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
  - b. Mark 9:48: "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
3. Hell is eternal in its scope: "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" (2 Th. 1:8,9).
4. The penalty to be imposed will be just—those consigned there will have earned that fate:
  - 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. 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."

#### M. Heaven.

1. Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
2. Heaven is a wondrous and beautiful place: "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" (Rev. 21:4).
3. Those tainted by sin will not be permitted to enter: "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).
4. Heaven is an eternal place: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

### III. **CONCLUSION.**

#### A. No one has reason to consider us an enemy when we tell them the truth.

1. Our motive is pure: we sincerely want to help them.
2. Our aim is sincere: to tell them only the truth.
3. Our desire is true: we want them to enjoy God's blessings.
4. Our effort is intended for their good: we want them to avoid hell.

#### B. Galatians 4:16: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

1. Our greatest friend will point out our sins and weaknesses.
  2. Our greatest friend will tell us the whole truth.
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## Does God Mean What He Says?

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. Some people say: "I know what the Bible says, but...."

1. They mean, "The Bible does say 'thus and so' but I do not like that idea; what it says does not mean much to me. I can get by somehow despite what the Bible says."
2. This is the attitude expressed by many people, in words or by action, or both.
3. The problem is not one of failing to understand; the problem is in believing what God says.
4. The statement is revealing: It means that the individual is rejecting what God has said.

#### B. It is really a question of whether God means what he says.

1. Did God ever make a threat which he did not keep, if the conditions (if any) were not met?
2. Did he ever promise anything which he did not fulfill when the conditions (if any) were met?
3. The history of God's dealings with man shows he always meant what he said, and that he always did what he promised or threatened!

### II. DISCUSSION.

#### A. God meant it when he made these Bible threats.

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."
  - a. Adam and Eve disregarded the warning, ate the forbidden fruit, and were horribly penalized. They were cut off from God (they died spiritually); they began to age and die physically; they now had to face a hostile world without all the special help and considerations they had enjoyed while in Eden.
  - b. We suffer sorrow, pain, death and all the other consequences of their sin—this is so because God meant what he said! "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" (Gen. 3:16-19).
2. Genesis 6:5-7: "And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."
  - a. The wickedness of mankind was great; so widespread was it that only Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah.
  - b. God warned Noah, and that great man was to pass along that warning to the people, that a great flood was coming unless there was wholesale repentance: "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" (2 Pet.2:5).
  - c. The Genesis Record tells of the impenitence of the sinful race, and the resultant flood of punishment! "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:26-27).
  - d. There are many evidences in nature of the universal flood, which along with the Biblical report,

- proclaims eloquently that God meant what he said!
3. Genesis 19:17: "And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."
    - a. Because of the gross wickedness of the people of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain, God determined that he would destroy them.
    - b. But because of the intercession of faithful, godly Abraham, God agreed that he would spare these citizens provided only ten righteous souls could be found in their midst. Abraham loved his nephew Lot, and sought to deliver him and his family from destruction. He thought surely there were at least ten good people.
    - c. But not even all of Lot's small family were willing to leave Sodom, therefore God fulfilled his threat: Sodom, Gomorrah, and the neighboring sinful cities were all utterly destroyed.
      - 1) Genesis 19:24-28: "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."
      - 2) Luke 17:28-32: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife."
    - d. The fact that the remains of these cities have not been discovered, or even their exact location, proclaims to all: "God means what he says!"
  4. Isaiah 13:19-20: "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."
    - a. God did not even announce any conditions whereby Babylon could escape the awesome punishment determined for her by the all-wise and powerful God of heaven. Indeed she may have scoffed at the warning, seeing she was just coming into the flower of her strength and glory.
    - b. The walls of that great city stood 350 feet high, and were 85 feet in width; the city/state ruled the ancient world; her armies were considered invincible. But God spoke, and her fall was inevitable!
    - c. The Medes and Persians invaded the city, using a grand stratagem: they diverted the river which flowed under the walls at one point, the soldiers marched into Babylon and overpowered the drunken defenders, capturing the city and taking over its empire. Cf. Dan. 5:1ff.
    - d. For more than 2000 years now, it has not been inhabited. God meant what he said!
  5. Matthew 24:1-2: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
    - a. The Jews thought that they had a monopoly on the protection and power of God. They had existed as a separate, special nation of God for fifteen hundred years; they placed great confidence in the fact that they had descended from Abraham, and had David and Solomon in their ancestry.
    - b. But they had ignored the warnings God had given them through many prophets, and the Messiah. Him they had rejected, opposed, and crucified. Compare: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in
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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*" (Acts 7:51-53).

- c. The Lord predicted the overthrow of Jerusalem and Judaism; the fulfillment took place in 70 A.D. when the Roman army besieged the city, conquered it, killing more than a million Jews in Jerusalem alone; they literally destroyed the temple, stone from stone!
- d. God and his all-powerful Son meant exactly what they said!

B. Does God really mean what he says about these threats made in the New Testament?

1. Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 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" (cf. Rev. 22:18-19).
  - a. Will God really cast into everlasting torment those who tamper with his word?
  - b. He meant what he said in every other warning; we have every reason to believe that this promise of punishment will be carried out against all those who disregard the warning!
  - c. How much better it is to simply take God at his word, stay within the safe limits defined by that word, and enjoy the blessed benefits of that eternal word! How awful it will be for those who treat his word with contempt, for in doing so, they show their real attitude toward Him who gave that word!
    - 1) Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
    - 2) 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."
2. Second Peter 3:9-14: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
  - a. Will he really destroy the earth and everything pertaining to it? Will this great and beautiful universe be utterly destroyed? Since he fulfilled all of his other warnings in the former days, we have every reason to believe that he will fulfill this threat also.
  - b. God has never made any idle threats! He does not talk for the sake of making noise! What he says, he means; what he threatens, he fulfills; what he promises, he makes good! We can rely on the word of the Almighty.
  - c. Notice that there are no conditions to this promise. It does not matter what man may or may not do; it does not depend on what man achieves or fails to achieve. God is going to destroy the earth and the universe in the last day!
  - d. According to this passage, and other Bible statements, all mankind can do is be ready: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).
  - e. There will be no signs of the impending end, contrary to popular belief:
    - 1) Matthew 24:36: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

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- 2) Mark 13:32-33: "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."
  - 3) Luke 12:39: "And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through."
  - 4) 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."
  3. 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."
    - a. Will the Lord really reject sincere religious people? Is the law of the Bible so definite and fixed that no one is permitted to deviate? Does the Lord expect every person, regardless of his background, country, and age, to obey the will of God? Again, since God performed his stated intentions in earlier days, we have every reason to believe he means exactly what he says in the present text!
    - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
    - c. Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
    - d. James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all."
  4. Matthew 19:9: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."
    - a. Did the Lord truly mean that there was only one cause for divorce and remarriage acceptable to him? In view of the examples considered in the first section, YES!
    - b. Therefore, one who is divorced for some cause other than fornication on the part of the spouse, and remarries, is living in sin. Compare:
      - 1) Galatians 5:19: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness."
      - 2) Galatians 5:21: "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."
      - 3) 1 Timothy 5:6: "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."
    - c. This is a hard proposition, but God has always meant what he said!
  5. 1 Corinthians 16:22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."
    - a. Is it really true that if one does not love Jesus, he will be lost in torment forever and ever?
    - b. What does it mean to love Christ? Does it mean to have a sentimental attachment for him? A warm feeling?
    - c. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). If we love him, we WILL obey him! If we do not obey him after learning his will, we do not love him!
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- 1) 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."
- 2) 1 John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
- d. This means that all those people who profess faith in Christ, but who follow a perverted religious system, are lost! God means what he says!
6. 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."
- a. Will God really reject those saints who willfully stay away from the assemblies?
- b. This means that when one becomes a Christian, there are certain, unchangeable requirements placed upon him: one of these things is to regularly and sincerely assemble with the saints.
- c. A saint who will not attend is no more faithful than a saint who lives a criminal life! It is impossible to please God as a Christian without assembling with the saints, and participating in the activities God has ordained!
- d. Just as surely as God meant in his commands and warnings in Old Testament days, he means what he says in this matter, also.
- C. Did God mean what he says about how to be saved?
  1. All spiritual blessings are in Christ; only those who are in Christ's body will be taken home to glory.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 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."
    - c. 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."
  2. How does one get into Christ? Baptism puts one into him (Gal. 3:27).
    - a. But baptism is worse than useless if one has not repented: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).
    - b. And where there is no faith there can be no repentance:
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) 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."
    - c. That faith must be expressed: In word: (Rom. 10:9-10) and in obedience (Jas. 2:19-26). God means what he says!

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3. He also means what he says about the possibility of our falling from grace:
    - a. 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
    - b. Galatians 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
    - c. 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?"
  - D. Does God mean what he says to Christians about worship?
    1. 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." Our worship must be directed toward God, offered sincerely, and given in accordance with the teachings of the truth.
    2. We must give as we have been prospered; only on the 1st day of the week; must give cheerfully and bountifully.
      - 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."
    3. Colossians 3:16-17: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
      - a. The Lord specified the kind of music he wants in worship—singing.
      - b. One who offers instrumental music, humming, whistling, or making noises with the mouth other than singing sensible, spiritual songs, is worshipping in vain: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:8-9).
    4. I Cor. 11:20-30; Acts 20:7. The Lord's Supper must be eaten only on the first day of the week; it must be thoughtfully entered into; if it is not eaten properly, it results in the individual becoming spiritually weak, sick, and dead!
      - 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, 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
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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."

5. God also means what he says about our worshipping him through study of his word and in the prayers we address to him through Christ:
  - a. Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
  - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."
  - c. 1 Timothy 4:13: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."
  - d. 1 Timothy 4:15-16: "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."
  - e. 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."
- E. Did the Lord really mean what he said in Matthew 6:33?
  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. The passage sets forth our obligation to SEEK.
    - a. To seek means to make inquiry into, to search out diligently.
    - b. It sums up all of our obligations before God. Compare: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man" (Eccl. 12:13).
    - c. The New Testament abounds with instructions along this line:
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) 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."
      - 3) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
      - 4) Philippians 2:12: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."
      - 5) Titus 3:1: "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work."
      - 6) James 1:21-27: "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. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is* vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world."
  3. We are to seek the kingdom of God.
    - a. The kingdom and the church are identical. If we are successful in seeking for the kingdom, we will find the church.
    - b. The kingdom must be sought for since it is not a physical kingdom: "And when he was demanded

- of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21).
- c. To seek it means we identify it, enter it, obtain its blessings, support it, do all to strengthen and spread it, and so live as to enrich its influence.
4. We are to seek God's righteousness.
    - a. Righteousness means right doing, obeying God; the early English word for righteousness was "rightwise."
    - b. This is not God's personal righteousness, but the plan by which he makes us to be righteous; it is the truth of the gospel:
      - 1) Deuteronomy 6:25: "And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us."
      - 2) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteous-ness."
      - 3) 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."
      - 4) 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."
      - 5) 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."
      - 6) Romans 10:16: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?"
      - 7) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
    - c. We seek it for the purpose of learning, believing, and obeying it.
  5. The passage sets forth the order of our search.
    - a. God's kingdom and righteousness must come first, before all other things! Herein lies the stringent obligation.
    - b. There are many good things and worthwhile pursuits open to us: but all these must be secondary to God's kingdom and righteousness!
    - c. If we have two places to go, or two tasks to do: the church and righteousness must have top priority! [We need rest, recreation, and entertainment, but these must not take precedence over spiritual essentials].
    - d. The Lord's church and the gospel are far more important than sports, attending a party, recreation, personal comfort, watching TV, and even life itself.
    - e. This is consistently taught throughout the Bible:
      - 1) 1 Kings 19:20: "And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?"
      - 2) Matthew 8:20-22: "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. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."
      - 3) Matthew 10:37-39: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and

he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

- 4) Luke 9:61-62: "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."
- 5) 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."
- 6) Revelation 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."
- f. Even when good and proper things conflict with the church and obedience, our priority is clear!
6. The passage sets forth a conditional promise.
  - a. God will supply our material needs if we meet the foregoing conditions.
  - b. To be assured of earthly necessities, seek God's kingdom and righteousness first.
7. Did the Lord mean what he said? The Bible and history affirm that he does!
- F. Did the Lord mean what he said in Luke 13:24?
  1. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24).
  2. Strive: from the Greek word "*agonizomai*," from which we get our English words agony and agonize.
    - a. It is used in 1 Corinthians 9:25 to denote contending in a public game or contest: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."
    - b. It is used in John 18:36 to denote fighting a battle: "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."
    - c. It is used metaphorically in 1 Timothy 6:12 and 2 Timothy 4:7 to denote a continual struggle against opposition and temptation.
      - 1) 1 Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."
      - 2) 2 Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith."
    - d. It means to strive as in a contest for a prize, straining every nerve to attain success; to put forth every effort.
      - 1) Colossians 1:29: "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."
      - 2) Colossians 4:12: "Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."
    - e. More than a desire or a token effort is required to enter the gate mentioned.
  3. What is the gate the Lord is discussing?
    - a. His statement in verse 24 is part of the response given to the question someone raised in verse 23: "Lord, are there few that be saved?"
    - b. The Lord spoke on the subject in Matthew 7:13-14 also, in which he stated that few would enter through the strait gate which opens into the narrow way that leads to life.
    - c. The gate of both passages is the gate of salvation which allows us to enter the narrow way which leads eventually to heaven. The salvation is two-fold: salvation from sin and salvation in heaven.
      - 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) Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

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4. Therefore, the Lord is saying that a great deal of concerted effort is required of each individual to find and enter the gate of salvation, and make one's way home to glory.
    - a. There are many counterfeit ways which claim to open on to the narrow way to life in heaven; diligent effort in studying the Bible is necessary to discover the only true gate. Most of us have had the great advantage of having been taught the truth from our childhood years; most people do not have that privilege. Often those who come out of sectarian error are more appreciative of the privilege of knowing the truth than many who have known it most of their lives and take it for granted.
    - b. The way from baptism to heaven is narrow and fraught with many dangers:
      - 1) There is the ever-present peril of temptation (Jas. 1:13-15; I Cor. 10:12)
      - 2) Discouragement is a plague to many (cf. Dt. 1:21,28; Num. 21:4; 32:7,9; Col. 3:21)
      - 3) Fear, lack of faith, or lack love, or lack of zeal
      - 4) Having evil thoughts or motives; evil words or deeds.
      - 5) There are many false teachers and countless false ways.
        - a) Psalms 119:104: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."
        - b) Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
        - c) 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."
        - 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 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."
        - f) 2 Timothy 3:13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
        - g) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
      - 6) A failure to grow: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:5-11).
    5. The fact that much diligence is required to reach heaven should not discourage us; our aversion of torment and strong desire for glory should motivate us to put forth the best effort possible. God's plan which is designed to lead us to heaven is very simple, but it requires the deepest sincerity, the most

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honest effort, and the very strongest desire which are possible for us to have; anything less than our best is not enough.

- a. The plan calls for the removal of all past alien sins (Rom. 1:23; 6:23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 11:6; John 8:24, 21; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31; Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).
  - b. The plan calls for the new Christian to live the kind of life described in the Bible:
    - 1) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 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."
    - 4) 1 John 1:6-10: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
  - c. The plan calls for Christians to worship God in spirit and in truth; to do the work God gives us to do in the New Testament; to present to the world the best example of Christianity possible; and to be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10).
6. Going to Heaven is not impossible—"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:9-11).

G. Did the Lord mean what he said in Mark 12:29-31?

1. 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."
  2. The requirement for us to love God is very impressive.
    - a. With all our heart: Means that we must have all our feelings, desires, emotions, affections, and longings centered on God.
    - b. With all our soul: Means that our life and being are dedicated to him.
    - c. With all our mind: Means that our mind is devoted to the service of God.
    - d. With all our strength: Means that we must commit and consecrate our energies and powers to doing his will first and foremost.
  3. The requirement for us to love our neighbor as ourselves is impressive.
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- a. We are not necessarily to put him ahead of ourselves in all things, but to love him as (to the degree) that we love ourselves.
- b. We are not necessarily required to feel a magnetic attraction toward him, but to have the purpose of mind to do him only good, never evil.
- c. It means that we will put forth whatever effort we can, with whatever opportunity we may have, to assist him; if he is hungry—feed him; if he is thirsty—give him drink; if he needs clothes—provide them; if he needs spiritual help—guide him into a knowledge of God's will; if he is weak—encourage him. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12).
4. The demand given in the passage is one which requires a continuing, diligent effort on the individual's part to develop, maintain, and properly express this love. The nature of the love described is one that must be expressed to be real. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

H. Did the Lord mean what he said in Matthew 6:19-21?

1. 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."
2. The treasures of ancient people was in the form of clothing, jewels and precious metals, and houses and lands. Rust, moths and thieves were all robbers of these riches. Compare:
  - a. Genesis 45:22: "To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver, and five changes of raiment."
  - b. Joshua 7:21: "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it."
  - c. 2 Kings 5:5: "And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold, and ten changes of raiment."
3. The Lord's prohibition was not against the accumulation of wealth in one or more of its forms, for Abraham was an extremely rich man; so was Job; Philemon was a very respected Christian while having wealth; Cornelius apparently was a man of wealth and position and became a fine Christian. In order for one to fulfil his obligation to his family, it is necessary for the father (and sometimes the mother) to work, to obtain money to furnish the essentials of life: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8).
4. Obviously, the obtaining, using, and retaining of wealth is not wrong. The manner of getting it, how it is used, our attitude toward it—these are important issues:
  - a. Mark 10:24: "And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"
  - b. 1 Timothy 6:6-18: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness....Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute,

- willing to communicate."
- c. James 2:14-16: "What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?"
  - d. 1 John 3:17: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"
5. The rich farmer [Luke 12] was called a fool because he tried to replace spiritual truths with material wealth. The rich, young ruler [Matt. 19] turned away from the Lord because he thought his riches were more important than the salvation of his soul. We must control the acquisitive and hoarding inclinations which are characteristic of mankind. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15.).
  6. Treasures in heaven are safe. They are spiritual in nature and eternal in scope; they are reserved in heaven (1 Pet. 1:3-5). They are for the individual; they can not be taken away from you against your will. All that one gives or does for the church of our Lord will accrue to his eternal credit. Not even a cup of cold water you give to a thirsty man will lose its value (Matt. 10:42).
  7. The chief reason for laying up treasures in heaven is that where the treasure is, there will be the heart of the individual. The Lord is most interested in the whole heart, and will accept nothing less; the devil will accept any part of your heart for if he has part, he will have you entirely, since the Lord will not take anything less than one hundred percent!
  8. It is scarcely necessary to inquire, "Did the Lord really mean what he said here?"
- I. Did the Lord mean what he said in 1 Timothy 4:12?
1. 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
  2. The statement is an imperative, setting forth a demand of God; it not a suggestion.
  3. The command is that Timothy (and every other preacher and Christian) be an example before the world of what a Christian truly is.
    - a. He is to manifest the Christian life by the words he uses or does not use.
    - b. He is to be an example of the Christian life by the way he lives.
    - c. Each Christian is to be an example to the world in showing love.
    - d. We are to manifest the Christian life by the attitude we maintain.
    - e. A life of faith, showing obedience and trust in God, must be daily maintained.
    - f. And our lives and words are to be characterized by purity.
- J. Did the Lord mean what he said in the following passages?
1. Romans 15:1-2: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification." He requires that we help each other along as we have opportunity and ability. We should never be a discourager of the weak saint, but ought to do all within our power to build him up, and make his faithfulness easier. Anyone can destroy and discourage; but a Christian must be one who builds up and encourages!
  2. Second Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
    - a. Christ requires that each of his followers be a diligent student of the word of God. The power to become a Christian is in the gospel (Rom. 1:16). The power to remain faithful is likewise found in the word (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
    - b. A child who does not eat, cannot be healthy and grow. A child of God who does not continually feed upon the pure word of God cannot remain healthy and will not grow.
      - 1) Hebrews 5:12-14: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word

- of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
- 2) 2 Peter 1:5-7: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
  - 3) 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."
3. Galatians 6:9-10: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
    - a. Christians are those who desire to help others; they don't have to be forced to assist the needy, or show concern for them. The Lord expects that each of his saints be sincerely interested in his fellowman, especially his fellow-saint, and be willing to help. Otherwise, his religion is vain.
    - b. James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world."
  4. Galatians 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."
    - a. James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
    - b. The Lord said that the spirit is generally willing but the flesh is weak. That be so, and the world being so filled with enticements to sin, Christians will often be led astray. Those who remain faithful (the spiritual of the text), will expend every effort and use every means to restore those who have fallen. To be unconcerned is to evince that we ourselves have fallen!
  5. Each of the following verses contain a statement on the importance of being sincere. One who alleges he is a Christian but is insincere, is styled a "hypocrite" in the Scriptures. Sincerity is one of the chief trademarks, or badges, of a Christian. Unless one is sincere, he cannot even become a Christian; and unless he maintains that sincerity, he will cease to be a faithful Christian. One who is honest and sincere, when he learns God's truth, will obey the gospel; if he does not obey, he loses both his honesty and sincerity.
    - a. 1 Corinthians 5:8: "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth."
    - b. 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."
    - c. Ephesians 6:24: "Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."
    - d. Philippians 1:10: "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."
    - e. Titus 2:7: "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *showing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity."
  6. 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?"
    - a. In serving God, a willingness to endure hardship and even death is required. This is not because God is one who delights in human suffering; rather, such is needed in order for us to be shaped and prepared to stand in God's presence.
    - b. Sin is so awful that God cannot countenance it.
      - 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) Matthew 5:9: "Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."
  - 3) Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
  - 4) 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."
  - 5) Revelation 21:25: "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."
- c. Tribulations and hardships are designed to purify us as the furnace is intended to purify the gold ore by burning off the dross.
  - d. "Cross-bearing is widely misunderstood. It is not old age, poverty, taxes, illness, or bad weather, or any other discomfiture of life that comes unavoidably into the lives of men. It is the acceptance, for the sake of the will of God, of some burdens, otherwise avoidable, but which are undertaken out of a pure desire to fulfill the Master's purpose. The centrality of the cross in Christ's religion was here affirmed by Christ at the very moment when one of his most beloved apostles had spoken against it" (*Commentary on Matthew*, Burton Coffman, p.258). To "deny himself" is to avoid ease and indulgence; to take up the cross is to endure reproach or dishonor in the eyes of the Lord (for the cause of Christ).
  - e. The soul of one individual is worth more than all the material universe. The soul, as used in this passage and in Luke 9:25, is the real person, the part of us that is eternal from its inception.
    - 1) Luke 9:25: "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"
    - 2) Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
    - 3) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"
  - f. In the context, when a Christian ceases to follow Christ by ceasing to bear the difficulties of life he incurs because of obedience, or ceases to deny himself those things Christ forbids, loses his soul.

