

You shall know the truth, and

THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE

(John 8:32)

By

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PREFACE

The Roman ruler, Pilate, once asked life's most important question from Jesus, the World's most important prisoner: "What is truth?" (Jn. 18:38). This prisoner was really the world's Creator and Owner (Jn. 1:3, 10-11; He. 3:1-4; Col. 1: 16-17), who had made an unthinkable mission into His world to salvage as many as possible from the revolt that had taken place and was now a voluntary prisoner (Jn. 10:18; 19:11). He said: "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jn. 18:36). His kingdom was a spiritual kingdom which extends throughout the universe. "The Lord has established His throne in the heavens; and His sovereignty rules over all" (Ps. 103:19).

There were now two spiritual kingdoms operating in the world-one headed up by "a stranger" and the other by "the good shepherd." Mankind had brought chaos upon themselves by following Satan's suggestions, who as a thief came "only to steal, and kill, and destroy" (Jn. 10:5, 10), and thus had lost the concept of truth. The Lord Jesus said: "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (Jn. 18:37). He came to answer life's greatest question by word and life, which Pilate could have availed himself of if he had been willing to pay the price of truth.

The Lord Jesus had spoken of the great revolt of angelic beings that had taken place when perhaps the greatest created being, who was to exercise supervision over the world, became "the father of lies" and refused to "stand in the truth" any longer (Jn. 8:44). Old Testament passages had previously indicated this revolt against reality, when Satan asserted "I will" five times and worked up his self-deception to the point where he declared himself to be Deity: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High" (Is. 14:12-14). He had invented a new way of living by introducing falsehood into the moral universe, declaring that his happiness was more important than that of his Creator and Benefactor-the "me first" life. Multitudes of holy angels joined him in this revolt and became demons. Thus the kingdom of Satan was formed as a well-organized operation against truth and virtue, concentrating upon self-deception and falsehood (Ep. 6:11-17).

Man was created a moral being in the "image" and "likeness" of God, with endless prospects of beautiful intelligent fellowship and enlargement of comprehension. The majestic declaration, "God is love" (I Jn. 4:8, 16), describes the voluntary moral character of the Godhead to live according to perfect intelligence in all moral relations. Mankind are to "be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love" (Ep. 5:1-2). We are to have "the love of God. . . poured out within our hearts" (Ro. 5:5) and keep ourselves "In the love of God" (Jude 21) in humble and intelligent obedience. This is the state of truth or the attitude of objective intelligence. God has declared: "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (Le. 19:2; I Pe. 1:16). Holiness is an evaluation of a moral being who is willing to live intelligently or righteously in all moral relations. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no one will see the Lord" (He. 12:14). Apart from this state of mind and choice of will, therefore, no relationship with God is possible, no happiness on the part of God or man, because no other state is right and proper. "Such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers... in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23-24).

With the dreadful example of the downfall of Satan and demons before our first parents, there was every reason to expect that they would not be so foolish as to throw overboard the life of intelligent submission to and confidence in their Creator and Benefactor. Man's remarkable creation involved the possibility of disobedience. Man would be merely a human machine if he could not disobey and the motions of worship would be a mere meaningless mechanization.

Moral beings must always formulate reasons for what they do. An outward act of disobedience is always preceded by a voluntary darkening of the intelligence as to what is acceptable conduct. Moral beings cannot live a contradictory existence. It is impossible to aim high and shoot low. If we are determined to live unworthily in our moral

relations, we must first distort our viewpoint of reality. It is a contest between God's will and our will. This means an elevation as to the importance of our will and a blinding of the mind as to the importance of God's will--a reversal of supremacy, a "me first." The beauty of truth has been driven from the mind, never to be seen again by any self-recovery process. The Apostle Paul was inspired to summarize this tragic revolution in man's relationship to God. Mankind first began to "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro. 1:18). "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever" (1:25). "As they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper" (1:28).

Now instead of loving beautiful intelligent truth, "men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil" (Jn. 3:19-20). Satan's kingdom consists of all who choose to live according to his principles-"me first," not "God first." Jesus called Satan "the ruler of this world" (Jn. 14:30) and spoke of his kingdom as now continuing. False philosophies of life have been developed which are an "empty deception, according to the tradition of men" (Col. 2:8). "The wisdom of this world is foolishness before God" (I Co. 3:19), because it is based upon false assumptions rather than upon objective intelligence of moral truth. "The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless" (20). Such are walking "in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart" (Ep. 4:17-18). It is a state of "deceiving and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13), a turning "away their ears from the truth," a turning "aside to myths" (II Tim. 4:4).

Everyone has formed his own philosophy or viewpoint of the values of life, which form the basis of conduct. This concept has been gradually developed as a result of the influences of heredity and environment and the moral choices which have been made. It is a state of mind as to our relative importance in the various relationships of life and is seldom reduced to verbal definition. It is either according to objective truth and obvious reality, or according to one's subjective desires and choices. one's philosophy and life must agree or life would be too disturbing to the conscience. one or the other must be modified. If one insists upon increasing selfish concentrations, the mind must seek to pervert or distort still further the sense of one's own importance or philosophy of relationships.

"Those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness" (Ro. 2:8) will receive great help from the great intelligence of Satan as "an angel of light" (II Co. 11:14) and from his many demon co-workers. "The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (II Co. 4:4). Those who pursue "the course of this world" do so "according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience" (Ep. 2:2). When Jesus said, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father" (Jn. 8:44), He did not mean that those choosing this way of living were not using their minds. Indeed, such must use their minds vigorously in selfish concentration, lest they awake to true reality. One must work to be an unbeliever, or an anti-believer. The Lord Jesus used the word "lost" in pathetic description as to what man might have been in the beauty of intelligence and holiness (Lk. 19:10). Unavoidably, "the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things" (Ro. 2:2).