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. Did God really mean it when he gave these great promises?

1. God made some grand promises to Abraham, and fulfilled them through his most glorious descendant, Jesus Christ.
  - a. 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."
  - b. 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."
  - c. Galatians 3:15-16: "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. *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."
  - d. Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if

- ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
- e. 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."
  - f. Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
  - g. 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."
  - h. 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."
2. First Corinthians 10:13: "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*."
    - a. He never promised any Christian a life of ease and merriment; he did promise tribulation:
      - 1) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
      - 2) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
    - b. But he gave to each faithful saint the promise that there would be no temptation given us too great; he would provide us with a means of escape.
  3. 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."
    - 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."
    - d. 1 Peter 5:5-6: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"
    - e. He does not operate miraculously in his daily dealings with us today as in the case of the inspired men of the first century. But no man can comprehend his marvelous providence which he uses in our behalf.
  4. James 1:12: "Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."
    - a. Will we really receive the crown of life? God could be trusted to mean what he said in the commands and warnings, and he can be trusted implicitly in these wonderful promises, also!
    - b. 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
    - 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."
  5. 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
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passed away." Will we one day have the privilege of living in this wonderful place? Will we really have all tears wiped away, all sorrows and pains removed? God has promised this, and to it he will be true! Our part is faithfulness.

6. First 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. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
  - a. If we walk in the light of the gospel as perfectly as we can, then the promise of the passage is ours daily, as we live here on earth. Half-hearted, insincere activity is not enough; neither is it sufficient that we believe *some* truth about Jesus, or follow part of the New Testament only: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all" (Jas. 2:10).
  - b. The power to save us and to guide us home to heaven is the gospel; not merely a part of the gospel, but the whole gospel, without addition, deletion, or perversion (Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:6-12).
- B. Did he really mean what he said in Hebrews 8:12?
  1. Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
  2. Yes, he will truly cleanse us from all of sin's guilt when we obey the gospel!
    - a. We must hear the gospel, which involves our learning and understanding its great precepts and commandments.
      - 1) Matthew 18:19: "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."
      - 2) John 6:44-45: "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."
      - 3) 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."
    - b. We must believe the gospel:
      - 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) Romans 10:13-17: "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."
    - c. We must repent of our sins of the past:
      - 1) Matthew 3:8: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:"
      - 2) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
      - 3) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
      - 4) Acts 26:20: "But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."
      - 5) 2 Corinthians 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of:

but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

- d. We must confess our faith in Christ:
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 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."
  - e. We must be baptized (immersed) for the remission of our sins:
    - 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 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
  - f. Compare:
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) 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,"
  - 3. With all of our guilt cleared away, we then can start anew!
  - 4. First Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"
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## Better Things of Hebrews

### I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. The Book of Hebrews was addressed to Jewish Christians who were about to return to Judaism.
  1. The inspired writer used heavenly wisdom to keep them faithful to Christ.
  2. There was much about Judaism that was appealing to some people.
    - a. The beautiful temple at Jerusalem appealed to many.
    - b. The impressive ceremonies of the Law had a strong appeal.
    - c. The rich garb worn by the High Priest and his assistants was attractive.
    - d. The worship acts were outward demonstrations, and did not rely on much inward insight.
  3. There were several forces at work to undermine their faith.
    - a. The peer pressure of Jews made life for a Christian very difficult.
    - b. The Christian's family would place great pressure on him to return to Judaism.
    - c. The Judaizing teachers used arguments to convince Christians to compromise the gospel.
    - d. The Jews and Romans carried on a war of persecution against the Christians.
- B. Hebrews lists several arguments to convince them of the superiority of the gospel to the law.
  1. The book discusses the following points of superiority.
    - a. Christ is superior to the prophets and the angels: Hebrews 1-2.
    - b. Christ is superior to Moses: Hebrews 3:1—4:13.
    - c. Christ's priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood: Hebrews 4:14—8:5.
    - d. The new covenant is superior to the old covenant: Hebrews 8:6-13.
    - e. The offerings under the gospel are superior to the offerings under the law: Hebrews 9:1—10:18.
  2. Paul uses the word *better* several times in the book to exalt Christianity over Judaism.
    - a. Hebrews 1:4: "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."
    - b. Hebrews 6:9: "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."
    - c. Hebrews 7:7: "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better."
    - d. Hebrews 7:19: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God."
    - e. Hebrews 7:22: "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."
    - f. Hebrews 8:6: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."
    - g. Hebrews 9:23: "*It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."
    - h. Hebrews 10:34: "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."
    - i. Hebrews 11:16: "But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."
    - j. Hebrews 11:35: "Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection."
    - k. Hebrews 11:40: "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."
    - l. Hebrews 12:24: "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel."

### II. DISCUSSION: A Consideration of these "Better" Verses:

- A. Christ is better than the angels.
  1. Hebrews 1:4: "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?"
2. "The Jews had developed an elaborate system of angelology....They came to think of angels as intermediaries between God and man (and) also believed that there were millions of them. They had many duties. They delivered messages, presided over the destiny of Israel, controlled the movement of stars, manipulated history. There were angels over the sea, the frost, the dew, the rain, the snow, the hail, the thunder and lightening. There were angels who were wardens of hell and torturers of the damned. There were destroying angels and angels of punishment" (Robert L. Gargill, *Understanding the Book of Hebrews*, quoted by Coffman, *Commentary on Hebrews*, p.56). Because of their views, it was necessary to show that Christ is superior to the angels.
  3. Angels delivered the Mosaic Law, which would cause prejudiced Jews to exalt angels above Jesus.
    - a. Acts 7:53: "Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*."
    - b. Galatians 3:19: "Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."
    - c. Hebrews 2:2-3: "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..."
  4. Since the power of angels was so great, and Christ is greater than they, the superior power of Christ is greatly exalted before us.
    - a. 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."
    - b. Matthew 28:2-4: "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*."
  5. Angels were created by Christ.
    - a. Hebrews 1:7: "And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."
    - b. Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."
    - c. Nehemiah 9:6: "Thou, *even* thou, *art* LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all *things* that *are* therein, the seas, and all that *is* therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."
    - d. Colossians 1:16: "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."
  6. Angels are in subjection to Christ. "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Peter 3:22).
  7. Angels worshiped Christ. "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6).
  8. The Father called Christ his *Son*, and referred to him as *God*. "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?....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" (Heb. 1:5,8).
    - a. While Christ was on earth, he was for that time "made a little lower than the angels" in order to be able to die for mankind (Heb. 2:9).
    - b. Following his earthly mission, he was exalted to the right hand of God to rule over the spiritual kingdom which the Father gave him (Dan. 7:13-14hil. 2:4-11).
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B. "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you" (Heb. 6:9).

1. This statement is a contrast to the preceding verses.
  - 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. Using a figure of speech, Paul then stated that the earth brings forth all kinds of growth; some are good and useful; some are thorns and briers, which are burned. "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned" (Heb. 6:7-8).
  - c. The strong warning of these verses affirms the impossibility of turning one back to Christ who has rejected him, and returned to Judaism.
2. The apostle did not consider them to be apostates; they were still his beloved brethren. Although they were on the verge of falling away, they had not done so yet; there was hope for them.
3. He stated his conviction that they would continue to retain those things which accompany salvation, which include the items indicated in verses 4-5: "...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."
4. In consequence to their continued faithfulness, God would not forget all their many labors. "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb. 6:10).
  - a. Studying God's word is wonderfully important to faithfulness; those who fall away usually are those who study the least.
  - b. These brethren had been accused earlier of neglecting to study God's word. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:12-14).
  - c. But they had continued to minister to the saints. If they lived up to Paul's expectation, they would be rewarded richly for their faithful service.

C. Under Christ, we have a better hope than that which the Mosaic Law provided.

1. Hebrews 7:19: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God."
  - a. The law made nothing perfect.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
  - b. The Old Law required perfect obedience; once a man violated an ordinance of the law, he was condemned by the law as a lawbreaker; it contained no provision [within itself] for direct pardon. It was only a shadow of the good things to come.
    - 1) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year

continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

- 2) Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
2. The gospel of Christ includes provision for full pardon. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14).
  - a. The gospel has a provision for the pardon of alien sinners.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
    - 3) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
    - 4) Acts 8:37-39: "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."
    - 5) 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. The gospel has a provision for the pardon of erring Christians.
    - 1) Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
    - 2) James 5:16-20: "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. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
    - 3) 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."
3. The gospel of Christ offers us close fellowship with the Almighty, which is the primary application made in the text concerning the better hope.
  - a. Under the law, the Jews could approach God in public worship only through the work of the Levitical priests. The ordinary sacrifices were offered by the priests; on the day of atonement, the high priest had special duties to perform in behalf of all the people, including himself.
  - b. The Mosaic system had mere men to be the intermediaries between man and God. In a sense, the worshipers were kept at arm's length from God.
  - 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."



- d. Ephesians 2:12-13: "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."
  4. Under the gospel system, each Christian is a priest, and can offer worship unto God through Christ, without the agency of some other human.
    - a. 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."
    - b. 1 Peter 2:9: "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."
    - c. Hebrews 13:15: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name."
  5. Under the Mosaic system, the great acts of public worship were to be offered at the temple in Jerusalem; the Samaritans worshiped on Mount Gerizim in Samaria. The gospel system removes the need for special places of worship, and emphasizes the nature and kind of worship that is accepted. "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" (John 4:20-24).
- D. Christ is the mediator of a better testament.
1. This better testament is the New Testament (the gospel system).
    - a. Hebrews 7:22: "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."
    - b. Hebrews 8:6: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."
  2. No oath was given for the Levitical priesthood, but a great oath from God confirmed the priesthood of Christ.
    - a. Psalms 110:4: "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."
    - b. Hebrews 7:17: "For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." God will never set aside Christ's priesthood—he swore to this.
  3. This oath shows the immutability of the gospel, that it is God's last revelation to man. Christ left heaven, lived among men, suffered persecution, endured death on the cross, was buried, was raised from the dead, ascended to sit at God's right hand, and now intercedes for us.
    - a. These facts show the absolute dependability and unending nature of the New Testament. It is the plan God formulated in eternity before time began; he timed its inception perfectly; he intends that it is to remain in force until the end of time.
    - b. "When God is said to repent, the meaning is that he simply wills a change; and when it is said that he will not repent, it means that he will never will a change. And consequently there is nothing beyond the priesthood of Christ, to which it will ever give place, as a means of accomplishing God's benevolent purposes in the redemption of mankind" (Robert Milligan, *Hebrews*, p.210).
    - c. The immutability of the gospel is also taught elsewhere.
      - 1) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
      - 2) 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." *Once* means "once for all time" (cf. Heb. 9:28).
  4. The New Testament gospel is superior to the Old Testament law for several reasons.
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- a. It was established on the basis of God's oath that Christ would be a priest forever.
  - b. It offers full pardon from every manner of sin on the conditions God gave.
  - c. It gives us the privilege to "draw nigh unto God."
  - d. It is the substance, not the mere shadow, of God's eternal plan.
  - e. It is the perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25), while the law was a yoke of bondage (Acts 15:10).
  - f. It has a perfect mediator (Christ), whereas the law had only Moses and the high priests.
- E. Christ's gospel offers better promises than Moses' law could give.
1. Hebrews 8:6: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."
  2. The Mosaic system placed great emphasis on earthly rewards, while the gospel system places greatest emphasis on spiritual blessings and attainments.
  3. Faithfulness in tithing under Moses resulted in financial and material increase, but under Christ the blessing is spiritual.
    - a. Malachi 3:8-10: "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. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*"
    - b. Acts 20:35: "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."
    - c. Philippians 4:17: "Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." By giving to Paul, they were more greatly blessed with the spirit of giving.
    - d. 1 Timothy 6:17-19: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."
  4. The blessings of obedience to God under Moses were measured in terms of material prosperity, continued ownership of the land, and long life; under Christ the blessings are spiritual blessings here and especially in heaven.
    - a. Deuteronomy 5:16: "Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."
    - b. 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."
  5. Worldly-minded Jews of the Old Testament centered their hopes on prosperity in the land, financial well-being, a sizeable number of children (especially boys), and other similar advantages and possessions. Under Christ, the faithful focus on bringing honor to God and Christ, helping others to become Christians, and to enter heaven.
    - a. Colossians 3:1-4: "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."
    - 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
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- heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
- c. 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."
  - d. Hebrews 10:34: "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."
  - e. Hebrews 11:16: "But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb. 13:14).
6. Specifically, the promises we have in Christ include these great things.
- a. Forgiveness of all our past sins when we obey the gospel, and pardon of those sins we commit afterwards.
    - 1) Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
    - 2) 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."
  - b. The assurance of success as we labor for the Lord.
    - 1) Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?"
    - 2) Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
    - 3) 1 John 5:4: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith."
  - c. God's providential help as we face the challenges and difficulties of life.
    - 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) 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."
    - 3) 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."
  - d. Fellowship with the best people on earth.
    - 1) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
    - 2) 1 Corinthians 12:25-26: "That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."
    - 3) Philippians 4:3: "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the book of life."
  - e. Privilege of prayer.
    - 1) 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."
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- 2) 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."
  - f. Moral purity.
    - 1) Colossians 3:5-11: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all."
    - 2) Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
  - g. The privilege of helping the needy.
    - 1) Psalms 41:1-3: "Blessed *is* he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness."
    - 2) Matthew 10:42: "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."
    - 3) Matthew 25:40: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inas-much as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me."
  - h. The blessing of contentment within ourselves and peace with God.
    - 1) Philippians 4:11-12: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."
    - 2) 1 Timothy 6:6-8: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."
    - 3) Romans 5:1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."
  - i. We will be raised from the dead at the return of Christ. "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" (John 5:28-29).
  - j. We will have a new, spiritual body. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).
  - k. We will be united with the redeemed of all ages.
    - 1) Matthew 8:11: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."
    - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "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."
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- 3) Hebrews 11:40: "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

F. Christ has provided better sacrifices.

1. Hebrews 9:23: "*It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."
2. The tabernacle, which was purified by blood, was a type of heavenly things. The Holy Place was representative of the church of Christ; the Most Holy Place was representative of heaven; the table of showbread represented the Lord's Supper; the incense represented the prayers of the saints.
3. The church is comprised of people whose souls have been purified by the blood of Christ. His blood makes it possible for us to enter the church (his body) and to go on to heaven at the end.
4. The writer showed in the chapter the necessity of blood in both the Old and New Testament systems, and exalts the blood of Christ over the blood of animals.
  - a. Hebrews 9:18, 20-22: "Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without blood.... This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
  - b. Hebrews 9:13-15: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."
5. The sacrifice of Christ is vastly superior to the sacrifices of the Judaism.

G. Christ has provided for a better resurrection.

1. Hebrews 11:35: "Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection."
2. There were cases of resurrection in the Old Testament which involved women.
  - a. 1 Kings 17:17-24: the son of the widow of Zarephath was raised by Elijah.
  - b. 2 Kings 4:18-37: the son of the Shunemite woman was raised by Elisha.
3. There is a better resurrection.
  - a. Those who were raised from the dead in Bible times all died again (except Christ); when we are raised at the end of time, there will be no more physical death for us.
  - b. Those who are to be raised from the dead at the end of time will be divided into two groups: those who were faithful to God's word will enter heaven; those who lived in disobedience will be consigned to *Gehenna*.
  - c. To be raised to eternal life is a far better resurrection than to be raised to live a short time more on earth, and it is a vastly better resurrection to be raised to enter heaven than to be raised to eternal condemnation.

### III. CONCLUSION.

A. Christ's blood speaks better things than does the blood of Abel.

1. Hebrews 12:24: "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel."
  2. Abel's blood cried out from the ground unto God (Gen. 4:10). This is a figure of speech, denoting the fact that his death called for punishment to be inflicted on his murderer.
  3. Christ's blood has a much more powerful plea to the Father: it calls on God to forgive the guilty.
    - a. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
    - b. Hebrews 9:14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"
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- B. These powerful arguments could keep the Hebrew saints from falling away.
1. Christ is better than the angels: Hebrews 1:4.
  2. There was hope for them if they had not yet forsaken Christ: Hebrews 6:9.
  3. Christ is able to make us perfect by his gospel: Hebrews 7:19.
  4. Christ is the mediator of a better testament: Hebrews 7:22; 8:6.
  5. Christ offers better promises than did the law of Moses: Hebrews 8:6.
  6. Christ's sacrifice is better than those offered under Judaism: Hebrews 9:23.
  7. Christ provides for a better resurrection.
  8. Christ's blood speaks better things than does the blood of Abel: Hebrews 12:24.
- C. Commitment to these same great truths will bring us salvation and keep us from falling away.
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## Principles and Precepts from Proverbs

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. There has never been any book like the Bible.

1. It alone was inspired of God.
2. Only the Bible provides man with the best possible guidance for life.
3. The Bible is the only source book of information about how to get to heaven.

#### B. The Bible is unique also in that it gives many rich and profound principles.

1. The aim of this study is to investigate some of these precepts.
2. It is always profitable to study God's word, from any viewpoint.
3. These precepts are things that have ever been true and applicable to man.

### II. DISCUSSION: We shall look at several from the book of Proverbs.

#### A. Proverbs 15:1: "A soft answer turneth away wrath..."

1. Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18:21). Severe wounds can be administered to the defenseless by it; or words which strengthen and encourage.
2. This text shows that in many cases trouble and strife can be averted by a kind, soft response to hard words spoken to us. It is easy to give back hard and harsh words; it is more difficult to answer humbly and kindly.
  - a. Matthew 5:44-45: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
  - b. Proverbs 25:11: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."
  - c. Romans 14:19: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."
  - d. Colossians 4:6: "Let your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."
3. It is in our best interest to speak kindly to and about each other.
  - a. This must be done if we are to have friends: "A man *that hath* friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend *that sticketh* closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).
  - b. It must be done if we are to have a good name.
    - 1) Proverbs 22:1: "A *good* name *is* rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* loving favour rather than silver and gold."
    - 2) Ecclesiastes 7:1: "A good name *is* better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth."
  - c. We must cultivate humility to have favor with God: "The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and before honour *is* humility" (Prov. 15:33).
  - d. It must be followed to be obedient to God.
    - 1) Ephesians 4:31: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."
    - 2) Titus 3:2: "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, showing all meekness unto all men."

#### B. Proverbs 23:7: "As he thinketh in heart, so is he."

1. Matthew 12:34-35: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."
  - a. What comes from a man's lips is what is stored up in his heart.
  - b. Those who speak evil of others have treasured up malice within themselves; those who speak

good of others have the same stored up in their heart of hearts.

2. Matthew 15:18-20: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man."
  - a. That with which we fill our minds will come forth sooner or later. One is not likely to commit murder without first contemplating it in his mind; the same is true with blasphemy, theft, fornication, etc.
  - b. James 1:13-15: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."
3. If we would avert as much sin as possible, we will fill our minds with only those things that are good and wholesome. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:8-9).
  - a. But many Christians will watch filthy movies, read sin-filled books, frequent places where all manner of sin is practiced, and talk about subjects which are productive of no good (Eph. 5:12).
  - b. It is far better to be around other faithful Christians, share in their fellowship, and build up and encourage each other.
4. Broaden the scope of this text and see how the principle fits a nation or society.
  - a. If the laws of a nation are righteous and the general attitude of the people is to reject degrading practices, the nation is strong and will endure. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).
  - b. But if the laws of a nation tend to break down the morals of the people, and if the minds of the people are filled with evil thoughts and motives, that nation is only a short distance from disaster. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God" (Ps. 9:17). The national gambling frenzy is productive of no good, but much evil. Any fair-minded examination of this plague will show that it is evil. State-run lotteries prey on the vices of its citizens, and will doubtless prove to be disastrous to our nation.
  - c. A nation that becomes indoctrinated in unbelief will soon find itself enslaved to sin and corruption. Consider all the nations of Noah's generation; Egypt; Assyria; Babylon; Israel; Rome. These rejected the God of heaven and his Law; they plunged into sin and were destroyed.
  - d. A nation that accepts strong drink without a pang of conscience will soon be filled with alcoholics and all of its evil effects.
    - 1) Proverbs 20:1: "Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."
    - 2) Proverbs 23:29-35: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, *and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."
  - e. A nation that accepts a human standard of morality will soon be wallowing in degradation. This means the weakening of marriage and the home, pornography, and all manner of fornication.



- f. A nation that accepts a system which countenances injustice will soon find itself accepting all manner of inconsistency and crime.
    - 1) Thus, we have laws allowing and supporting abortion, but have other laws providing criminal punishment on those who break an eagle's egg or disturb a turtle's nest.
    - 2) We free criminals from prison due to "overcrowding," but prosecute a man for protecting his family and his property.
    - 3) Things that once were unlawful, have later been allowed by the law (e.g., abortion, alcoholic drinks). Efforts have been fostered to legalize drugs which are now outlawed. Legalizing sin will only lead to a nation's end.
    - 4) Amos 2:6: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes."
    - 5) Micah 6:8: "He hath showed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
  - 5. What an individual or a society fills it mind with, sooner or later becomes the governing principle by which it operates. "As we think in our hearts, so shall we be."
  - C. Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but...."
    - 1. In religion, ever since Cain substituted his own offering for what God ordained, men have sought to please themselves in their spiritual activities. The hardest lesson on earth for many to learn is the simplest: "Fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccl. 12:13).
      - a. God's authority must be held supreme if a man is to have the approval of the Almighty.
        - 1) 1 Samuel 2:30: "Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed *that* thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."
        - 2) Psalms 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
      - b. Since God speaks to man today through the message of Christ (Heb. 1:1-2), we must honor and obey the word of Christ.
        - 1) 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) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
        - 3) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
        - 4) 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."
    - 2. But the common tendency of mankind is to insist on his own way in religion. Cain, Nadab and Abihu, Jeroboam, and countless others in ancient and modern times all illustrate man's desire to please himself in religious functions.
    - 3. In this proudful attitude, man shows his foolishness.
      - a. Proverbs 28:26: "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."
      - b. Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."
      - c. Isaiah 30:10: "Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits."
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- d. 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."
  - e. 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."
  - f. Ezekiel 33:13: "When I shall say to the righteous, *that* he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it."
  - g. Ezekiel 33:20: "Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways."
  - h. Luke 16:15: "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."
4. The Lord requires that we follow his will in all our spiritual activities, and he warns us against adding to, substituting for, deleting from, or perverting the word of God!
- a. 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."
  - b. 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."
  - c. Revelation 22:8-9: "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."
- D. Proverbs 13:15: "The way of the transgressor is hard."
- 1. This is a truth often expressed by the Divine Record.
    - a. The northern kingdom of Israel (called "Ephraim") discovered it.
      - 1) Hosea 4:17: "Ephraim *is* joined to idols: let him alone."
      - 2) 2 Kings 17:5-7, 13-15, 20-23: "Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For *so* it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods....Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, *and by* all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments *and* my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against
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them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that *were* round about them, *concerning* whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them....And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day."

- b. Many times, people suffer from their sins in various ways in this life; in every case, the ungodly will suffer in the eternity to come.
  - 1) Isaiah 28:20: "For the bed is shorter than that *a man* can stretch himself *on it*: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself *in it*."
  - 2) Amos 5:19: "As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him."
  - 3) Matthew 7:1-5: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."
  - 4) 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."
  - 5) 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."
  - 6) 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."
2. Consider some of the common transgressions and how they often punish those who do them.
  - a. The one who uses alcohol often suffers: if he gets caught driving under the influence, he can be punished; he brings hardship on his own family and himself by his drinking; when his conduct become unruly, he can be arrested; his livelihood suffers when his drinking affects his work; his health suffers from drinking; he can injure or kill himself or others by driving under the influence; and most grievous of all, his drinking is sinful and will cause him to lose his soul. In addition to these awful consequences, he leaves behind a legacy of evil which will encourage his own children and others to follow his pernicious way.
  - b. The same consequences await those who use other drugs.
  - c. The fornicator sets himself up for various physical maladies; he places himself in possible jeopardy of a jealous suitor; he can destroy his marriage and home; and he will lose his soul.
  - d. The blasphemer, the liar, the worldly-minded, the covetous, the selfish, the hater, the gossip, the one who holds malice in his heart, the criminal, the false teacher, the follower of false doctrine—all of these have many woes to endure in this life and must face horrible penalties in eternity!
3. The way of the transgressor is truly hard! How much better it is to humbly and sincerely follow the will of God and be blessed! Faithful saints have difficulties to face in this world, and the sinner may appear to have a better lot in life, but chastening is for our good, and God does not give the full

harvest in "October."

- a. The story is told of an unbelieving farmer who boasted to his Christian neighbors that his crops were just as bountiful as theirs, even though he did not believe in God or attempt to serve him. One wise saint replied, "God does not give his full harvest in October." "Behold, these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it *was* too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors" (Ps. 73:12-19).
- b. As the blessings of the unrighteous are only apparent and not real, so also are the hardships we suffer as Christians insignificant when compared to the glory awaiting us in heaven!
  - 1) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
  - 2) Hebrews 12:11: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

E. Proverbs 22:1: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches..."

1. Ecclesiastes 7:1: "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth."
  - a. What advantage is it to have great wealth and be held in contempt by others? Man is a social creature, and generally can only be happy if he is around others of his kind, and has their approval.
  - b. What advantage is it to have great wealth and position, and stand under the curse of God? Is it not better to have no great wealth or position or popularity (if need be), and have the approval of God? "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?" (Matt. 16:26).
2. To have a "good name" means that we are held in high esteem by our fellow man; to have a "good name" before God means that we have his full endorsement.
3. To have a "good name" means also that we have a good influence on other people, especially our children and grandchildren. What kind of influence will our lives have on our descendants who are to live a hundred years, or two hundred years in the future? This becomes an extremely important proposition when we consider the cases of two men who lived several generations ago.
  - a. Max Jukes was a worldly man—his descendants included criminals.
  - b. Jonathan Edwards was known as a believer—his descendants included many great men.
4. For these reasons, what God said long ago still bears great meaning.

III. **CONCLUSION.**

A. Proverbs 27:1: "Boast not thyself of to morrow...."

1. We have no reason to be boastful about anything. God provided our life, he gives us air to breath, water to drink, food to eat, clothing to wear, and the means to have a roof over our heads.
  - a. Not one of these essentials could a man provide for himself without God's bounty.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
  - b. Certainly, no one can boast about saving his own soul (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:1-9).
  - c. No one can declare correctly that heaven is his home because he has earned it and God is

obligated to give it to him.

- d. Even the continuation of our lives depends on God. We have no right to boast of what we shall do or have tomorrow. "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" (Jas. 4:13-15).
2. Faith, humility and reverence for God which lead to our obeying his will is our chief obligation and greatest advantage.
  - a. "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" (Heb. 11:6).
  - b. "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility" (Prov. 15:33).
  - c. "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" (Eccl. 12:13f).
  - d. Hosea 13:1: "When Ephraim spake trembling he exalted himself in Israel: but when he offended in Baal, he died."
  - e. Matthew 5:3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."
- B. Isaiah 41:10: "Fear thou now; for I am with thee: be not dismayed...."
  1. This was a promise to God's faithful people in ancient Judah. But the same kind promises are for us today.
    - a. 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.*"
    - b. 1 Peter 5:6-7: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."
  2. God's promises are for those who obey his will.
    - a. He promises forgiveness of sins to those who will obey the gospel.
      - 1) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
      - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
      - 3) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
    - b. He promises heaven for those who follow his will in Christ.
      - 1) Mark 10:29-30: "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
      - 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."
  3. If we walk in the light of Christ's gospel, there is no reason for us to be fearful of the world, of our enemies, of the future, of our daily needs, or of the great Judgment to come.
    - a. Matthew 10:42: "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."
    - b. 1 Corinthians 10:13: "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*."

- c. Hebrews 6:10: "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."
  - d. 1 John 4:17-18: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."
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## CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE

### A. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: The Essentiality of Love.

1. Verse 1: "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."
    - a. The ASV gives this rendering: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal."
    - b. These instruments make no pleasant sound separate from the rest of the orchestra. Few if any would derive any pleasure from hearing one of these instruments being played solo.
    - c. "The comparison shows that speaking with tongues, even if it were exercised in an unexampled manner, is utter emptiness unless accompanied by love. The gift of tongues, even when it attained its highest conceivable development, is inferior to the language of angels; but even if one spoke with all the gifts of language *human* or *divine*, his word, if loveless, would be but a vainglorious noise, or sounds without soul or feeling; such as come from pounding on some brazen gong or basin, or from cymbals, which are the lowest, most monotonous, least expressive of all musical instruments" (McGarvey, p.128).
    - d. To tell people to love God and neighbor is not enough; we must tell them and show them how. Love for our fellow man is the willing of good toward them (Mark 12:31; Matt. 7:12); love for God is expressed by doing his will (1 John 5:3; Mark 12:30). If we love God, we will gladly and sincerely do what he requires. Love for others will cause us to forego privileges and possessions in order to do good to them.
    - e. The apostle addresses the heart of their problem in this passage. They were active in religion, but their works emphasized outward, superficial displays. Pagans used cymbals and loud trumpets in their worship; perhaps the Corinthian Christians had not shed these former notions. They needed to learn the lesson on love, and see that external demonstrations, regardless of how important they might be, were meaningless without real love.
  2. Verse 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."
    - a. The possession and exercise of supernatural gifts is void of good if they are employed without love. There would be no profit to the individual or for others.
    - b. Love is thus shown to be of greater merit than the use of the extraordinary gifts without love.
      - 1) Colossians 3:12-14: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*. And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness."
      - 2) 1 Peter 4:8: "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."
      - 3) 2 Peter 1:7: "And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
    - c. The gift of prophecy was the supernatural gift from God that permitted the person to receive and deliver revelations from the almighty (Gal. 1:1-21 Cor. 2:9-14; Eph. 3:1-11). The New Testament prophets and apostles were privileged to be given information that revealed to them the great plan which God had kept secret from the beginning of time, which neither angels nor Old Testament prophets were allowed to know. The gift of miraculous faith was given to certain New Testament saints, a faith that empowered them to perform momentous supernatural acts (Acts 3:1ff; Matt. 17:20; 21:21; Mark 11:23). However, if any of these tremendous gifts were exercised without love on the part of the individuals possessing them, there would be no profit for their souls.
  3. Verse 3: "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."
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- a. Moving beyond the exercise of miraculous gifts, Paul makes the same application to acts of Christian service. In these matters, love is just as necessary if any profit is to be gained.
- b. It is possible for a Christian to give away all his goods in order to provide food for the needy, and do so without any profit to his soul. Why? How? The motive behind the generosity determines the benefit derived by the donor. If he did it to call attention to himself, he has acted in vain. Ananias and Sapphira wanted the attention of the brethren, but lied about the amount they received for the property they sold; their motives were misguided; they lost their lives and souls, and accrued no benefit from their loveless gift (Acts 5)
- c. The same is true with one who offers to die in another's place. If his motive is not love, his sacrifice will do his soul no good. It is imperative that we continually examine our hearts to identify the motives by which we operate.
- d. Love is like faith: it is an active principle: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6); it must be expressed to be real. Pride and worldly-minded disposition must be put aside, and the motivation of love must be diligently cultivated and exercised, in order for our religious activities to be beneficial to our souls and bring glory to God.

B. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: The Characteristics of Love.

1. Verse 4: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."
  - a. Love moves a Christian to be patient (longsuffering). Because we love God, love the church, and love our own souls, we patiently endure trials and persecutions without complaining against God. Because we love our brethren and our fellowman, we suffer long with them.
    - 1) One who is motivated by love is not quick to condemn or criticize others. A farmer does not plow up a crop two days after planting the seed, because the seed has not germinated yet. He knows he must be patient until the proper time has passed.
    - 2) One who is patient is like God, for our Heavenly Father is patient: "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8).
    - 3) Paul's statement here is not designed to rebuke the Corinthians, but to encourage them in their problems and afflictions. The passage is extremely important to all Christians of every generation.
  - b. Love shows kindness; it is gentle and merciful: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17). Strong defines the word as "to show one's self useful, i.e., act benevolently."
    - 1) New Testament examples of kindness are found in (cf. Mark 2:1-12):
      - a) Matthew 15:21-28: "Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast *it* to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."
      - b) 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."
- c) 2 Timothy 1:16-18: "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well."
- 2) Kindness can be expressed by our words: "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness" (Prov. 31:26).
- 3) Kindness can be expressed by our actions: "And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to the evil*" (Luke 6:34-35).
- 4) Before kindness can sincerely be expressed by our words or actions it must first be in our hearts: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matt. 12:34-35).
- c. Love does not move us to envy. Envy is defined as "to look with ill will or be pained at the good fortune of another."
- 1) Envy is useless and wasteful; it has no profit and all of its fruit is evil. Envy caused Cain to murder his brother (Gen. 4); envy led to Haman's downfall (Esther 7); envy was directly involved in the Lord's death (Matt. 27:18).
- 2) Love and envy are antagonistic: love does not envy; love is generous, it is never envious; love is happy for the good fortune of others. Love (not envy) led the Samaritan to help the unfortunate robbery victim (Lk. 10:30-37).
- d. Love does not vaunt itself; it is not puffed up with pride. To *vaunt* is "to boast, to brag, to puff up, to be proud."
- 1) This trait (which love does not have) will cause a person to push himself forward as being important; it creates a feeling of superiority, and is expressed in disregarding another, or in holding him in contempt.
- 2) Love does not allow this attitude, but rather demands its opposite: humility. If one is lacking in humility, he is lacking in love.
- a) Proverbs 3:34: "Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly."
- b) Proverbs 15:33: "The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and before honour *is* humility."
- c) Isaiah 66:2: "For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."
- d) Micah 6:8: "He hath showed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
- e) Matthew 5:3: "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
- f) Acts 12:20-23: "And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's *country*. 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
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- up the ghost."
- 3) Humility admits its dependence on God (Jer. 10:23); it grows out of gratitude (Luke 17:10; Rom. 12:1).
    - a) 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) 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."
    - c) Romans 12:1: "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."
  2. Verse 5: "Doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."
    - a. Love does not behave itself unseemly.
      - 1) Unseemliness describes improper or disgraceful conduct; it is to act in a manner that deserves rebuke. On the other hand, seemliness is to act properly, to be above reproach in behavior.
      - 2) The opposite of unseemliness is also courtesy: "Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous" (1 Pet. 3:8). Courtesy manifests itself especially in small matters. Love promotes seemly behavior, courtesy, and good manners. One who has developed Christian love will exhibit good behavior and courtesy at all times and in all places and in all activities.
      - 3) To be courteous is to show consideration of others by respecting their feelings, being gentle in dealing with them, and by refusing to be hateful or spiteful.
      - 4) What a change every community would undergo if this element of love were to be fully practiced!
    - b. Love does not seek her own.
      - 1) This element of love is unselfishness. Love does not cause a person to seek his own advantage, but is unselfish.
        - a) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
        - b) Philippians 2:3-5: "*Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."
      - 2) It does not search after, and require its own happiness first, to the injury or neglect of others. However, this does not require that we ignore our own happiness, health, or salvation.
      - 3) The first step in becoming a Christian is to see ourself in the right perspective, using the word of God as the standard.
        - 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) Romans 12:10: "*Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."
        - c) Romans 15:1-3: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."
        - d) 1 Corinthians 9:19-23: "For though I be free from all *men*, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak,

- that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you*."
- e) 1 Corinthians 10:24 "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*."
  - f) 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."
- 4) Visualize the great change that would be effected in a community if this element were fully applied by all!
- c. Love does not move us to be easily provoked.
- 1) One who is under the influence of Christian love is not quick to be angry, but controls his temper. He is calm and collected, is not easily excited, and does not react hastily or rashly; he looks soberly at life and the circumstances of day-to-day living. "Flying off the handle" is not a proper picture of the Christian life.
  - 2) No one can live above an occasion relapse into sin. We live in a complex society, at a time when the great majority are departing from the moral standard of God's word. It is easy for us to lose control of our emotions, and give vent to wrath. It is easy to say or do things that are hurtful and sinful.
  - 3) The Bible requires self-control of those who would please God.
    - a) Job 5:2: "For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one."
    - b) Proverbs 14:17: "*He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.*"
    - c) Proverbs 16:32: "*He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*"
    - d) Ephesians 4:31: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."
    - e) Colossians 3:8: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."
    - f) James 1:19-20: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."
  - 4) If our emotions rule us, we are like a city of ancient times whose wall has been torn down: we are exposed to the enemy, and at his mercy: "*It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house*" (Prov. 25:24).
  - 5) Controlling our temper is for our own good, and for the good of others, as well as the church.
- d. Love thinks no evil.
- 1) This does not mean we will never entertain an evil thought; this cannot be done. An ancient Chinese sage observed that we cannot keep the birds from flying above our heads, but we can keep them from building a nest in our hair. We can no more keep evil thoughts from popping into our mind than we can stop the rain, the sunshine, or night.
  - 2) Thinking no evil means that we are not overly suspicious of the motives of our fellowman, that we will not always imagine others mean us harm, and will not impute the worst possible construction on the words, acts, or facial expressions and tones of voice others use toward us. The comic strip character Ziggy thought that the football team on the field was talking about him when they went into a *huddle*.
  - 3) There are certain childhood traits that are commendable in a Christian, one of which is the willingness to accept things at face value, and to be willing to give others the benefit of any doubt that may exist.
    - a) Matthew 19:13-14: "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
    - b) 1 Corinthians 14:20: "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye
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children, but in understanding be men."

- 4) Being too quick to suspect the worst can make us miserable! We are not to be naive, but think the best until we know otherwise. This principle is taught in Matthew 7:1-5 (a familiar passage on judging).
3. Verse 6: "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."
  - a. Love will not lead one to rejoice over iniquity.
    - 1) Love requires that we take no delight when another falls into sin or experiences trouble. If we possess real Christian love, we will take no pleasure in hearing an evil report about another, even if the report is true. When a brother falls into sin or error, refute the error and rebuke the sin, but do so with a broken heart. No right-thinking person could find any pleasure in the sin of another saint (cf. Ezek. 18:18,32; 2 Pet. 3:9).
    - 2) Love requires that we stand against all sin and religious error, and that we stand for the truth. We rejoice when truth prevails; we rejoice when one obeys the gospel, or does some good thing for the Lord, or overcomes some temptation, or grows spiritually. There is no competition between faithful Christians or faithful congregations.
  - b. Paul rejoiced when the truth was preached; his soul depended on having this attitude: "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 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. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:14-19).
4. Verse 7: "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."
  - a. Love bears all things.
    - 1) Love teaches us to be strong and steadfast; to bear up under all circumstances. Earlier elements of love dealt with our attitudes toward other people and God; this attribute deals with our own spirit.
    - 2) Mothers endure many things during the course of their lives. They bear up under the stress and pain of pregnancy and childbirth. Their children sometimes disregard their will, ignore their sacrifices, and think nothing of their many good works. How can the mother endure such? Their mother's love enables them. Because she loves her neglectful or rebellious child, she bears the burden.
    - 3) Jesus silently endured shame, agony, and hatred on the cross (1 Pet. 2:22-23; Luke 23:34). How was he able to bear up under these? His heart was filled with genuine love for God and all mankind.
    - 4) Paul suffered at the hands of the Jews, but his heart's desire for them was that they might be saved (Rom. 9:3; 10:1). He was not bitter and resentful toward them even when in prison on account of their false charges (2 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 5:3-4). Patience produces steadfastness, and experience (approvedness) furnishes us with hope. It is to our benefit that we bear up under all trying circumstances.
    - 5) How can we bear up under the weight of our Christian struggles? By developing genuine love. How can we cultivate this love? By studying the Bible (Acts 20:32); by obeying the Bible (2 Tim. 4:6-8; Rom. 5:3-4); by praying fervently and frequently (Jas. 5:16; Phil. 4:6-7); by worshipping sincerely (John 4:24; 1 John 4:8).
  - b. Love believes all things.
    - 1) Love causes us to maintain an open mind. If we love a fellow Christian, we will accept what he tells us unless a good reason arises to the contrary. It does not encourage gullibility or naivety.
    - 2) This characteristic of love leads us to have the readiness to accept that which evidence supports

- after a fairminded examination. Some closed their minds to the Lord's words (Luke 15:1-2). An open mind is required in order for one to become a Christian and live the Christian life (Luke 17:11-12).
- a) Luke 15:1-2: "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."
  - b) Luke 17:11-12: "And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off."
- 3) God's word is quick and powerful; his spoken word created the universe, keeps it going, and his written word can give life to the sin-slain soul. But it cannot reach a closed mind!
  - 4) Some have closed their minds about the church, deluding themselves into believing that it is not important. But why did Jesus die for it (Acts 20:28)? Why does God use it to reconcile all believers to himself (Eph. 2:16; 1:22-23).
  - 5) Many have closed their minds to the plan of salvation, to moral living, and to true worship.
- c. Love hopes all things.
- 1) The characteristic of love emphasizes optimism or hope. The only ones with a right to be optimistic and full of hope are faithful Christians. Hope is comprised of desire and expectation. We cannot have hope for something we do not want to obtain; and we cannot hope for something that we have no reason to expect to receive. Concerning eternity, who can be optimistic except God's faithful?
  - 2) Visualize what life would be like without hope: "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*" (Rom. 8:24-25). If we do not believe things will be better in heaven, how could we face life? A person without hope (an optimistic attitude regarding eternity) is most miserable.
  - 3) Abraham had hope (Gen. 12:1-3; 18:9-14; Rom. 4:17-21). Hope sustained him, and it can sustain us, and save us (Rom. 8:24). But hope grows out of faith, and is a characteristic of love.
    - a) Genesis 18:9-14: "And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, which *was* behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old *and* well stricken in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 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."
    - b) Romans 4:17-21: "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."
- d. Love endures all things.
- 1) "The word '*hupomenoo*,' translated 'endureth,' is a military term, and means to sustain an assault; hence it has reference to heavier afflictions than those sustained by the 'beareth' of verse 7. It refers to gross ill-treatment, violence and persecution, and such grievance as provoke resistance, strife, etc. (2 Tim. 2:10,24; Heb. 10:32; 12:2; Matt. 5:39; comp. John 18:22,23, with Acts 23:2-5).
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The enduring is not simply that dogged persistency which bears up despite adversity, it is an endurance which forgives offense (Luke 17:4). From love as it manifests itself in daily life Paul now rises to speak of love in its essence" (McGarvey, p.131).

- 2) "It suffers, endures, bears all evils, and is not driven from the true course by the wrongs and injuries of the wicked" (Lipscomb, p.199).
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## “The Blood That Stained the Old Rugged Cross”

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. The Title of this Lesson Grows out of the Song by that Name.

On the cross of Calvary our blessed Savior died,  
Gave His life to save the world from loss;  
In His pain and agony, for ev'ry sin to hide.  
Shed the blood that stained the old rugged cross.

To the cross, the rugged cross they nailed His precious hands,  
And in death He fully paid the cost.  
There is pardon in His love for ev'ry one that stands  
For the blood that stained the old rugged cross.

What an awful death He died to pardon you and me,  
All alone in agony he tossed  
And a world once lost in sin can now be wholly free,  
By the blood that stained the old rugged cross.

'Twas His blood His precious blood that stained the old rugged cross,  
'Twas His love that paid the awful cost;  
O soul so far astray come and plunge today,  
In the blood that stained the old rugged cross. — Albert E. Brumley.

#### B. Profound Truths Having Eternal Consequences are Announced in these Scriptures:

1. 1 John 1:6-7: "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." Our fellowship with Christ and each other depends on our faithfulness to the gospel, and our cleansing from our sins is dependent upon the blood of Christ.
  2. 1 John 2:1-3: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." Affirmed here by the apostle of love is the universality of the eternal plan of redemption by the blood of Christ.
  3. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The Redeemer here affirms that there is a direct connection between the blood of Christ and the remission of sins.
  4. 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." The high value Christ places on his church is seen by the purchase price he paid to bring it into being.
  5. 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." Christians have been saved by the love of God and blood of Christ [when we obeyed the gospel], and we shall be delivered from the wrath of God in *Gehenna* in eternity [if we have been faithful].
  6. Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead,
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and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Every sensible saint will treasure up in his heart an unending love for Christ, by whose blood we have been cleansed.

7. These verses affirm the efficacy of the Lord's blood to effect the salvation of lost man.
  - a. "There are just a few men upon the earth that are striving to reach heaven independently of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is a lamentable picture to see fine citizens, good business men and splendid women, in their negligence, indifference, and carelessness, blinded, deluded, and deceived, thinking that they can leave behind them evidences of their acceptance with God when they have not been washed in that fountain filled with the precious blood of his Son" (N.B. Hardeman).
  - b. "These scriptures [such as those noted above], when translated into common English, simply mean that Jesus Christ, our Lord, died as a ransom for lost and ruined humanity; that as man's life was forfeited by his betraying the trust committed to him, it took life, which is the blood, to make the atonement, or propitiation, for man's redemption and restoration" (ibid.).

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. Back at the Very Dawn of Human History, God Made Man and Set Him up to Live on the Earth.

1. "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). This first man (and a little later the woman) came from God's creative hand perfect in body, mind, spirit, and conscience. He was the culmination of the Almighty's creative power, bearing the impress of divinity on his countenance, and the stamp of God's image upon his heart. There was no physical or spiritual or emotional defect!
2. But God did not make Adam and Eve to be mere machines, blindly to follow the dictates of their Maker. They were clothed with the power of choice, an awesome responsibility. They had freedom to decide matters and to act according to the dictates of their own thinking. With the power to choose comes the possibility that wrong choices can be made—with attendant consequences.
3. God placed in man's hands the authority to rule over earth and its inhabitants. It was the Creator's plan to work with obedient man, for the good of all concerned. It was his desire to shower Heaven's blessings upon mankind. It was God's will for man to have a long and happy life on earth, and that there be nothing to mar his home here, or to interfere with his communion with the Creator.
4. The story now takes a sad turn, for man chose to turn from the holy arrangement, and violated the trust tendered into his hands. Man turned an attentive ear to the great enemy—Satan—and yielded to his enticement to disobey God. "And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Gen. 3:6).
  - a. Death resulted—man was alienated from God; he lost the close communion he had previous had with the Holy One. And man began to grow older from that moment, until eventually his spirit departed from the mortal tabernacle, and fled back into God's keeping; his body eventually returned to the elements of the ground from which it was made (Eccl. 12:7).
  - b. Thorns, thistles, and pestilences blocked the path that heretofore had been even, straight, and smooth. Hardship, troubles, pain, and sorrows now began to characterize his endeavors.
  - c. The evil influences of Satan now replaced the bounties of God; man was now cursed, frightened, and scarred; he was now afflicted with shame and guilt; he was no longer in close fellowship with his Maker.
  - d. Through his foolish disobedience, man turned over control of the earth to Satan, and introduced to his descendants the tragedies of sin and its punishment.

### B. The Need for a Redeemer Was Manifest.

1. The Second Person of the Godhead enters the picture. Christ, the anointed one, interposed his blood to effect man's return into God's favor. The only condition was that tainted man must become a loving, devoted servant of the Lord Jesus.



- 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 5:8: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
  - c. 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. 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
  - e. 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."
2. God's heart was broken when he beheld man, the crowning part of his creation, soiled by sin. He had been obligated to drive man from the Paradise of Eden, but he had already formulated a plan to open the gate for man to enter an even greater Paradise—the Paradise of God—the eternal home of the soul!
  3. The great enemy was victorious over the first Adam, but the Second Adam won a resounding triumph over the evil one, made propitiation for man's sins, and became the mediator between fallen man and the Creator. The Messiah successfully battled Satan throughout his earthly sojourn, retained his perfectly sinless condition, submitted to the crucifixion, entered into the hades world beyond death, but burst forth through the gates of this unseen abode of the dead, and was raised to life again—never to die again.
    - a. Matthew 12:25-29: "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. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house."
    - b. Luke 11:14-22: "And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."
    - c. Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power
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of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

C. God Was Successful in Bringing to Fruition the Plan of the Ages.

1. The divine strategy was drafted by the Father, executed by Christ, and revealed by the Holy Spirit to the first Adam's fallen race. By the fulfillment of this divine plan, the church has been purchased by the precious blood of Christ, which was shed on Calvary.
2. Two parties are always involved in every transaction: one who provides and the other who accepts. In this case, those who accept the proffered gift enter into and constitute the church. Each is washed by the blood of the Redeemer and is added to the church in the same operation.
  - 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. 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."
  - c. Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
  - d. 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."
  - e. Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
  - 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."
  - g. 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."
  - h. 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."
  - i. Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

D. God Did Not Send Christ to Die for Man Immediately after Man Fell into Sin.

1. Some 4,000 years passed between those two events. Man could not have comprehended or appreciated the plan that early in his history. He could not have been moved to loving, devoted service to the Almighty. The attraction of the cross would not have made a powerful appeal to his heart: "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" (John 12:32-33).
  2. Through those many years, God established many symbolic and typical arrangements by which to prepare mankind for the coming of the Messiah. These all pointed toward and culminated in the Age of the Gospel.
  3. A blood sacrifice was essential if man was to be able to approach God during the Patriarchal Age.
    - a. God directed Cain and Abel, the first two born into the human family, to offer a sacrificial service which involved a bloody animal sacrifice. We remember that Cain's offering of grain was rejected and that Abel's animal sacrifice was accepted (Gen. 4). The difference was one of believing and doing what God said. Abel offered his sacrifice by faith (Heb. 11:4); since faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17), it follows that Abel did what God had ordered; Cain did not.
    - b. Noah perceived the need for a blood sacrifice, which he offered when he and his family left the ark (Gen. 8:20-22).
    - c. Abraham grasped the necessity of an offering of blood, which he tendered on many occasions.
    - d. For 2,500 years, the patriarchs followed this pattern.
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4. A blood sacrifice was essential in order for the Israelites under the Mosaic Law to approach God.
    - a. From the first time that Israel, under the leadership of Moses, encamped at the foot of Sinai, until the close of the Mosaic age 1,500 years later, the only way an Israelite could approach God was through an offering of blood. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).
    - b. All the ordinances of the Mosaic Law and all its commandments and services were sanctified and dedicated by the blood of a sacrificial animal: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:14-22).
      - 1) The tabernacle, the laver, the candlesticks, the table, the mercy seat, the ark of the covenant—all were sanctified and sealed for sacred service by the blood of animals.
      - 2) So also were each of the many utensils used in tabernacle worship—the flesh hooks, tongs, pots, pans, shovels, snuffers, etc.
  5. In summary, from the blood offered by righteous Abel, on down through the age of the patriarchs, and on down through the Mosaic Age, blood was continually in view in the worship of godly people. All of these blood-soaked sacrifices prefigured and typified the blood shed by the immaculate child of Mary—the Son of the Living God!
- E. Through Forty Centuries There Was No Sacrifice Powerful Enough to Remove the Guilt of Sin.
1. No animal blood was strong enough or sacred enough to take away even the guilt of a single violation of God's word (cf. 1 John 3:4).
  2. The sacrifices offered were typical; the blood poured out was typical; and the remission provided was only typical and partial: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:1-4).
    - a. The blood of animals was all they had to offer; and no animal blood was able to take away sin, as the above passage eloquently declares.
    - b. Some foolish people thought they could obtain divine favor by offering human sacrifices—human blood. The Moabites and others did; in more modern times, the Aztecs and Incas did. Where are these people today, and where is their civilization?
  3. While the Mosaic Law was in effect, an Israelite would come to the appointed place, at the appointed time, bringing the appointed animal to be sacrificed. He would deliver his animal to the priest, who would offer that victim as a sacrifice.
    - a. What did the Israelite receive? Not a single sin was actually removed by the animal sacrifice! His guilt was merely rolled forward for another year, until the atonement sacrifice could be again offered.
    - b. Through the years of that faithful Jew's life, his sins accumulated and the accompanying guilt piled
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up, year after year, with no means available for their removal.

- c. A faithful Jew, having lived a life of obedience to God's law, died and entered the eternal realm. The ultimate offering of blood, that of Christ, benefitted his soul, when it was offered at the proper place and time. The benefits of his blood went backward in time to cover the faithful ones of the past, and forward in time, to cover the obedient ones in the future.
  - 1) 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) Romans 3:23-25: "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."
  - 3) 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."

F. We Come Now to Hebrews 8:1-12.

1. "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:1-12).
  2. Under the new age—the Gospel Dispensation—there would be no need for God's people to be told about God; they would know him already. Under the Mosaic Law, every Jewish infant was an automatic child of God at birth—being a descendant of Abraham through Isaac.
    - a. He was already a child of God. As he grew up, he would have to taught about God. As he reached various levels of development, he was prepared to meet his obligations. But at the first, he was a child of God and knew nothing about the Almighty—until that information was later taught him.
    - b. Under the Gospel Age, alien sinners, men and women who have reached the age of accountability, must be taught about God. When they learn enough, they obey the gospel and become children of God. No child of God under the law of Christ has to be taught about God; he has already learned those truths.
  3. Under the Mosaic System, there was a remembrance made of an individual's sins every year. But now under the gospel, those who become children of God have their sins forever removed.
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- a. Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
- b. Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
4. This pertains to the sins of the past; sins later committed are forgiven as the erring saint repents, confesses his wrongs, and asks God for forgiveness.
  - a. Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
  - b. James 5:16: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
  - c. 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
5. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission (Heb. 9:22); but the blood of animals cannot take away sins. Therefore, without the shedding of Christ's blood there can be no remission.
  - a. Paper money does not absolutely pay a debt because of its own worth. The worth of paper money is only as sound as the basis of that paper money—the gold upon which it may be based, or the strength and stability of the government which issued it. Because of this, paper money has canceled out many financial obligations.
  - b. In a similar way, God issued to the patriarchs and to the faithful Israelites, promissory notes based on the infinite value of the blood of Christ—which God had determined from eternity would be shed. God forgave these obedient ones "on credit"—the benefits of the blood of the Redeemer would flow backward in time to cover those sins of the righteous ones who lived in the past: "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" (Heb. 9:15).
  - c. The literal blood of the Old Testament sacrifices was not actually placed on the body of the worshipper. The Mosaic Law had been sealed by blood—every Jew who came under the law, accepted the requirements of that Law, and received the benefits the law provided. These benefits were on the basis of the animal blood by which the Law was sanctified and sealed.

### III. CONCLUSION.

#### A. Under the Gospel of Christ, the Followers Are Benefitted by the Blood of Christ.

1. The gospel has been sanctified and sealed by his blood. But no sensible person thinks that a literal application of Christ's blood can be made to our spirit.
  - a. No one living today has ever seen a single drop of the actual blood of Christ. Even if a liberal portion of his blood were available, an application of that blood would do the soul no good.
  - b. If the Roman soldier had been spattered by blood when he pierced the Lord's side with a spear, that would have done his soul no good.
  - c. Some have the notion that the Holy Spirit literally sprinkles the blood of Christ upon the heart of the sinner who is converted—this error asserts that the conversion is direct and miraculous, and the application of the blood of Christ is literal and miraculous. No basis for such a doctrine can be found in the Bible!
2. Before the Messiah ever left heaven, provisions had been made for the writing of a book which would give all the details by which God's people were to be governed. This book is essentially the Last Will and Testament of Christ.
  - a. A will takes effect after the testator dies: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force

- after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:15-17).
- b. Every will is sealed by the blood of the testator—he must be dead before the will goes into effect. Being sealed, no one has the right to change it: "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" (Gal. 3:15; cf. 1:6-12).
  - c. The blood of Christ sealed the New Covenant of Christ and purchased the church of Christ. How much of his blood went into his church? Every drop! If we are to derive any of the benefits from his blood, we must obtain it in the institution into which his blood went.
  - d. Suppose you have a one-hundred-dollar bill. Suppose you find a coat in a store priced at one hundred dollars. You buy the coat. How much of the one-hundred-dollar bill is unused? Now if you are to get any benefit from the one hundred dollars, it must be by the coat.
  - e. If you are to get any benefit from the blood of Christ, it can only be obtained through the church, for which he paid with his blood. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).
- B. The Hope of the World is the Blood of Christ.
1. We live each day upon suffering and death. The plants and animals from which our meals are made sacrificed their lives before they became available for our food. Our mothers suffered and risked their lives in order for us to have life. Jesus died on "The Old Rugged Cross" to make spiritual life possible for us. Without the blood of Christ, there is no salvation and no hope beyond this life.
  2. The gospel tells us to believe in Christ, repent and turn away from the practice of every sin, confess our faith in Christ, and be baptized into Christ. We then enter his church; we are made part of his kingdom; we become a member of his family.
    - a. Acts 2:38, 41, 47: "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....And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
    - b. 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."
  3. We are then privileged to walk in the light of his word and enjoy the continual cleansing his blood provides.
    - a. 1 John 1:6-10: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
    - b. 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."
    - c. Romans 5:9-11: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."
    - d. Hebrews 9:13-15: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead
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works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

- e. Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
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# “Is Thy Heart Right With God?”

Acts 8:14-24

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. Man is a two-fold being.

1. He is a physical man with a physical heart. If the physical heart is diseased or damaged, our physical life is in serious peril
2. He is a spiritual man with a spiritual heart. If our spiritual heart is diseased or damaged spiritually, we are in serious peril.

### B. The spiritual heart must be pure.

1. Passages:
  - 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."
2. Through sin, each accountable individual has committed sin—transgressed God’s will (1 John 3:4). To be pure again, the heart of each must be changed:
  - a. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
  - b. Ecclesiastes 7:29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."
  - c. Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
  - d. Matthew 13:13-15: "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."
  - e. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
  - f. 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. The song, “Is Thy Heart Right With God,” serves as the title to this lesson.

Have thine affections been nailed to the cross? Is thy heart right with God?  
Dost thou count all things for Jesus but lost? Is thy heart right with God?

Hast thou dominion o’er self and o’er sin? Is thy heart right with God?  
Over all evil without and within? Is thy heart right with God?

Are all thy pow’rs under Jesus’ control? Is thy heart right with God?  
Does He each moment abide in thy soul? Is thy heart right with God?

Is thy heart right with God? Washed in the crimson flood;  
Cleansed and made holy, humble and lowly, Right in the sight of God? — E.A. Hoffman

## II. DISCUSSION.

### A. All religious groups call for a change of heart.

1. Many think it is a supernatural change, evidenced by strong emotional reaction.
2. They speak harshly of “head religion” and pronounce loudly in favor of “heart religion.”
3. But man does not have two sets of faculties: one for secular and one for religion. In April of 2004, a



Catholic priest, the head over the Theology Department of Notre Dame University, was asked if a Catholic president of the United States could actively support and defend abortion and still be in fellowship with the Catholic Church. It has been brought out that the Roman Catholic Church has a law forbidding abortion. The priest's reply was that a president operated in two different realms—the political and the religious. He alleged that such a president could strongly support abortion in his political affairs but not in his private (religious) affairs. He would be in sin only if he personally was involved in an abortion. But if anyone promotes a sinful activity, even though he might not personally participate, he is still guilty. [This exchange was on the O'Reilly Factor].

4. To understand how the heart is changed, we must see the nature of the spiritual heart.

**B. What is the spiritual heart and what does it do?**

1. It includes the intellect.

a. It thinks:

- 1) Genesis 6:5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."
- 2) Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee."
- 3) Matthew 9:4: "And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?"
- 4) 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."

b. It understands: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:15).

c. It reasons: "And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" (Mark 2:8).

d. It believes: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).

2. It includes the emotions.

a. It loves:

- 1) Matthew 22:37: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."
- 2) 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. It can despise and hate: "And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart" (2 Sam. 6:16).

c. It can rejoice: "For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name" (Ps. 33:21).

d. It can suffer anguish: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you" (2 Cor. 2:4).

3. It includes will-power.

a. It can intend and purpose:

- 1) Acts 11:23: "Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."
- 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) 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."

- b. It can decide and will: "Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well" (1 Cor. 7:37).

4. It includes the conscience.

- a. It can commend or condemn us: "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" (Rom. 2:15).
- b. 1 Samuel 24:5: "And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt."
- c. 2 Samuel 24:10: "And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly."

C. How is the heart changed?

1. How is the **intellect** changed?

a. By testimony and facts:

- 1) 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."
- 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) 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?"

b. The intellect is addressed by the process of teaching:

- 1) 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."
- 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) John 6:44-45: "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."
- 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. Compare this to the legal process:

- 1) Evidence is obtained.
- 2) The evidence is presented in court.
- 3) The guilt or innocence of the party involved is determined.

2. How are the **emotions** changed?

a. By the appeal of God's love:

- 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) John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me."
  - 3) Hebrews 2:6-9: "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."
  - 4) 1 John 4:19: "We love him, because he first loved us."
- b. The guilt of the offending party is shown; godly sorrow is produced.
    - 1) Romans 5:6: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."
    - 2) Romans 5:8: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
    - 3) 2 Corinthians 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."
  - c. The emotions are addressed by teaching, since faith and love work jointly:
    - 1) Acts 16:34: "And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."
    - 2) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
3. How is the **will** changed?
    - a. By appealing to the motives:
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) 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?"
    - b. By appealing to the fear of punishment and the hope of reward:
      - 1) Acts 2:40: "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."
      - 2) 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."
    - c. The will is addressed by teaching the motives which God provides and the individual chooses.
  4. How is the **conscience** changed?
    - a. By appealing to the sense of right and wrong. The conscience is like a clock—it must be accurately set. If our understanding is incorrect, our conscience will be deceived.
    - b. The conscience is addressed by teaching the truth; the conscience is a safe guide only if it has been properly taught God's law.
    - c. The Ethiopian rejoiced over the blessings he had received; he knew all was well with his soul. "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" (Acts 8:39).
- D. Is the change of heart the only change in the conversion process?
1. There must be a change of heart or baptism is useless: he enters the water as a dry sinner and comes forth from the water a wet sinner.
  2. There must be a change of state or relationship.

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- a. A young woman becomes a bride; her state [her relationship to her husband] has changed. She is not a bride until the proper procedures have been completed.
  - b. A young man enlists in the military; his state is now different from before. He is not a soldier until the enlistment process is completed.
  - c. A sinner's state must be changed:
    - 1) 1 Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."
    - 2) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
    - 3) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
  - d. Before his baptism, the alien sinner is separated from God and all that is holy; after baptism, he is added to Christ, is part of the Lord's spiritual family, and now has citizenship in the Lord's kingdom.
    - 1) Ephesians 2:11-13: "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."
    - 2) Acts 2:41, 47: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls....Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
    - 3) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
3. There must be a change of life [practice].
    - a. One who continues the old manner of living has not been converted.
    - b. Colossians 3:5-14: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness."
  4. The change of heart plus obedience to the gospel results in the approval of the conscience.
    - a. What make the conscience hurt? The realization that one has disobeyed God or that he has not measured up to God's standard:
      - 1) 2 Samuel 24:10: "And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly."
      - 2) Acts 2:37: "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. Rejoicing comes after obedience.
      - 1) Acts 8:39: "And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away
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Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

- 2) Acts 16:32-34: "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."
- 3) Consider the lumberjack waiting to warm up in cold weather before cutting the tree. He will not warm up until he exerts himself in using the axe.
- 4) Consider waiting for the change of heart to happen, without doing our part.

E. Summary.

1. The intellect is changed by testimony.
2. The emotions are changed by the attractiveness of Christ and his word.
3. The will is changed by applying the proper motives.
4. The entire process is consummated in obeying gospel in baptism:
  - a. 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."
  - b. 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."
  - c. 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."
  - d. Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
5. The conscience approves of our faith and obedience.

III. **CONCLUSION.**

A. Why did man marry his wife?

1. He learned her good points, he began to love her.
2. Our learning of Christ's goodness and by studying gospel, we begin to love him: we renounce our former lifestyle and are baptized.
3. Some believe in the Lord, love him, hate the evil world, want to do right: at this point, they have changed their heart but need to change their state: baptism puts the penitent believer into Christ.

B. Feelings can be deceiving.

1. Saul of Tarsus felt he was right:
    - a. Acts 23:1: "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men *and* brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."
    - b. Acts 26:9: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."
  2. We walk by faith: we do not walk by sight or by feelings (2 Cor. 5:7).
  3. The heart that will not do what God says is not right.
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## "How Great Thou Art"

### 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.
- 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.
- C. Many years ago a prominent man in Kansas City defied God before a large audience.
  1. "I will give God 15 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. Arthur Brisbane wrote a rebuttal by comparing the atheist's ploy with a colony of ants in New Mexico which denied the existence of the Santa Fe railroad.
    - a. An intelligent ant accurately described the system and named the president. An unbelieving ant denied it all and defied the president of the line to come out from Chicago and step on him if he [the president] existed. He reached the same conclusion as did the atheist in Kansas City.
    - b. "Can't you imagine the busy president of the Santa Fe Railway, with the destinies of that great concern in his hands, closing his desk and suspending his business to dash out to New Mexico, step on one red ant, just to prove that he did exist?"
    - c. 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: 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: you cannot see him, etc.
  - 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, 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.
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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 mule 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. THE MORAL LAW WITHIN ARGUMENT 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 is for the good of society in general; there are no absolutes; there is 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. Every society, even primitive ones, has a sense of right and wrong, and is repulsed by that which violates that sense.
  - 3. 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.
  - 1. No animal has it. If a man gets his head in the way of a kicking mule and dies from the blow, we do not 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.
- 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 express man 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 and highly complex 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.
    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.
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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 sheweth 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 it not from God?

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

- A. **Ice.** "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).
    1. 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.
    2. 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.
    3. 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.
    4. 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.** 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.
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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.** All of God's creations are designed and equipped for their particular niche in the world.
1. 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.
  2. 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.
  3. 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** 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.
1. 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.
  2. 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.** 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. 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. 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. 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.
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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 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
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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 provide 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 weigh in insects in one day.
  2. Owls, hawks, eagles, etc., keep the rabbit and mice population under control.
  3. The balance if nature affirms the existence of a Grand Designer!

**X. THE 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!
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**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, 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: "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).
1. 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.
  2. 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
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to feeding it semi-digested food.

3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
  - 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."
6. 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 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). 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. 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). 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! "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 our 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
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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 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
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- 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 cudgelled 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.
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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.
    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. 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). An atheistic professor (Paul Davies), conceded that the human brain is "the most developed and complex system known to science' (1992, Jackson, p.50). 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.
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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).
  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 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. How many people are there on the face of the earth?...If there are roughly 4 billion people on earth [more than 6 billion today -BLW], 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 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. 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....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...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. 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....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. 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."
  - 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 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: "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. 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. 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 labour 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: "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. 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."
  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 labour; and their works do follow them."
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## “They Know Not What They Do”

Luke 23:32-43; 1 Peter 2:21-25

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. It Is a Blessing for Us Not to Know Some Things.

1. In the ordinary case, we cannot know the day or the circumstances of our death.
  - a. A man asked his friend if he would like to know when he would die. The friend replied that he had no interest in knowing the day of the death, but he would certainly like to know the place he was to die—“I wouldn’t ever go near the place!”
  - b. If we knew the time of death, we might live sinful lives up until we neared the fateful day—and likely lose our souls because our disobedience would be willful, if we waited until the last hour.
2. If we knew when the Lord would come again, what good would come from that knowledge? We likely would delay our obedience to the gospel, deprive the Lord and the world of the fruits of a godly life, and promote disobedience rather than obedience.

#### B. It is a False Notion That What One Does Not Know Cannot Hurt Him.

1. Our ignorance of a speed limit is not likely to be acceptable to a police officer.
2. Ignorance of the law forbidding taking a box cutter aboard an airliner will not keep us out of trouble.
3. Ignorance of the God’s law will not justify failure to obey:
  - a. 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."
  - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

#### C. But Ignorance Has Led to Great Trouble for Many People.

1. Not knowing about the advances made in modern forensics has caused many criminals to be caught and punished.
2. Not knowing God’s law on marriage, divorce, and remarriage has caused many unsuspecting souls to enter unscriptural marriages that portend great trouble—especially in eternity!
3. Not knowing God’s law of pardon has caused multitudes to live in spiritual darkness and be totally unprepared for eternity.
4. Not knowing God’s requirements for Christian living has caused many members of the Lord’s church to rob themselves of the riches of a godly life—and left them ill-prepared for death.

### II. DISCUSSION.

#### A. Luke 23:32-34.

1. Luke 23:32-34: "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. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
  - a. One purpose behind the three executions was to insult Christ; his companions in death were two criminals; his being placed between the two suggested to the witnesses that he was the worst of the three.
  - b. Our Lord was moved by compassion even toward his enemies: *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*. His reaction was anticipated by the prophet Isaiah:
    - 1) Isaiah 53:5-7: "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."

- 2) 1 Peter 2:21-25: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."
- c. Compassion was commonly expressed by our Lord.
  - 1) Matthew 9:35-38: "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. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."
  - 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."
2. The central purpose of his first coming was to provide a way for lost man to be saved.
  - a. 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."
  - b. Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
  - c. Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
  - d. John 3:16-18: "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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."
3. Our Lord addressed his prayer to the Father.
  - a. He taught his disciples to direct their prayers to the Father: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9).
  - b. God is the Father of Christ in the sense that he is greater in authority than the Son, just as an earthly father has greater authority than his child. God sent the Son; the Son sent the Holy Spirit—"...The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him" (John 13:16).
    - 1) Christ is begotten of the Father in the sense that God sent him into the human family; he was miraculously conceived and brought forth by the Virgin Birth.
    - 2) Christ is begotten of the Father in the sense that God brought him forth from the grave.

- c. The tender communion that existed between the Father and Son during the Lord's earthly ministry can be ours! "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:14-18).
  - 4. Christ asked the Father to forgive his enemies.
    - a. By this he set the perfect example.
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) 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."
      - 3) Mark 11:25-26: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." [Compare: "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him"—Luke 17:3].
      - 4) 1 Corinthians 4:12: "And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."
    - b. Those offenders who received pardon did not obtain it at this time—they were still guilty 53 days later on Pentecost. They were pardoned at the time in Acts 2 only if they obeyed the gospel (Acts 2:36-41).
    - c. The forgiveness we offer to someone who has caused an offense against us does not remove the guilt of his sins; only God can forgive; our forgiveness re-establishes our fellowship with the offender.
  - B. Luke 23:35-38.
    - 1. Luke 23:35-38 "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. 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. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."
    - 2. The Lord's enemies had no compassion on him in his agony; they derided him with harsh words: *He saved others but he cannot save himself.*
    - 3. The soldiers whose job it was to carry out the execution also mocked him. There was no compassion to be found in these belligerent men. After they beheld the miraculous demonstrations that occurred on that occasion, they changed their attitude: "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).
  - C. Luke 23:39-43.
    - 1. 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
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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."

2. One of the criminals made a railing demand of the Lord: "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" [He was asking for the Lord to get them all down from the cross]. This was not an indication of faith, but a scorning challenge. The other criminal rebuked this first man, declaring that he ought to fear God since he was under the same condemnation of death. He stated that he and the first criminal were being justly executed, but that Christ had done nothing amiss. Earlier, both of the criminals had spoken harshly of the Lord: "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth" (Matt. 27:44).
3. The second criminal asked the Lord to "remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." He knew enough about the Lord to believe that he was the Messiah. Like the apostles at first, he misunderstood the nature of the Lord's kingdom.
4. Our Lord replied that this man would "today...be with me in paradise." Paradise is a reference to the place of comfort and rest which the righteous dead enjoy prior to the end of time and the resurrection. The statement clearly indicates that the thief was now a saved man.

D. The Answer to the Thief Argument for Salvation by Faith Only.

1. Sectarians very often make an argument for "being saved today just like the thief." They assume that the thief was saved without baptism, that his salvation was by faith alone, and that therefore anyone today can be saved in the same fashion. Is the thief a proper example for conversion today?
2. Christ had power to forgive sins even while he was in his personal ministry, therefore he is a divine being.
  - a. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) 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" (Mark 4:5-12). The Lord forgave the sick man. No condition is stated, however; the only faith indicated is the faith of the men who carried their sick friend to Jesus.
  - b. Luke 7:47-50: "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." This lady had her sins forgiven by the Lord on the basis of her faith.
  - c. Luke 19:9-10: "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
  - d. Prior to his crucifixion, the Lord forgave various ones—with or without conditions. He had the right to forgive; he could specify any condition or give no condition. But now, since his will has gone into effect, the forgiveness and other bounties are decided by that published word. A man might have millions of dollars; while he lives, he can dispense money to others with or without any condition; but after his death, his money must be awarded in accordance with his will.
    - 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."

3. No one today can be pardoned like the thief was pardoned; no one today can be forgiven like the lady of Luke 7. The reason: Christ's gospel has taken effect; the only way anyone can be saved is by complying with the conditions of the gospel.
  - a. The penitent thief lived and was saved before the gospel took effect. Mark 16:15-16 had not yet been delivered.
  - b. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were saved, but were not baptized. Why? They lived before the law of the Gospel was enacted.
  - c. For the same reason, George Washington did not pay income tax, Andrew Jackson did not pay Tennessee sales tax, and Abraham never had a driver's license—those laws were not in effect when they lived.
  - d. The Law of Christ took effect after his death: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14; cf. Heb. 9:15-17).
  - e. The full terms of the gospel were first preached on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2.
    - 1) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
    - 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."

E. Six things they did not know about Christ

1. They did not know his true identity.
  - a. Plain statements:
    - 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."
  - b. The civil and religious leaders were directly involved in arresting, trying, condemning, and pressuring Pilate to crucify him. They could have discovered his true identity. All the evidence necessary to that end was present.
    - 1) They could have compared his teachings, his life, and other factors regarding his work, to the Old Testament Scriptures and discovered his identity.
    - 2) They could have noted his miracles which proved him to be the Messiah. Nicodemus had done so: "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:1-2).
    - 3) Many of the rulers believed on Christ: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43).
  - c. Rather, they got him to state he was the Son of God and then condemned him on this statement—without examining whether it was true.
    - 1) 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."
- 2) Mark 14:61-65: "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? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall 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, 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. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands."
  - 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."
2. The multitude did not know why he was on the cross.
- a. The civil and religious leaders had condemned him on the charge of blasphemy (since he claimed to be the Son of God); they did not examine the evidence to see if his claim was true—they assumed he was wrong. They closed their minds to the truth. [Those who knew the Lord well, knew that he was innocent of any wrongdoing].
  - b. The average Jew would assume that their leaders had made an exhaustive examination of his case, and had justly condemned Jesus. In their eyes, his guilt had been established. The great mass of humanity will not think for themselves—they accept the views of their religious, academic and political leaders—without examination.
    - 1) Prominent sectarian doctrines are widely accepted because few will investigate.
    - 2) The theory of evolution is accepted because many will not examine it carefully.
    - 3) The “politically correct” doctrine is accepted because it is the popular view.
    - 4) More people are condoning homosexuality and gay marriages without analyzing the issue.
  - c. Their ignorance of the Scriptures set them up to accept this false conclusion.
    - 1) If they had known Isaiah 53, they could have perceived that Jesus of Nazareth is truly the long-awaited Messiah.
    - 2) If they had known Zechariah, they could have foreseen that the Messiah’s demise—Jesus fit the prophetic picture (Zech. 11:12; 12:10; John 19:34-35). He had been betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12); his body had been pierced (Zech. 12:10).
    - 3) If they had known Psalm 22, they would have been aware of other details regarding the Messiah.
      - a) Psalms 22:6-8: "But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. 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) Psalms 22:16-18: "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."
  - d. The Savior’s innocence was admitted by some whose testimony would carry much weight.
    - 1) Judas: "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, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*" (Matt. 27:3-4).
    - 2) Pilate: "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" (Luke 23:14-15).
- 3) Pilate's wife: "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" (Matt. 27:19).
  - 4) The penitent thief: "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" (Luke 23:40-41).
  - 5) The Roman soldiers: "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).
  - 6) 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."
  - 7) 1 Peter 2:22: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
  - 8) John 8:46: "Which of you convicteth me of sin? If I say truth, why do ye not believe me" (ASV)?
3. They did not know what he could do for them.
    - a. John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name."
    - b. Matthew 23:37-39: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
    - c. Luke 19:41-44: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."
    - d. John 5:40: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."
    - e. 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."
  4. They did not know that he was their only hope.
    - a. Matthew 17:5: "....This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
    - 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."
    - d. 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"
    - e. 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."
    - f. They placed their hope:
      - 1) In the Mosaic Law—but that Law was soon to be replaced by the Gospel (Col. 2:14; Jer. 31:31-34; Isa. 2:2-4).
      - 2) In the Temple—but that temple was to be destroyed in A.D. 70.
      - 3) In Jerusalem and its massive walls—but the city was overcome and destroyed by the Romans.

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- 4) In their kinship to Abraham—but that was a forlorn hope.
    - a) 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, 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."
    - b) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
  - 5) They placed their trust in their religious traditions and doctrines of men.
    - a) Matthew 15:7-9: "*Ye* hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men."
    - b) Matthew 15:13-14: "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."
  - g. Sadly, they eventually learned the error of their foolish statement to Pilate:
    - 1) Matthew 27:25: "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children."
    - 2) Luke 23:27-30: "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."
  5. They did not know that he would be raised from the dead.
    - a. Matthew 16:21: "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."
    - b. Matthew 17:22-23: "And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry."
    - c. 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."
  6. They did not know that he would be their Judge.
    - 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. Matthew 26:64: "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."
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- 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."
  - d. 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."
  - e. Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
  - f. 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."
- F. Six other things they did not know.
- 1. They did not know the extent of their wickedness.
    - a. Nehemiah 9:20, 27: "Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst....Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies."
    - b. Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
    - c. Matthew 23:37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!"
    - d. 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*."
    - e. 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."
    - f. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
    - g. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
    - h. Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
  - 2. They did not know the horrors of *Gehenna*.
    - a. It is a place where the ordinary appetites cannot be satisfied. Compare: "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:24).
    - b. It is a place of everlasting shame and contempt.
      - 1) Daniel 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt."
      - 2) Luke 13:27-28: "But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see
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- Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out."
- c. It is a place where the companions there will be most repulsive.
    - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 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."
  - d. It is a place of memory and remorse. Compare: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (Luke 16:25).
  - e. It is a place of no hope. Compare: "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" (Luke 16:26).
  - f. *Gehenna* [hell] is the final abode of the wicked.
    - 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) Revelation 14:10-11: "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."
    - 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."
  - g. It is place of outer darkness: "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30). This dreadful place is devoid of all light; it is outside the place of light.
  - h. It is a place of horrible sounds: "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30).
  - i. It is a place where a loathsome penalty is applied: "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48).
3. They did not know the Old Testament teachings.
- 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 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."
- c. Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
  - d. 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. John 8:58-59: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."
  - f. John 5:39: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."
  - g. 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."
4. They did not know the Old Testament prophecies (Isa. 53).
- a. Deuteronomy 18:15-19: "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....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. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him." [See Acts 3:22-23].
  - b. 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." [See Matt. 1:18-25].
  - c. Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
  - d. Daniel 9:24-27: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 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. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
  - e. 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." [See Matt. 2].
  - f. Micah 7:15: "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous *things*."
5. They did not know God.
- a. John 8:45-47: "And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me
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- of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God."
- b. 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."
  - c. 1 John 2:2-4: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world. 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."
  - d. Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"
  - e. 1 John 1:5-7: "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."
6. They did not know the glories of Heaven.
- 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. 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."
  - c. 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 labour; and their works do follow them."
  - d. 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."

G. How many are in a similar state today?

- 1. Like these Jews of that generation, many today do not know:
  - a. The true identity of Jesus.
  - b. Why the Lord was crucified.
  - c. What Christ can do for them.
  - d. That Jesus is their only hope beyond this life.
  - e. That his resurrection is a genuine, documented event of history.
  - f. That Christ will be their Judge at the end of time.
- 2. Like these Jews, many do not know the extent of their sinful condition.
- 3. Many today do not grasp the horrors of *Genenna*.
- 4. There is much ignorance of the Bible today, even among some members of the church.
- 5. Many today do not know God (1 John 2:2-4).

### III. CONCLUSION.

A. Look again at our text:

- 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. Our Lord's prayer was answered, but not in the direct sense of the word. That is, the sins of the guilty parties were not forgiven immediately, merely on the request of the Savior. That this conclusion is so, is seen by the fact that they were still guilty several weeks later, on the Day of Pentecost: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same



Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:36-37).

3. The conditions of their pardon are the same requirements for us!
  - 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. 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."
4. There is a second law of pardon—for Christians who commit sin:
  - 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."

B. How wonderfully blessed we are to have such a compassionate Savior!

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## THE INFLUENCE OF HUMANISM ON THE AMERICAN SOCIETY

### I. INTRODUCTION.

#### A. This Generation is Facing Problems Older Generations in Our Country Did Not Have to Face.

1. Our generation has degenerated into a spiritually crooked and criminal world to a large degree.
  - a. There is probably more religious error today than ever before.
  - b. There is more crime in our day than ever before in the history of our great country.
  - c. Divorce for any reason, legalized gambling, abortion on demand, homosexaulity, stealing, fraud, alcohol, illegal drugs, chaos in public schools: these are increasing problems, threatening our homes, children, schools, and future.
  - d. Political liberalism and corruption are posing a threat to our country and our own safety.
  - e. Many rulings from our court system clearly promote greater unbelief and immorality; few there be that encourage godliness and righteousness.
2. The causes of the present dilemma are many, but may be summarized in two categories.
  - a. The rejection of the Bible as the absolute standard in spiritual matters is the primary cause. One who rejects the Bible as his guide in religious, spiritual, and moral matters, has repudiated the only inspired source of information on these all-important subjects.
  - b. Humanism is the second cause. This religious philosophy asserts that there is no one to whom we may turn for help; to solve our individual and national problems, we must depend only upon ourselves.
3. Humanism speaks of having two wings—secular and religious. In practical terms, these two branches are one. Religious humanism is merely secular humanism with a religious flavor. Modernistic groups [including the Unitarian Church] color their humanist dogmas and practices with a veneer of religion. The liberal denominations and apostate liberal congregations among us are in the process of becoming nothing more than social clubs with a religious flavor. Humanism is a bag which contains all the moral evils of fallible man.

#### B. Humanism Has These Various Features.

1. Atheism—full-grown humanists reject:
    - a. The existence of God.
    - b. The inspiration, integrity, and authority of the Bible.
    - c. The deity of Christ.
    - d. The need for the crucifixion and atonement provided by Christ.
    - e. All supernatural activity reported in the Bible..
  2. Evolution.
    - a. Since they reject the Bible, they do not believe in special creation.
    - b. They explain the presence of the universe by some such thing as the “big bang” theory.
    - c. They account for life on the basis of blind evolution.
  3. Materialism.
    - a. They do not believe there a is God in heaven; they reject the Biblical concept of Heaven and Hell.
    - b. Satisfying the needs and desires of the flesh is paramount to humanists. To them this world is all there is to a man’s existence.
    - c. They think man must depend on his own wisdom, knowledge, and power to provide for himself.
  4. Modernism and liberalism in politics and religion (if they have any religious or spiritual leaning).
    - a. The trend for the past half-century has been toward liberalism in politics. Politicians blatantly proclaim their support for things that would have made brave men blush in an earlier time.
    - b. Those who believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, and Biblical morality, are depicted by liberal politicians as fanatical religious nuts [they liken us to Islamic extremists].
  5. No absolute standard of morality.
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- a. Joseph Fletcher wrote a widely-accepted book in which he advocated *situation ethics* [that nothing is right or wrong in itself; that the situation determines what should be done. Fletcher tried to weaken the standard of morality. Thomas Altizer wrote a book at the same time in which he announced that “God is dead in human experience.” His efforts were intended to remove the source of morality. The purpose of Fletcher, Altizer, and other humanists is to convince people that they can do whatever they desire, and not have to answer to anyone—not even to the conscience.
- b. They do not believe there is an absolute standard:
  - 1) “We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous [the individual decides] and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures. Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of humanism. We strive for the good life, here and now. The goal is to pursue life's enrichment despite debasing forces of vulgarization, commercialization, and dehumanization” [Manifesto II, part three].
  - 2) “In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit, by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered ‘evil.’ Without countenancing mindless permissiveness or unbridled promiscuity, a civilized society should be a tolerant one. Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their life-styles as they desire” (ibid., part six).
- c. In their view, each individual has the inherent right to decide such things for himself. The philosophy under consideration [humanism] places man at the apex of all thought; it is totally centered on mankind; it utterly rejects the concept of *God*.
- d. Faithful Christians know that God’s gives the standard of morality, and that that standard is the Bible.
  - 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) Psalms 100:3: “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.”
  - 3) 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.”
  - 4) Micah 6:8: ‘He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’
  - 5) 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.”
  - 6) 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.”
  - 7) 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.” (Cf. John 9:4).

## II. HUMANISM HAS HAD AN INFLUENCE ON ALL ASPECTS OF AMERICAN LIFE.

### A. It has had an effect on American Politics.

1. The founders of our nation frequently cited their belief in the the God of the Bible, the authority of the Bible, and to the morality of the Bible. Other influential people have noted the vital importance of the God's word to our country.
  - a. "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on prospering, but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury us and our glory in profound obscurity" (Daniel Webster).
  - b. A prominent Frenchman, after touring America, gave his assessment of our nation: "America is great because America is good; if America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."
2. Each politician who has been infected with humanist precepts will undoubtedly, sooner or later, seek to put those ideas into law.
  - a. Laws have been enacted which make it legal to kill an unborn baby but a serious crime to disturb a turtle's nest or harm an animal.
  - b. We are not allowed to use the Bible in the public classroom, or even to teach a moral principle from the sacred book, but filthy books are sometimes required reading.
  - c. It is unlawful to promote Christianity in the public schools, but Islam may be promoted and made required reading.
  - d. "The courts demand that every religious person must accommodate a single atheist who might be 'offended' at the favorable mention of God's name (unfavorable or blasphemous mentions, we are told, are protected by the same First Amendment that prohibits favorable mentions). But no atheist can be forced to accommodate a single religious person who might be offended by the atheist's unbelief, or who wants to be part of the pluralism and diversity about which liberals regularly speak, but which is not broad enough to embrace people who believe in God" (Cal Thomas).
  - e. "On this day, March 15, 1984, the Senate voted down voluntry silent prayer in public schools. President Ronald Reagan responded: 'I am deeply disappointed that, although a majority of the Senate voted for it, the school prayer amendment fell short.' President Reagan later remarked: 'In 1962, the Supreme court...banned the...saying of prayers. In 1963, the Court banned the reading of the Bible in our public schools...a series of assaults were made in one court after another.... Without God there is no virtue because there is no prompting of the conscience...without God democracy will not and cannot long endure'" (The Federalist).
3. The United States Conference on AIDS recently concluded its annual conference in New Orleans. It was a gay affair, receiving more than \$300,000 of your money, compliments of the Department of Health and Human Services. How did they spend it? Well, some was spent on workshops detailing how to get abstinence education defunded and out of schools; after all, abstinent teens reduce the target population for homosexual pedophiles. One presenter even went as far as to suggest that abstinence education is "harmful to children." Oh, and some of your money was spent on a performance by "entertainer" Jenifer Lewis, who used her time on stage to describe graphically a fantasy sex encounter with VP Dick Cheney. Her performance was so crass that some conference attendees walked out. The event was sponsored by the National Minority AIDS Council, which received \$4.7 million of your hard-earned tax dollars this year [2003].
4. Many politicians support homosexuality, legalized gambling, abortion [even for teenage girls, without parental notification], divorce for any reason, legalizing marriage for same-sex individuals, and a host of other items on the humanist agenda.
5. Many politicians oppose prayers and Bible-reading in public schools; some of them support Islam more than Christianity; some would support removing "In God We Trust" from our coins and "Under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance. In the hands of some politicians, Atheism is safer than the truth of the Bible.

### B. It has an effect on the American News Media.

1. What if today's media had written the Bible?
    - a. On the Red Sea Crossing: "Wetland Trampled in Labor Strike."
    - b. On David and Goliath: "Hate Crime Kills Beloved Champion."
    - c. On Elijah on Mount Carmel: "400 Killed as Fire Sends Religious Right Extremists into Frenzy."
    - d. On the birth of Christ: "Hotels Full, Animals Left Homeless; Animal Rights Activists Enraged by Insensitive Couple."
    - e. On feeding the 5,000: "Preacher Steals Child's Lunch; Disciples Mystified Over Behavior."
    - f. On healing the 10 lepers: "Local Doctor's Practice Ruined; Faith Healer Causes Bankruptcy."
    - g. On healing of the Gadarene demoniac: "Madman's Friend Causes Stampede; Local Farmer's Investment Lost." [The author of these pithy lines is not known to me—bw].
  2. The bias of the news media in behalf of humanism is obvious to any fair observer. Any positive news from our struggles in Iraq are ignored or whitewashed; any negative event from Iraq is frequently blown out of proportion. Conservative matters, which are of great concern to faithful Christians, are not well-received by humanists, who are liberal in their thinking.
  3. Journalists are preponderantly liberal [aka, "Humanist"] in their philosophy, a mental bent that shapes and directs much of their reporting in other than strictly objective directions.
- C. It has an effect on American Public Education.
1. Fifty years ago, the primary offences commonly disturbing public classrooms were such things as chewing gum in class, talking during the class sessions, running in the hallways, etc. Today, serious crimes are commonly taking place, including assault, rape, drug-use, and other such items. Humanism has encouraged the moral standards, which have contributed to the present problems in education.
  2. Humanism says: "I am convinced that the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public school classrooms by teachers who correctly perceive their role as proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects the spark of what theologians call the Divinity in every human being. These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers. The classroom must and will become an arena of conflict between the old and the new—the rotting corpse of Christianity, together with all its adjacent evils and misery..." (John Dunphy, *The Humanist* magazine, Jan/Feb 1983 issue; via the Contender website).
  3. Notice this item taken from the "Contender" website:
    - a. "The rapid spread of humanism in our country is due in large part to the humanist indoctrination our children receive in the public school system. This infusion of humanist propaganda is well known in our colleges and universities, but actually starts well before then, in the elementary schools. In the interest of 'diversity' and 'tolerance,' our elementary students are being forced to study non-Christian religions such as Islam. They are restricted from sharing the gospel with friends at school, but are learning about Mohammed, the Quran, and the 5 pillars of Islam. They are being taught that there truly is no right or wrong. They are being subjected to moral relativism that teaches that what is 'bad' to one person, is good for another person based on differences in cultural background. In the interests of 'tolerance,' they are told not to judge these people, and recognize that calling something bad, wrong, or immoral, is being intolerant and divisive.
    - b. "As our children grow older, and start to learn about science, they are taught that all life and all creation is just a wonderful accident. Teachers, even if they wanted to, could not discuss the scientific evidence of a divine creation. They must teach our children that out of nothing came an entire universe and incredibly complex biological organisms (humans, for example). These students learn that God does not exist, and that humans have not only evolved to what we are now, but we will continue to evolve in more spiritual ways.
    - c. "....According to the scientific method (by which all theories are proved), evolution cannot even be called a theory. Evolution has not been observed, and therefore cannot truly be called more than a hypothesis. However, if you open any science textbook, you will see that evolution is referred to as a FACT!! Creationism cannot be taught in public schools, as it is considered a religious

doctrine. Educators use this as an excuse not to teach our children the plethora of SCIENTIFIC evidence that supports a divine creation. In 1925, a substitute biology teacher named John Scopes was put on trial in Tennessee for teaching evolution in the classroom—against the law in Tennessee at that time. This case became known as the ‘Scopes Monkey Trial.’ Clarence Darrow, an ACLU lawyer who defended Scopes made this comment, ‘It is the height of bigotry to teach only one view of origins.’ Well Mr. Darrow, I wholeheartedly agree. But where is the ACLU now? Why do they not support that comment as they did back in 1925? The reason is that they have succeeded in removing God from the classroom, and they have no intention of letting Him back in!

- d. “As your children graduate from High School and move on to college, the humanist brainwashing intensifies. A recent study by the Center for the Study of Popular Culture polled social science and liberal arts professors at all the Ivy League colleges. The results are not surprising. David Horowitz, president of the Center, says this: ‘Only three percent of the faculty in all the Ivy League identify themselves as Republicans. Forty-four percent named an organization that represents their views as the ACLU,’ he says. ‘Zero percent identify with the Christian Coalition —one percent with the [National Rifle Association].’ Zero percent!!
  - e. From elementary school through post-graduate studies, our children are taught that there is no God, all creation is a pleasant accident, there is no right or wrong, and to say otherwise is intolerant and divisive. You may not share the gospel with your friends, but we will teach you to meditate in the manner of the eastern religions.” [Website located under “Humanism. This is a denominational website, but on this subject, it teaches the truth].
  4. “Christianity is shunned in public schools, while tolerance is advocated for other religions. A California middle school required students studying Islam to dress in Islamic garb, say Muslim prayers, and wage their own personal ‘Jihad.’ In a New York school district, as holidays approached, the school district deemed that nativity scenes and crosses would not be allowed on school property. However, the Star of David, the menorah, the Star and Crescent and the Christmas tree would be allowed. The Christmas tree was allowed, as it was mostly a ‘secular symbol.’ The school district did not say why Jewish and Islamic religious symbols were permitted. This same school district, while not allowing students to pray out loud, set aside a special room for Islamic students to go pray. Elementary school students are being taught self-hypnosis and meditation as relaxation techniques. At the same time, many of these schools have discontinued the practice of reciting the pledge of allegiance, or re-writing it to exclude the words, ‘under God’ (ibid.).
  5. “*Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world*” (Humanist Manifesto). “Humanism is an ideological, political, and religious belief that denies the existence of God. Atheists are humanist, as are new-agers, and many others. The theory of evolution was developed by humanists to create a world devoid of God. Humanism today is prevalent in our media, schools, and government. The religious humanist believes, as the Humanist Manifesto states, that the religions of the world are outdated due to a vastly increased knowledge and experience, and are powerless to solve the problem of human living in this time. Christians know the power of God, but to the humanist the human is divine and must be responsible for furnishing adequate human goals and providing for the spiritual needs of today. Because humanists believe that the universe and its peoples are self-existing and not created, they believe humanism is the only religion capable of leading humans along the evolutionary path to ‘Christ Consciousness.’ In humanism there is no right or wrong, only experience and an endless struggle to become enlightened, to evolve” (ibid.).
- D. It has an effect on American Religion.

1. The Humanist Manifesto II asserts the following:
    - a. “Many within religious groups, believing in the future of humanism, now claim humanist credentials. Humanism is an ethical process through which we all can move, above and beyond the divisive particulars, heroic personalities, dogmatic creeds, and ritual customs of past religions or their mere negation. We affirm a set of common principles that can serve as a basis for united action—positive principles relevant to the present human condition. They are a design for a secular society on a planetary scale.”
    - b. “We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so....We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the human race. As non-theists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity ....Some humanists believe we should reinterpret traditional religions and reinvest them with meanings appropriate to the current situation. Such redefinitions, however, often perpetuate old dependencies and escapisms; they easily become obscurantist, impeding the free use of the intellect. We need, instead, radically new human purposes and goals. We appreciate the need to preserve the best ethical teachings in the religious traditions of humankind, many of which we share in common. But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities.
    - c. “Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities. Such institutions, creeds, and rituals often impede the will to serve others. Too often traditional faiths encourage dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than affirmation, fear rather than courage. More recently they have generated concerned social action, with many signs of relevance appearing in the wake of the ‘God Is Dead’ theologies. But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves [emph. added]....Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the ‘ghost in the machine’ and the ‘separable soul.’ Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body” [part First].
  2. Given these tenets, when a humanist seeks to influence religion, he begins with the assumptions that there is no God, that Christ is not the Son of God, that the Bible is not the word of God, that the universe is not the product of God, that man has no soul that needs saving, that there is no Heaven to be gained and no Hell to be avoided, that there is no divinely-given standard of morality, and that man is ultimately answerable only to himself. These very ideas we are seeing promoted and practiced by modern religious groups. It is obvious that humanism has had a devastating effect on modern religion.
- E. It has an effect on American Business.
1. Merchants and businessmen have always had their problem with unethical operators. Government maintains a close control over weights and measures used in business activities, which has largely curbed much of the crooked dealings of the past. God spoke harshly to the Jewish businessmen of an ancient day regarding their “false balances.”
    - a. Leviticus 19:36: “Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.”
    - b. Amos 8:5: “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?"
- c. Micah 6:11: "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?"
  - d. Jeremiah 32:10: 'And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances.'
2. Advertisements and commercials often make false and misleading claims; implications are made which the item being promoted cannot do.
  3. The radicals who disrupted the nation with their anti-war shennanigans during the 1960s, turned to materialism during the 1970s and 1980s; many of them now occupy positions of great influence in business and government. Many of these are infected with humanism
- F. It has an effect on the American Home and Family.
1. "[M]arriage is threatened not by divorce, but by people not marrying in the first place—as is increasingly the case in the two European societies that have redefined marriage to include couples of the same sex. Our present high divorce rate is not stopping the vast majority of Americans from wanting to marry. Nor should it. Nothing provides the antidote to narcissism, or the environment for the healthy raising of children, or the way for people to take care of one another, as does the marriage of a man and a woman. And while most divorces are terribly sad, divorce itself no more undermines the institution of marriage than car crashes undermine the institution of driving. In fact, the vast majority of people who do divorce deeply wish to marry again; painful divorce has not undermined marriage even among those who have divorced. There may be honest reasons to support the redefinition of marriage to include same-sex couples. The argument that heterosexuals divorce a lot is not one of them. It is, in fact, demagoguery" (Dennis Prager, via The Federalist). [Of course, the Bible shows that there is only one acceptable reason for divorce and remarriage: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9). Mr. Prager's point is to answer the argument made by the homosexual community that marriage is a failure].
  2. "[E]ssentially modern post-Christian Europe, and Canada, and large parts of the United States...have replaced the traditional impulses of civilization, which is to breed, and to prosper, and to expand and survive with a culture of narcissism. You know, I'd like to have...meaningless, promiscuous sex, and just think about myself all day long, and all week long, and all year long. But in the end, when you prioritize that, you actually destroy the culture that enables it. It's a completely absurd culture and brazen. And that's what we've done.... Because the fact of the matter is...most societies have built into their DNA the need to survive, the need to prosper, and the need to reproduce. And we have managed to lose that in an extraordinary short period of time, and quite remarkably....And so it's a simple, foolish, self-defeating sort of selfishness to carry on like that" (Mark Steyn).
  3. "The problem with the 'gay marriage' issue is that the more fundamental issue is not 'gay marriage.' The real issue is who should decide such issues—that is, what kind of country and what kind of government do we have or want to have? What does democracy mean if any headstrong minority can violate the laws passed by a majority and enshrined in centuries of legal precedents?....The time is long overdue to start impeaching judges who think their job is to veto laws they don't like or condone lawlessness that they agree with. The time is also long overdue to re-examine lifetime appointments of judges, which allows them to act like little tin gods, at the expense of our freedom and the country's elected government" (Thomas Sowell, The Federalist).
  4. The following quote is from Wayne Jackson:
    - a. President James A. Garfield once said: "The sanctity of marriage and the family relation make the corner-stone of our American society and civilization." A number of current conditions clearly suggest that that "corner-stone" is crumbling.
    - b. Materialistic parents are placing economic prosperity ahead of their children. The phrase "latch-key child" is too well-known to need elaboration. Many mothers have abandoned the home (cf.



- Tit. 2:5), leaving their children at day-care centers—not because (in many cases) they are forced to work in order to survive, but simply because they want more “things” of a material variety. Children spend countless hours watching TV or playing video games without parental supervision. There will be a high price to pay for such parental irresponsibility.
- c. A large segment of our society has abandoned the concept that God designed the marriage ordinances, and that such are not subject to human revision. For instance, the Bible clearly teaches that sexual gratification is an integral part of marriage. But sexual union is not an end within itself. Sexual activity outside of a legitimate marriage is fornication (cf. 1 Cor. 7:2). At one time it was the case that a mere “live-in” arrangement was a matter of shame. Even Hollywood stars kept such liaisons under the cloak of secrecy. Now, fornicating relationships are common. Celebrities comment upon their “live-with” associations with no blush at all (cf. Jer. 6:15). We are told by experts that more than 5 million Americans are “living together” without the benefit of legitimate marital commitment.
  - d. Add to this the fact that divorce has become a national disgrace. Older folks can easily remember when a divorced person was not a viable political candidate. Now, divorce does not raise an eyebrow. Not only is society out of control in terms of the divorce evil, the church is virtually to that point as well. In recent years weird theories, one after another, have surfaced, the design of which is to justify those who have unscripturally divorced their mates and then remarried. Prominent names have been associated with these views. It is this writer’s conviction that the biblical teaching on this topic—namely that a divorce and potential remarriage is allowed only to the innocent victim in a marriage breached by fornication (cf. Mt. 5:32; 19:9)—is now a minority view among believers.
  - e. The homosexual trend in this country is one of the most dramatic indicators that we are a nation out of moral control. An intimidating word has been coined to characterize those who oppose homosexual conduct: it is “homophobia.” We had better be homophobic—if we remember what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah! Several political movements have attempted to promote homosexual “marriages,” contending that discrimination against “legal” homosexual and lesbian unions is unconstitutional. It is certainly no secret that the present administration reflects the most pro-homosexual leadership in the history of this nation. [This article was written in 1999]. More than 100 “gays” have been appointed to administrative positions under the current President’s watch. Our leader has openly commended the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Teacher’s Network, a national homosexual teachers group, which, incidentally, is determined to teach the youth of the United States that homosexual relationships are normal and beautiful. Out of control!
  - f. Do nations turn around, once they have started a slide toward moral chaos? Tragically, they almost never do. Not even the great nation of Israel could be salvaged by the persuasion of the prophets. It took an Assyrian conquest and a Babylonian captivity (of seventy years) to bring the Hebrews to their knees. Even then a terminal judgment finally came in the form of the Roman destruction of Judaism in A.D. 70 (cf. Mt. 22:7).
  - g. I am certainly no prophet. I do not know what lies in America’s future. I can, however, follow the flow of human history as such is revealed in the Scriptures. And what I see in that does not make me comfortable about our nation’s prospects. I know this: Each Christian, consistent with his/her abilities, has a three-fold responsibility.
    - 1) We must commit to lives of personal goodness as a savoring influence among our peers.
    - 2) We must teach forcefully the positive truths of moral conduct.
    - 3) We must oppose the teachings of the immoral vermin who would destroy this nation. [This article was taken from the Christian Courier website: “America—A Nation Out Of Control”].
- G. It has an effect on American Sports.
- 1. Humanism sees nothing wrong with lying, cheating, or using unethical means to gain an end.
  - 2. There is an attitude in modern sports that emphasizes the necessity of winning at all costs. Whether

these items are caused directly by humanism may be difficult to establish in a given case, but certainly the denial of moral absolutes by humanism would foster such practices as those listed below:

- a. This attitude allows players to try to injure star players on the opposing team.
  - b. It has encouraged some players to use steroid drugs to get an unfair advantage.
  - c. In some cases, bribes have been paid to influence the outcome.
  - d. Some are willing to bend the rules to win.
3. Overpaid sports figures are held up as role-models for young people; some of these stars are known for their immoral conduct and even criminal activity (drug use, for example).

H. It has an effect on the entertainment industry.

1. "We are used to hearing the elites in the entertainment and media worlds complain that conservatives like President Bush are 'out of touch' with the real world, they don't identify with the lives of real people. But real people are showing up in droves to see 'The Passion.' Real people hunger for entertainment that speaks to their souls, that confronts the consequences of sin, that takes on the new aggressive secularism. Real people are weary of having their values and beliefs derived by the Bib Thinkers in the entertainment industry as backward and ignorant" (Laura Ingraham, The Federalist).
2. Humanism is blatantly preached in movies, prime-time television, comedy shows, and songs. If a Christian is portrayed in a movie or television show, he is usually presented as a fool, ignorant, or bigoted.
3. An entertainer at the half-time of a Super Bowl game removed a critical part of her garment for millions to see.
4. Nudity, immoral sexual conduct, profanity, and gross violence are commonly portrayed in movies. These have become so commonplace that our children have grown up thinking this is the way people should act and talk.

I. It has an effect on American Jurisprudence.

1. In early 2005, the Colorado Supreme Court upheld a lower court's ruling to reverse a jury's decision to invoke the death penalty on a man who had been convicted of rape and murder. During the penalty phase of the trial, the jury consulted the Bible before recommending the death penalty. Their verdict was overturned because the consulted God's word.
2. "When he refused to bow and grovel before the federal judiciary, [Judge Roy] Moore was suspended as Alabama's chief justice. In November 2003, he was tried before a judicial ethics panel. Moore's position was elegant in its simplicity: I took an oath to defend the Alabama Constitution, which acknowledges God as the foundation of our laws. Therefore, as the state's chief judicial officer, I am bound to affirm that truth, which I have done with my Ten Commandments statue. And, by the way, I'm not required to go along with the federal judiciary's convenient misinterpretations of the Constitution. Based on his intransigence here, Moore was removed from office....[W]e are in a constitutional crisis created by activist judges intent on mandating homosexual marriage (thereby deconstructing the American family), taking God out of the Pledge of Allegiance, abetting pornographers in flooding the country with filth, enshrining abortion-on-demand as the penultimate right, making Americans subject to foreign laws, and rewriting our history to transform America into one (secular) nation, under their heel. To save the Constitution and representative government will take a thousand Roy Moores, all echoing the words of Thomas Jefferson (author of our nation's founding document): 'To consider the judges as the ultimate arbiters of all constitutional questions (is) a very dangerous doctrine indeed, and one which would place us under the despotism of an oligarchy.' It has" (Don Feder, The Federalist).
3. "A day of decision is upon us. Whether it was the legalization of abortion, the banning of school prayer, the expulsion of the 10 Commandments from public spaces, or the starvation of Terri Schiavo, decisions by the courts have not only changed our nation's course, but even led to the taking of human lives. As the liberal, anti-Christian dogma of the left has been repudiated in almost every recent election, the courts have become the last great bastion for liberalism. For years activist courts, aided

by liberal interest groups like the ACLU, have been quietly working under the veil of the judiciary, like thieves in the night, to rob us of our Christian heritage and our religious freedoms. Federal judges have systematically grabbed power, usurping the constitutional authority that resides in the other two branches of government and, ultimately, in the American people" (Tony Perkins, *The Federalist*).

4. Another quote from Wayne Jackson's fine article: *America—A Nation Out Of Control*:
  - a. "Another symptom of a nation out of control is the manner in which our judicial system has decomposed over the past half-century. A very significant book arrested the public's attention recently. It is titled, *Guilty: The Collapse of Criminal Justice* (1996, Random House). The author was the late Harold J. Rothwax, a judge who presided over criminal cases in New York City for the past twenty-five years. Apparently Judge Rothwax was not conservatively oriented. He stated that in his early life his hero was Clarence Darrow (the atheist who argued for evolution in the famous Scopes trial). Too, in his younger lawyering years, Rothwax was a card-carrying member of the A.C.L.U. I mention these things to emphasize that this judge was not out of a strait-laced background. The thesis of the Judge's book is this: The American justice system is in a state of moral collapse. He writes: 'We have formalism and technicalities but little common sense. It's about time America wakes up to the fact that we're in the fight of our lives.' This prominent jurist further stresses: 'The bottom line is that criminals are going free.' He notes: 'There is no respect for the truth, and without truth, there can be no justice.' Rothwax charges that 'our system is a carefully crafted maze, constructed of elaborate and impenetrable barriers to the truth.'
  - b. "There are many cases which illustrate the growing abuse of justice. We summarize two of these.
    - 1) On Christmas Eve of 1968, ten-year-old Pamela Powers was attending an event with her parents at the YMCA in Des Moines, Iowa. She went to the rest room and was never seen alive again. A few days afterward, a car was discovered in Davenport (160 miles away) containing some of her clothes. Two days later, Robert Williams, owner of the car, surrendered to Davenport police. Officials in Des Moines dispatched two policemen to transport Williams back to the site of the abduction. They were strictly charged not to question him en route. Along the way, one of the officers commented that it was Christmas time, and it would be wonderful if the Powers family could at least recover the body of Pamela and give it a 'Christian burial.' Sometime later Williams spoke up: 'Okay, let me take you to the body.' He directed the officers to the place where he had buried little Pamela in a ditch. Subsequent tests revealed that she had been raped and smothered to death. Robert Williams was convicted of murder. However, the conviction was overturned in federal court. When the U.S. Supreme court finally ruled on the matter, the majority opinion, written by Justice Potter Stewart, stated that Williams' 'rights' had been violated by the police officer's 'Christian burial' speech.
    - 2) "At 2 a.m. on November 20, 1990, Leonardo Turriago was pulled over by two state troopers for speeding. The officers asked if they could look into his van; Turriago said they could. Inside, the troopers saw a trunk and asked Turriago about it. He sprang open its lock, then ran away. Opening the trunk, the troopers found the body of a man shot five times. Turriago was caught quickly. In his apartment, police found eleven pounds of cocaine and guns. The suspect told them where to find the murder weapon. Turriago was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to forty-five years to life. The defense appealed, arguing that the troopers had no right to search the van. On June 6, 1996, Turriago's conviction was overturned. A New York appellate court ruled that the police search had been coercive.
  - c. "There are hundreds of similar examples. It is difficult to fathom how anyone could be so dense as to be unable to see that we have bent so far over backwards, to insure that those accused of crimes are not abused, that we have thrown truth and justice to the wind. Is it any wonder that respect for the judicial system is at an all-time low? Is it any surprise that the crime rate has skyrocketed? The judicial system is out of control. We have evolved a legal 'kangaroo' procedure where the morality of biblical revelation is despised and ridiculed, while the Amendments to the

Constitution are viewed as sacrosanct.”

J. It has an effect on American Medical Practices.

1. There are many doctors who have no conscience against aborting innocent babies.
2. It is becoming clear that some medical people have no compunction against starving innocent babies and adults to death.
3. What is to keep an unscrupulous health care giver from dosing a patient with strong drugs, keeping him under sedation for a long period of time, and give the victim no food—starving him to death?
4. There seems to be a growing movement in our nation toward doctor-assisted suicide. This is one of the prominent features on the humanist agenda: “To enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of civil liberties in all societies. This includes freedom of speech and the press, political democracy, the legal right of opposition to governmental policies, fair judicial process, religious liberty, freedom of association, and artistic, scientific, and cultural freedom. It also includes a recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide. We oppose the increasing invasion of privacy, by whatever means, in both totalitarian and democratic societies. We would safeguard, extend, and implement the principles of human freedom evolved from the Magna Carta to the Bill of Rights, the Rights of Man, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights” [Manifesto II, point seven].

III. **THE FALSE MORALITY OF SECULAR HUMANISM.**

A. An Examination of the Basic Views of Morality of Humanism [We quote from Humanist Manifesto II].

1. “As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to live and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith. Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival....Traditional moral codes and newer irrational cults both fail to meet the pressing needs of today and tomorrow. False ‘theologies of hope’ and messianic ideologies, substituting new dogmas for old, cannot cope with existing world realities. They separate rather than unite peoples....The ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the potential for growth in each human personality—not for the favored few, but for all of humankind. Only a shared world and global measures will suffice....The decades ahead call for dedicated, clear-minded men and women able to marshal the will, intelligence, and cooperative skills for shaping a desirable future. Humanism can provide the purpose and inspiration that so many seek; it can give personal meaning and significance to human life....
2. “FIRST: In the best sense, religion may inspire dedication to the highest ethical ideals. The cultivation of moral devotion and creative imagination is an expression of genuine ‘spiritual’ experience and aspiration.
  - a. We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so. Even at this late date in human history, certain elementary facts based upon the critical use of scientific reason have to be restated. We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the human race. As non-theists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity. Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.
  - b. “Some humanists believe we should reinterpret traditional religions and reinvest them with meanings appropriate to the current situation. Such redefinitions, however, often perpetuate old dependencies and escapisms; they easily become obscurantist, impeding the free use of the intellect. We need, instead, radically new human purposes and goals.
  - c. “We appreciate the need to preserve the best ethical teachings in the religious traditions of

humankind, many of which we share in common. But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities. Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities. Such institutions, creeds, and rituals often impede the will to serve others. Too often traditional faiths encourage dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than affirmation, fear rather than courage. More recently they have generated concerned social action, with many signs of relevance appearing in the wake of the 'God Is Dead' theologies. But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves" [Manifesto II].

3. From this quote, it is clear that humanists think Bible morality is outdated; that there is no absolute truth governing conduct or religious belief. Every person is his own lawmaker. "We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount....The world has achieved brilliance without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants" [General Omar Bradley].
4. They think that there is no act that is always wrong, as long as *love* is served somehow.
  - a. Lying, stealing, adultery, and such like may be wrong in most cases, but there are situations in which these ungodly acts are the right thing to do (they think).
  - b. They propound the case of a frontier family under attack by Indians. The father hides his wife and children in the cellar beneath a trap door. The Indians capture the man and demand that he reveal the hiding place of his family. The situationists say that to tell the truth would be wrong; to tell them a lie would best serve love and ought to be done. [We will answer this later].
  - c. They relate another situation of a German woman captured and imprisoned when the Russians conquered her country at the end of World War II. Her family was in territory controlled by the West, but she was placed in a concentration camp in East Germany. The only way she could be released and restored to her family was if (1) she became gravely ill, or (2) she became pregnant. She enticed one of her guards and became pregnant. When her condition was made known, she was allowed to return to her family, who received her warmly. Her baby was made welcome by the family. The situationists say that love in this case was best served by her committing adultery, not by remaining pure. [We will answer this later].
5. Here are some statements made by situationists [humanists]:
  - a. "But if people do not believe it is wrong to have sex relations without marriage, it isn't, unless they hurt themselves, their parents, or others....All situationists would agree with Mrs. Patrick Campbell's remark that they can do what they want 'as long as they don't do it in the street and frighten the horses'" (*Spiritual Sword*, July, 1972, p.24).
  - b. "For me there are no rules—none at all" (*ibid*).
  - c. "The situationist enters into every decision-making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage, and he treats them with respect as illuminators of his problems. Just the same he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside in the situation if love seems better served by doing so....The situationist follows a moral law or violates it according to love's need....Only the commandment to love is categorically good" (*I Believe Because*, p.237).
  - d. "The point is that an evolutionary ethic for man...should be based on man's own nature, on his evolutionary position and significance....It cannot be expected to be absolute, but must be subject to evolution itself and must be the result of responsible and rational choice in the full light of such knowledge of man and of life as we have" (George Gaylord Simpson, *ibid*, p.25).
  - e. "No action is good or right in itself. It depends on whether it hurts or helps people, whether or not it serves love's purposes..." (*Spiritual Sword*, July, 1971, p.45).
6. Some situationists even appeal to Scripture for support of their views. They twist these passages in a misguided attempt to deceive the simple into believing their foolish doctrine.

- a. One such passage is Mark 2:23-28: "And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
  - b. From the information in this passage they conclude that Jesus was a situationist, and condoned violating Scriptural principles when necessary. Since he did so, we may. [We will answer this later].
- B. There is Such a Thing as Absolute Truth and Thus an Absolute Standard of Morality.
1. "If you tell me you do not believe in God and then say to me I should brake for animals, or pay women equally, or help the poor, on what basis are you making such an appeal? If no standard for objective truth, law, wisdom, justice, charity, kindness, compassion and fidelity exists in the universe, then what you are asking me to accept is an idea that has taken hold in your head but that has all of the moral compulsion of a bowl of cereal. You are a sentimentalist, trying to persuade me to a point of view based on your feelings about the subject and not rooted in the fear of God or some other unchanging earthly standard. The mayor of New Paltz, NY, Jason West, recently performed same-sex 'marriages,' saying it is the 'moral' thing to do. Moral? According to whom? If only according to Mr. West, he is practicing moral relativism, not objective morality" (Cal Thomas).
  2. Morals could not have evolved, as the evolutionists assert. Morals have no physical properties. The true and only possible source of the sense of rightness or wrongness (which gives a sense of happiness or of guilt) could only have been provided by our Creator.
    - a. 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."
    - 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. John 2:24-25: "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."
    - d. Psalms 8:1-9: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"
  3. Humanism makes strong assertions that there is no such thing as an absolute standard of morality, but they make other statements that contradict this basic false assumption:
    - a. They state that the Nazi holocaust against the Jews was evil, and that the Nuremberg trials were good. By what standard do they judge the former to be bad and the latter good?
    - b. They affirm that moral values are relative and that there are no moral absolutes, but then make statements which require a firm moral standard: "The overriding need of the world community today is to develop a new Planetary Humanism—one that seeks to preserve human rights and
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- enhance human freedom and dignity, but also emphasizes our commitment to humanity as a whole. The underlying ethical principle of Planetary Humanism is the need to respect the dignity and worth of all persons in the world community” (Manifesto of 2000).
- c. According to humanism, the same act might be right and wrong—depending on the time element. A moment before Roe—Wade took effect, abortion was wrong; a moment after, it was good. But the truth is, that the act itself determines whether it is good or evil, with God’s word as the standard (cf. Ps. 19:1-4; Rom. 1:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:16; Mark 12:29-31).
  - d. A humanist is inconsistent with his faith and practice when he is personally involved. He condones lying, stealing, murder, and rape by asserting the criminal’s background absolves him from guilt, or some technical failure on the part of the legal system nullifies his crime. Such is the case when the humanist is not directly affected. But if the crime is committed against him or his family, his tune is much different!
4. Truth itself is narrow and restricted.
    - a. We must be 100% correct to ring a particular telephone or to open a combination lock. The right numbers are required and they must be used in the right sequence.
    - b. It is not enough that we are sincere in thinking we have used the right numbers in the right sequence when we have not done so; the proper phone will not ring and the lock will not open!
    - c. It does not matter who the person is who tries to ring your number; everyone must dial the same numbers; and the numbers and their sequence do not change daily or with the situation.
    - d. Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
  5. Truth is narrow, restricted, and unbendable in natural laws.
    - a. Gravity: It does not matter how sincerely one wishes, gravity will not go away; neither can it be changed to fit our current needs. It does not matter whether an innocent baby or a hardened criminal violates the law of gravity: the result is the same.
    - b. Chemistry: A deadly concoction will kill an innocent baby as well as a hardened criminal. And the healing properties of chemicals will avail the innocent as well as the sinful. The concoction has the same results daily and universally; it is dependable and unbendable.
    - c. Reproduction: A million grains of corn when properly planted will produce plants of the same kind. None of these seeds will produce a potato or cotton plant. There is no exception.
    - d. These laws of nature remain unchanged; they apply with equal force to everyone. The same is true with spiritual laws.
      - 1) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
      - 2) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all."
  6. God had an absolute standard for man in the Patriarchal Age.
    - a. Genesis 4:3-5: "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." Abel offered his sacrifice by faith (Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17); Cain did not. God’s word to Cain and Abel was absolute and unchangeable.
    - b. Genesis 38: The Cases of Er and Onan.
    - c. Genesis 39:9: "*There is* none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou *art* his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" If Joseph had agreed to the enticements of Potiphar’s wife he would have committed sin against God; sin is the transgression of God’s law (1 John 3:4). Where there is no absolute
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- standard, there is no sin (Rom. 4:15; 5:13). Joseph knew more than the humanists; to commit this sin would have caused greater problems than the imprisonment he suffered.
7. God had an absolute standard for man in the Mosaic Age.
    - a. The Decalogue meant exactly what it said (Ex. 20:1-17). No exceptions were permitted. These are not mere suggestions or general guidelines!
    - b. Violators of Moses' Law were punished. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2).
    - c. Numbers 15:32-36: "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses."
    - d. Leviticus 10:1-2: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD."
  8. God has an absolute standard for man in the Gospel Age.
    - a. Hebrews 2:1-3: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have 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*."
    - b. Wrongs are identified:
      - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
      - 2) 2 Corinthians 1:18-20: "But *as God is* true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."
      - 3) Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
      - 4) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
      - 5) Revelation 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:27 says that those contaminated with sin (any sin) will not be permitted into heaven.
    - c. The New Testament also spells out positive things which are required of us if we are to have God's approval and blessings. It is not enough that we shun the wrong, we must do the right.
      - 1) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."



- 2) 2 Peter 1:5-7: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
- d. The New Testament has a stricter standard of right and wrong than the Old Testament.
  - 1) The Old Testament forbade adultery; the gospel forbids the lustful look: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28).
  - 2) The Old Testament forbade stealing; the gospel requires us to work so that we may give to those in need: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
- e. The New Testament applies to every generation, universally, to the end of time.
  - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have 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" (NKJ).
  - 2) We are warned not to make any changes to it:
    - a) Galatians 1:6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
    - b) Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
  - 3) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
  - 4) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

### C. Christian Conduct is Based on Love.

1. Pertinent passages:
  - a. Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
  - b. Romans 13:8: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."
2. Man (using only his own ideas and intelligence) is not able to know what love requires in every situation.
  - a. What one might think serves love might be wrong.
    - 1) Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
    - 2) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

- b. Hitler loved Germany, but he caused millions of people to be killed; many Germans were also slaughtered in his concentration camps by his command; tens of millions of others died in the war he precipitated.
- c. The theory would give man the right to decide for himself what love requires. Disasters would be multiplied if everyone followed the humanistic standard.
3. We must have a reliable standard to know what love requires.
  - a. God's word details what love requires.
    - 1) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
    - 2) Mark 12:31: "And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
    - 3) Romans 13:8-10: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law."
    - 4) 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."
    - 5) 1 John 5:2-3: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
  - b. When we obey God, we know we are right and cannot be wrong.
- D. We Can Know That the New Morality of Secular Humanism is Wrong.
  1. Their arguments can be answered.
    - a. Mark 2:23-28; cf. Matthew 12:1-8; 1 Samuel 21:1-7. Christ replied to his enemies by showing that they were being inconsistent when they justified David's unlawful act and condemned his disciples' action which he shows to have been lawful and right. Commenting on Matthew 12:3ff, J.W. McGarvey made the following observations:
      - 1) "Jesus expressly admits that what David did was unlawful; and some have supposed that he here intends to justify it on the ground of necessity, and then to argue that his disciples, though guilty of violating the law of the Sabbath, are justifiable on the same ground. There is no doubt that on this ground David excused himself for eating the showbread, and that the Pharisees did the same for him. But it can not be that he who refused to turn stones into bread when tortured by a forty days' fast, and who said, 'Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,' would approve such a violation of the law as David was guilty of. Neither can it be that he allowed his own disciples while under the law to break the Sabbath. If Christians may violate law when its observance would involve hardship or suffering, then there is an end of suffering for the name of Christ, and an end even of self-denial" (*Commentary on Matthew-Mark*, p.104).
      - 2) "But it is clear that by the Pharisees David's act was thought excusable; otherwise they could have retorted on Jesus thus: Out of your own mouth we condemn you: you class your act with David's; but David sinned, and so do you" (*ibid*).
      - 3) "Now the real argument of Jesus is this: David, when hungry, ate the show-bread, which it was confessedly unlawful for him to eat, yet you justify him: my disciples pluck grain and eat it on the Sabbath, an act which the law does not forbid, and yet you condemn them" (*ibid*).
      - 4) "The priests in the temple were required to offer sacrifice, trim the golden lamps, and burn

incense on the Sabbath, and these acts required manual labor. In this case, the general law against labor on the Sabbath was modified by the specific law concerning the temple service. The term ‘profane’ is used, not because it was a real profanation, but because, being labor, it had the appearance of profanation. The example proves that the prohibition of labor on the Sabbath was not universal, and as it was not, it might not include what the disciples had just done” (*ibid*).

- 5) “The disciples who ate the grain are compared to the priest in the temple; and the temple with that which led the disciples to the act in question. This was the service which they were rendering to Jesus—a service which sometimes prevented the usual means of providing food. It was their obligation to serve him which was greater than the temple; that is greater than the obligation of the temple service on the priests. If then, the priests were justifiable, much more the disciples” (*ibid*).
- 6) “That he was Lord of the Sabbath—a fact which his previous works had demonstrated—placed his conduct in regard to the Sabbath above criticism, and made it really a guide as to the proper way to observe the Sabbath. This remark takes the question outside the range of argument, and brings it within the range of authority. It should be observed that, in this discussion, Jesus sought chiefly to expose the inconsistency of his assailants, and to assert his own divine authority. He reserved to another opportunity a more detailed argument to prove the innocence of acts of mercy on the Sabbath” (*ibid*, p.105).
- b. Their pioneer and Indians argument.
  - 1) If the frontiersman told the truth, he would have destroyed his family. If he told a lie, he would be in trouble with the Almighty (Rev. 21:8). What could he do?
  - 2) However, the Indians would kill the pioneer whether he told the truth, told a lie, or said nothing at all. Why not preserve his family and his own integrity by remaining silent about his family? The likelihood of anyone today falling into a similar situation is extremely remote.
- c. The German woman argument.
  - 1) The case shows the weakness of their system. It is an extremely rare and unlikely situation. How many people are apt to face such a dilemma?
  - 2) The case fails to take note of the evil effects the woman’s actions could naturally bring to the guard himself, on his wife and family, and on the future behavior of the woman’s children, in addition to the evil which any sin brings on those who are tainted by it.
  - 3) Which is worse? To be in prison, separated from her family? Or to be in direct violation of the Law of God?
    - a) Isaiah 59:1: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
    - b) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
2. We can see humanism’s folly by looking at history.
  - a. If an absolute standard of morality is not recognized, confusion and turmoil result. "In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).
  - b. Where Bible morality was rejected, doom resulted. Compare: Sodom; Rome; Greece; Nazi Germany; Tojo’s Japan; Saddam Hussein’s Iraq.
  - c. We cannot legalize or wink at sin without being affected. It will grow, multiply, intensify, spread, and destroy. Legalized gambling (perfectly acceptable to humanists) contaminates a community in various ways.
    - 1) It takes food from the mouths of the innocent and cover from their heads.
    - 2) It corrupts some law enforcement personnel, judges and attorneys, and the gamblers.
    - 3) It places a greater tax burden on the population to support more police, additional jails, more

judges and courtrooms, and to finance a greater welfare program.

- 4) It destroys the principle of work, encourages the something-for-nothing notion, and promotes the downward trend in morality.
- d. Biblical principles, stated so long ago and proved by countless specific cases, are still true.
  - 1) Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
  - 2) Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people."
3. The New Morality of Humanism is simply the Old Immorality! Modernists in our modern world like to change names and words, to deceive the simple—and themselves. Humanism is a philosophy that is merely the same old rebellion against God that destroyed many societies of the past and propelled countless souls into perdition!

#### IV. CONCLUSION.

##### A. Humanism and Its Fruits:

1. Humanism in **politics** undermines and weakens a country.
2. Humanism in **religion** weakens and destroys souls.
3. Humanism in **morality** sickens and destroys a society.
4. Humanism in **justice** punishes the innocent and justifies the guilty.
5. Humanism in **law enforcement** weakens respect for the law and undermines justice.
6. Humanism in **business practices** undermines the economy, promotes greed, and robs the innocent.
7. Humanism in **society** weakens the home and undermines respect for law and order.
8. Humanism in **education** robs young people of what they need to face the real world.

##### B. What Can We Do?

1. First, tend to our own immediate situation.
  - a. We must control our own selves, by keeping ourselves pure in thought, word, motive, and deed.
  - b. We can train and restrain those under our influence: our children and grandchildren; we can urge morality in our entire family and encourage it among our friends.
  - c. We must trust in God's providence to deliver us from evil.
    - 1) Matthew 6:13: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."
    - 2) 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
    - 3) Philippians 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
2. We can try to influence others in the way of truth.
  - a. By exalting God and his word.
    - 1) God wants the best for us. A mother restricts the activities of her children, not for the purpose of demonstrating her authority, but in the best interests of her little ones.
    - 2) God places some restrictions and requirements on us, but these are all in our best interest. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11).
    - 3) God's word is timeless and powerful. "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:24-25).
  - b. By setting the proper example for the world: be consistent with our claims as children of God.
  - c. Do what we can to retain good civil laws and oppose unrighteous laws in every scriptural way.
  - d. Develop strong elders, deacons, teachers, and preachers who will stand for and uphold the truth.

e. Insist on faithful preaching of the word.

- 1) 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."
- 2) 2 Timothy 4:1-5: "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they eap 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."

C. The Gospel Plan of Salvation Demonstrates God's Wisdom.

1. By examining and receiving (hearing) the gospel, we demonstrate our honesty: "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" (Acts 17:11-12).
  2. Believing the gospel changes the object of our love: before faith, we loved self and the world; after faith is established in our hearts, we center our love on Christ and heaven.
  3. In repentance, we sincerely regret our sinful past, and determine not to repeat those sinful actions.
  4. In confessing Christ before God and men, we show our courage and commitment.
  5. In baptism, we show our faith and willingness to be obedient to God in order to be saved.
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## Humanist Manifesto I

The Manifesto is a product of many minds. It was designed to represent a developing point of view, not a new creed. The individuals whose signatures appear would, had they been writing individual statements, have stated the propositions in differing terms. The importance of the document is that more than thirty men have come to general agreement on matters of final concern and that these men are undoubtedly representative of a large number who are forging a new philosophy out of the materials of the modern world. -- Raymond B. Bragg (1933)

The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious beliefs throughout the modern world. The time is past for mere revision of traditional attitudes. Science and economic change have disrupted the old beliefs. Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions created by a vastly increased knowledge and experience. In every field of human activity, the vital movement is now in the direction of a candid and explicit humanism. In order that religious humanism may be better understood we, the undersigned, desire to make certain affirmations which we believe the facts of our contemporary life demonstrate.

There is great danger of a final, and we believe fatal, identification of the word religion with doctrines and methods which have lost their significance and which are powerless to solve the problem of human living in the Twentieth Century. Religions have always been means for realizing the highest values of life. Their end has been accomplished through the interpretation of the total environing situation (theology or world view), the sense of values resulting therefrom (goal or ideal), and the technique (cult), established for realizing the satisfactory life. A change in any of these factors results in alteration of the outward forms of religion. This fact explains the changefulness of religions through the centuries. But through all changes religion itself remains constant in its quest for abiding values, an inseparable feature of human life.

Today man's larger understanding of the universe, his scientific achievements, and deeper appreciation of brotherhood, have created a situation which requires a new statement of the means and purposes of religion. Such a vital, fearless, and frank religion capable of furnishing adequate social goals and personal satisfactions may appear to many people as a complete break with the past. While this age does owe a vast debt to the traditional religions, it is none the less obvious that any religion that can hope to be a synthesizing and dynamic force for today must be shaped for the needs of this age. To establish such a religion is a major necessity of the present. It is a responsibility which rests upon this generation. We therefore affirm the following:

FIRST: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

SECOND: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.

THIRD: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

FOURTH: Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded by that culture.

FIFTH: Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relations to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

SIXTH: We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought".

SEVENTH: Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation -- all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.

EIGHTH: Religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

NINTH: In the place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.

TENTH: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

ELEVENTH: Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

TWELFTH: Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the

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satisfactions of life.

THIRTEENTH: Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

FOURTEENTH: The humanists are firmly convinced that existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate and that a radical change in methods, controls, and motives must be instituted. A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

FIFTEENTH AND LAST: We assert that humanism will: (a) affirm life rather than deny it; (b) seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from them; and ©) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive morale and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

So stand the theses of religious humanism. Though we consider the religious forms and ideas of our fathers no longer adequate, the quest for the good life is still the central task for mankind. Man is at last becoming aware that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, that he has within himself the power for its achievement. He must set intelligence and will to the task.

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## Humanist Manifesto II

### -- Preface --

It is forty years since Humanist Manifesto I (1933) appeared. Events since then make that earlier statement seem far too optimistic. Nazism has shown the depths of brutality of which humanity is capable. Other totalitarian regimes have suppressed human rights without ending poverty. Science has sometimes brought evil as well as good. Recent decades have shown that inhuman wars can be made in the name of peace. The beginnings of police states, even in democratic societies, widespread government espionage, and other abuses of power by military, political, and industrial elites, and the continuance of unyielding racism, all present a different and difficult social outlook. In various societies, the demands of women and minority groups for equal rights effectively challenge our generation.

As we approach the twenty-first century, however, an affirmative and hopeful vision is needed. Faith, commensurate with advancing knowledge, is also necessary. In the choice between despair and hope, humanists respond in this Humanist Manifesto II with a positive declaration for times of uncertainty.

As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to live and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith. Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival.

Those who sign Humanist Manifesto II disclaim that they are setting forth a binding credo; their individual views would be stated in widely varying ways. This statement is, however, reaching for vision in a time that needs direction. It is social analysis in an effort at consensus. New statements should be developed to supersede this, but for today it is our conviction that humanism offers an alternative that can serve present-day needs and guide humankind toward the future.

-- Paul Kurtz and Edwin H. Wilson (1973)

The next century can be and should be the humanistic century. Dramatic scientific, technological, and ever-accelerating social and political changes crowd our awareness. We have virtually conquered the planet, explored the moon, overcome the natural limits of travel and communication; we stand at the dawn of a new age, ready to move farther into space and perhaps inhabit other planets. Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease, extend our life-span, significantly modify our behavior, alter the course of human evolution and cultural development, unlock vast new powers, and provide humankind with unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life.

The future is, however, filled with dangers. In learning to apply the scientific method to nature and human life, we have opened the door to ecological damage, over-population, dehumanizing institutions, totalitarian repression, and nuclear and bio- chemical disaster. Faced with apocalyptic prophecies and doomsday scenarios, many flee in despair from reason and embrace irrational cults and theologies of withdrawal and retreat.

Traditional moral codes and newer irrational cults both fail to meet the pressing needs of today and tomorrow. False "theologies of hope" and messianic ideologies, substituting new dogmas for old, cannot cope with existing

world realities. They separate rather than unite peoples.

Humanity, to survive, requires bold and daring measures. We need to extend the uses of scientific method, not renounce them, to fuse reason with compassion in order to build constructive social and moral values. Confronted by many possible futures, we must decide which to pursue. The ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the potential for growth in each human personality -- not for the favored few, but for all of humankind. Only a shared world and global measures will suffice.

A humanist outlook will tap the creativity of each human being and provide the vision and courage for us to work together. This outlook emphasizes the role human beings can play in their own spheres of action. The decades ahead call for dedicated, clearminded men and women able to marshal the will, intelligence, and cooperative skills for shaping a desirable future. Humanism can provide the purpose and inspiration that so many seek; it can give personal meaning and significance to human life.

Many kinds of humanism exist in the contemporary world. The varieties and emphases of naturalistic humanism include "scientific," "ethical," "democratic," "religious," and "Marxist" humanism. Free thought, atheism, agnosticism, skepticism, deism, rationalism, ethical culture, and liberal religion all claim to be heir to the humanist tradition. Humanism traces its roots from ancient China, classical Greece and Rome, through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, to the scientific revolution of the modern world. But views that merely reject theism are not equivalent to humanism. They lack commitment to the positive belief in the possibilities of human progress and to the values central to it. Many within religious groups, believing in the future of humanism, now claim humanist credentials. Humanism is an ethical process through which we all can move, above and beyond the divisive particulars, heroic personalities, dogmatic creeds, and ritual customs of past religions or their mere negation.

We affirm a set of common principles that can serve as a basis for united action -- positive principles relevant to the present human condition. They are a design for a secular society on a planetary scale.

For these reasons, we submit this new Humanist Manifesto for the future of humankind; for us, it is a vision of hope, a direction for satisfying survival.

-- Religion --

FIRST: In the best sense, religion may inspire dedication to the highest ethical ideals. The cultivation of moral devotion and creative imagination is an expression of genuine "spiritual" experience and aspiration.

We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so. Even at this late date in human history, certain elementary facts based upon the critical use of scientific reason have to be restated. We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the

human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity. Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.

Some humanists believe we should reinterpret traditional religions and reinvest them with meanings appropriate to the current situation. Such redefinitions, however, often perpetuate old dependencies and escapisms; they easily become obscurantist, impeding the free use of the intellect. We need, instead, radically new human purposes and goals.

We appreciate the need to preserve the best ethical teachings in the religious traditions of humankind, many of which we share in common. But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities. Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities. Such institutions, creeds, and rituals often impede the will to serve others. Too often traditional faiths encourage dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than affirmation, fear rather than courage. More recently they have generated concerned social action, with many signs of relevance appearing in the wake of the "God Is Dead" theologies. But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. While there is much that we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.

SECOND: Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the "ghost in the machine" and the "separable soul." Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture.

Traditional religions are surely not the only obstacles to human progress. Other ideologies also impede human advance. Some forms of political doctrine, for instance, function religiously, reflecting the worst features of orthodoxy and authoritarianism, especially when they sacrifice individuals on the altar of Utopian promises. Purely economic and political viewpoints, whether capitalist or communist, often function as religious and ideological dogma. Although humans undoubtedly need economic and political goals, they also need creative values by which to live.

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-- Ethics --

THIRD: We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our futures. Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of humanism. We strive for the good life, here and now. The goal is to pursue life's enrichment despite debasing forces of vulgarization, commercialization, and dehumanization.

FOURTH: Reason and intelligence are the most effective instruments that humankind possesses. There is no substitute: neither faith nor passion suffices in itself. The controlled use of scientific methods, which have transformed the natural and social sciences since the Renaissance, must be extended further in the solution of human problems. But reason must be tempered by humility, since no group has a monopoly of wisdom or virtue. Nor is there any guarantee that all problems can be solved or all questions answered. Yet critical intelligence, infused by a sense of human caring, is the best method that humanity has for resolving problems. Reason should be balanced with compassion and empathy and the whole person fulfilled. Thus, we are not advocating the use of scientific intelligence independent of or in opposition to emotion, for we believe in the cultivation of feeling and love. As science pushes back the boundary of the known, humankind's sense of wonder is continually renewed, and art, poetry, and music find their places, along with religion and ethics.

-- The Individual --

FIFTH: The preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value. Individuals should be encouraged to realize their own creative talents and desires. We reject all religious, ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize personality. We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility. Although science can account for the causes of behavior, the possibilities of individual freedom of choice exist in human life and should be increased.

SIXTH: In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit, by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered "evil." Without countenancing mindless

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permissiveness or unbridled promiscuity, a civilized society should be a tolerant one. Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their life-styles as they desire. We wish to cultivate the development of a responsible attitude toward sexuality, in which humans are not exploited as sexual objects, and in which intimacy, sensitivity, respect, and honesty in interpersonal relations are encouraged. Moral education for children and adults is an important way of developing awareness and sexual maturity.

-- Democratic Society --

SEVENTH: To enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of civil liberties in all societies. This includes freedom of speech and the press, political democracy, the legal right of opposition to governmental policies, fair judicial process, religious liberty, freedom of association, and artistic, scientific, and cultural freedom. It also includes a recognition of an individual's right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide. We oppose the increasing invasion of privacy, by whatever means, in both totalitarian and democratic societies. We would safeguard, extend, and implement the principles of human freedom evolved from the Magna Carta to the Bill of Rights, the Rights of Man, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

EIGHTH: We are committed to an open and democratic society. We must extend participatory democracy in its true sense to the economy, the school, the family, the workplace, and voluntary associations. Decision-making must be decentralized to include widespread involvement of people at all levels -- social, political, and economic. All persons should have a voice in developing the values and goals that determine their lives. Institutions should be responsive to expressed desires and needs. The conditions of work, education, devotion, and play should be humanized. Alienating forces should be modified or eradicated and bureaucratic structures should be held to a minimum. People are more important than decalogues, rules, proscriptions, or regulations.

NINTH: The separation of church and state and the separation of ideology and state are imperatives. The state should encourage maximum freedom for different moral, political, religious, and social values in society. It should not favor any particular religious bodies through the use of public monies, nor espouse a single ideology and function thereby as an instrument of propaganda or oppression, particularly against dissenters.

TENTH: Humane societies should evaluate economic systems not by rhetoric or ideology, but by whether or not they increase economic well-being for all individuals and groups, minimize poverty and hardship, increase the sum of human satisfaction, and enhance the

quality of life. Hence the door is open to alternative economic systems. We need to democratize the economy and judge it by its responsiveness to human needs, testing results in terms of the common good.

ELEVENTH: The principle of moral equality must be furthered through elimination of all discrimination based upon race, religion, sex, age, or national origin. This means equality of opportunity and recognition of talent and merit. Individuals should be encouraged to contribute to their own betterment. If unable, then society should provide means to satisfy their basic economic, health, and cultural needs, including, wherever resources make possible, a minimum guaranteed annual income. We are concerned for the welfare of the aged, the infirm, the disadvantaged, and also for the outcasts -- the mentally retarded, abandoned, or abused children, the handicapped, prisoners, and addicts -- for all who are neglected or ignored by society. Practicing humanists should make it their vocation to humanize personal relations.

We believe in the right to universal education. Everyone has a right to the cultural opportunity to fulfill his or her unique capacities and talents. The schools should foster satisfying and productive living. They should be open at all levels to any and all; the achievement of excellence should be encouraged. Innovative and experimental forms of education are to be welcomed. The energy and idealism of the young deserve to be appreciated and channeled to constructive purposes.

We deplore racial, religious, ethnic, or class antagonisms. Although we believe in cultural diversity and encourage racial and ethnic pride, we reject separations which promote alienation and set people and groups against each other; we envision an integrated community where people have a maximum opportunity for free and voluntary association.

We are critical of sexism or sexual chauvinism -- male or female. We believe in equal rights for both women and men to fulfill their unique careers and potentialities as they see fit, free of invidious discrimination.

-- World Community --

TWELFTH: We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government. This would

appreciate cultural pluralism and diversity. It would not exclude pride in national origins and accomplishments nor the handling of regional problems on a regional basis. Human progress, however, can no longer be achieved by focusing on one section of the world, Western or Eastern, developed or underdeveloped. For the first time in human history, no part of humankind can be isolated from any other. Each person's future is in some way linked to all. We thus reaffirm a commitment to the building of world community, at the same time recognizing that this commits us to some hard choices.

THIRTEENTH: This world community must renounce the resort to violence and force as a method of solving international disputes. We believe in the peaceful adjudication of differences by international courts and by the development of the arts of negotiation and compromise. War is obsolete. So is the use of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. It is a planetary imperative to reduce the level of military expenditures and turn these savings to peaceful and people-oriented uses.

FOURTEENTH: The world community must engage in cooperative planning concerning the use of rapidly depleting resources. The planet earth must be considered a single ecosystem. Ecological damage, resource depletion, and excessive population growth must be checked by international concord. The cultivation and conservation of nature is a moral value; we should perceive ourselves as integral to the sources of our being in nature. We must free our world from needless pollution and waste, responsibly guarding and creating wealth, both natural and human. Exploitation of natural resources, uncurbed by social conscience, must end.

FIFTEENTH: The problems of economic growth and development can no longer be resolved by one nation alone; they are worldwide in scope. It is the moral obligation of the developed nations to provide -- through an international authority that safeguards human rights -- massive technical, agricultural, medical, and economic assistance, including birth control techniques, to the developing portions of the globe. World poverty must cease. Hence extreme disproportions in wealth, income, and economic growth should be reduced on a worldwide basis.

SIXTEENTH: Technology is a vital key to human progress and development. We deplore any neo-romantic efforts to condemn indiscriminately all technology and science or to counsel retreat from its further extension and use for the good of humankind. We would resist any moves to censor basic scientific research on moral, political, or social grounds. Technology must, however, be carefully judged by the consequences of its use; harmful and destructive changes should be avoided. We are particularly disturbed when technology and bureaucracy control, manipulate, or modify human beings without their consent. Technological feasibility does not imply social or cultural desirability.

SEVENTEENTH: We must expand communication and transportation across frontiers. Travel restrictions must cease. The world must be open to diverse political, ideological, and moral viewpoints and evolve a worldwide system of television and radio for information and education. We thus call for full international cooperation in culture, science, the arts, and technology across ideological borders. We must learn to live openly together or we shall perish together.

-- Humanity As a Whole --

IN CLOSING: The world cannot wait for a reconciliation of competing political or economic systems to solve its problems. These are the times for men and women of goodwill to further the building of a peaceful and prosperous world. We urge that parochial loyalties and inflexible moral and religious ideologies be transcended. We urge recognition of the common humanity of all people. We further urge the use of reason and compassion to produce the kind of world we want -- a world in which peace, prosperity, freedom, and happiness are widely shared. Let us not abandon that vision in despair or cowardice. We are responsible for what we are or will be. Let us work together for a humane world by means commensurate with humane ends. Destructive ideological differences among communism, capitalism, socialism, conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism should be overcome. Let us call for an end to terror and hatred. We will survive and prosper only in a world of shared humane values. We can initiate new directions for humankind; ancient rivalries can be superseded by broad-based cooperative efforts. The commitment to tolerance, understanding, and peaceful negotiation does not necessitate acquiescence to the status quo nor the damming up of dynamic and revolutionary forces. The true revolution is occurring and can continue in countless nonviolent adjustments. But this entails the willingness to step forward onto new and expanding plateaus. At the present juncture of history, commitment to all humankind is the highest commitment of which we are capable; it transcends the narrow allegiances of church, state, party, class, or race in moving toward a wider vision of human potentiality. What more daring a goal for humankind than for each person to become, in ideal as well as practice, a citizen of a world community. It is a classical vision; we can now give it new vitality. Humanism thus interpreted is a moral force that has time on its side. We believe that humankind has the potential, intelligence, goodwill, and cooperative skill to implement this commitment in the decades ahead.

We, the undersigned, while not necessarily endorsing every detail of the above, pledge our general support to Humanist Manifesto II for the future of humankind. These affirmations are not a final credo or dogma but an expression of a living and growing faith. We invite others in all lands to join us in further developing and working for these goals.



## **Humanist Manifesto of 2000**

### **I. Preamble**

Humanism is an ethical, scientific, and philosophical outlook that has changed the world. Its heritage traces back to the philosophers and poets of ancient Greece and Rome, Confucian China, and the Charvaka movement in classical India. Humanist artists, writers, scientists, and thinkers have been shaping the modern era for over half a millennium. Indeed, humanism and modernism have often seemed synonymous for humanist ideas and values express a renewed confidence in the power of human beings to solve their own problems and conquer uncharted frontiers.

### **II. Prospects for a Better Future**

For the first time in human history we possess the means provided by science and technology to ameliorate the human condition, advance happiness and freedom, and enhance human life for all people on this planet.

### **III. Scientific Naturalism**

The unique message of humanism on the current world scene is its commitment to scientific naturalism. Most world views accepted today are spiritual, mystical, or theological in character. They have their origins in ancient pre-urban, nomadic, and agricultural societies of the past, not in the modern industrial or postindustrial global information culture that is emerging. Scientific naturalism enables human beings to construct a coherent world view disentangled from metaphysics or theology and based on the sciences.

### **IV. The Benefits of Technology**

**Humanists have consistently defended the beneficent values of scientific technology for human welfare. Philosophers from Francis Bacon to John Dewey have emphasized the increased power over nature that scientific knowledge affords and how it can contribute immeasurably to human advancement and happiness.**

### **V. Ethics and Reason**

**The realization of the highest ethical values is essential to the humanist outlook. We believe that growth of scientific knowledge will enable humans to make wiser choices. In this way there is no impenetrable wall between fact and value, is and ought. Using reason and cognition will better enable us to appraise our values in the light of evidence and by their consequences.**

### **VI. A Universal Commitment to Humanity as a Whole**

**The overriding need of the world community today is to develop a new Planetary Humanism—one that seeks to preserve human rights and enhance human freedom and dignity, but also emphasizes our commitment to humanity as a whole. The underlying ethical principle of Planetary Humanism is the need to respect the dignity and worth of all persons in the world community.**

### **VII. A Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

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To fulfill our commitment to Planetary Humanism, we offer a *Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*, which embodies our planetary commitment to the well-being of humanity as a whole. It incorporates the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, but goes beyond it by offering some new provisions. Many independent countries have sought to implement these provisions within their own national borders. But there is a growing need for an explicit *Planetary Bill of Rights and Responsibilities* that applies to all members of the human species.

#### VIII. A New Global Agenda

Many of the high ideals that emerged following the Second World War, and that found expression in such instruments as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, have waned through the world. If we are to influence the future of humankind, we will need to work increasingly with and through the new centers of power and influence to improve equity and stability, alleviate poverty, reduce conflict, and safeguard the environment.

#### IX. The Need for New Planetary Institutions

The urgent question in the twenty-first century is whether humankind can develop global institutions to address these problems. Many of the best remedies are those adopted on the local, national, and regional level by voluntary, private, and public efforts. One strategy is to seek solutions through free-market initiatives; another is to use international voluntary foundations and organizations for educational and social development. We believe, however, that there remains a need to develop new global institutions that will deal with the problems directly and will focus on the needs of humanity as a whole. These include the call for a bicameral legislature in the United Nations, with a World Parliament elected by the people, an income tax to help the underdeveloped countries, the end of the veto in the Security Council, an environmental agency, and a world court with powers of enforcement.

#### X. Optimism about the Human Prospect