Certainly one of the most meaningful summaries of that state of being which the Lord Jesus came to attain are His words: "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:31-32). The Lord had a glorious deliverance in mind.. "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (36). Man must "awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you" (Ep. 5:14). If God can find a way to reveal the true state of things and solve the great problems of reconciliation, so that man can return to a proper view of reality and be mercifully forgiven for his dreadful rebellion, the purpose for which man was created can once more be realized. If such will "work out" their "salvation with fear and trembling," or maintain a sensitivity to Divine truth, as God "is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12-13), then a most blessed life of "confidence before God" (I Jn. 3:21) and fellowship with the Godhead will result (I Jn. 1:3). The Bible is God's condescending effort to achieve this goal.

Biblical evidence indicates God's success in attaining the enlightenment and forgiveness of Adam and Eve, Abel, Enoch who "walked with God," Noah, Abraham who was known for his faithfulness, and Moses to whom God spoke "mouth to mouth" (Nu. 12:7-8), to name a few. "Moses went up to God" (Ex. 19:3) and was given the two tables

of the Ten Commandments (20:1-17), which became the greatest objective declaration of truth in the Old Testament. It was God's endeavor to give man a few simple rules of intelligence to guide him in his moral relations. There can be no lessening of this concept of truth in any plan of salvation that a loving God could offer (Lk. 10:25-28), because anything less would not bring happiness to God or man. Under the Gospel, the walk in the Holy Spirit brings about this fulfillment in a new intimate relationship with the Godhead (Ro. 8:3-4).

"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world" (He. 1:1-2). "The law was given through Moses, grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17). Man not only needed an expression of truth, but also a model of truth under the pressures of earthly life. The profound problems of reconciliation needed to be solved. Thus it was that "the Father has sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (I Jn. 4:14). "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory" (Jn. 1:14). The Lord Jesus "explained" or put the Godhead on exhibition (18), being "the exact representation of His nature" (He. 1:3), so that He could say: "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9).

"The multitudes were amazed at His teaching" (Mt. 7:28). "His message was with authority" (Lk. 4:32). "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks," the officers said when sent to take Him (Jn. 7:46). Our Lord upheld the Old Testament and said, "Not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished" (Mt. 5:17-18). "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," He said to Satan in a special period of temptation, (Mt. 4:4). The Lord Jesus affirmed that "the Father is greater than I" (Jn. 14:28), and yet declared His true Deity, "I and the Father are one" (10:30). This claim was well understood by the religious leaders, since they accused Him: "You being a man, make Yourself out to be God" (Jn. 14:33).

"God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him" (Jn. 3:17). God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), and thus the Lord Jesus "gave Himself as a ransom for all" (6). One must not only submit to truth but "receive the love of the truth so as to be saved" (II Th. 2:10). Thus the Bible is presented as the means of truth. God the Father is "the God of truth" (Is. 65:16). The Lord Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." (Jn. 14:6). The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of truth" (17), who is to "teach you all things" (26), and "guide you into all the truth" (16:13). When the Lord Jesus spoke of leaving them soon, the disciples were distressed that they could not remember the many wonderful things that they had heard. The Master quieted their fears that the new intimate relationship in the Holy Spirit (14:17) would quicken their minds and reveal further truth: "He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (16:14). The Apostle Paul later referred to the "things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit" (I Co. 2:13). "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16-17). The Lord Jesus began His ministry with great urgency. "My food," He said, "is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work" (Jn. 4:34). "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest" (35). He later expressed His great burden in earnest prayer, for our instruction: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10), which, of course, meant that God's will was not being done on earth. He went "preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel'" (Mk. 1:14-15). "The kingdom of God is within you," He said (Lk. 17:21). All must return to Divine supremacy, if salvation is to become a reality—God must become King in our lives. "The one who does the will of God abides forever" (I Jn. 2:17). It is "the way of truth" (II Pe. 2:2), "the way of righteousness" (II Pet. 2:21).

"I am the light of the world," the Lord Jesus said. "He who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). "Life" consists only in obeying moral "light." "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (I Jn. 1:5). The Godhead have always chosen to live under the continual scrutiny of Their absolute intelligence of what is right and proper in moral relationships—"He Himself is in the light" of perfect Divine truth (vs.7). "If we walk in the light," the same light that the Godhead have as far as we can perceive it in our human limitation, "we

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have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His son cleanses us from all sin" (vs.7). This walk "in the light" is to "practice the truth" (vs.6). "He who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God" (Jn. 3:21).

In His great Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus explained that salvation must be a genuine reality of experience in a complete change of life and motive. "I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (outward religious formalism without a revolution of inner life), you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:20). "Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it" (Mt. 7:13-14). "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (vs.19). "Not every one who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven" (vs.21). Victory over sin is so imperative in salvation, that it is profitable to pluck out an eye or cut off a hand if necessary to overcome temptations (Mt. 5:29-30).

There are two approaches that can be made toward a more respectable life: The first approach is to stress duties, which reduces to laws and regulations those rules which are to be obeyed—rules of do's and don'ts—without taking time to establish reasons for conduct. This becomes a mechanical, laborious endeavor which we all have experienced. The other approach, the approach of the Gospel, is to stress objective reality or truth, which develops a mental picture of our relationships to God and to each other, in which realization we see spontaneously what conduct is right and proper. And we do not need a slavish obedience to rules or laws. Everything that God asks is absolutely intelligent and proper. The ultimate of Christian experience is to "have the mind of Christ" (I Co. 2:16). As long as we retain the concept of truth, we cannot live wrongly. This means a concentration upon the true concept of reality, rather than upon rules of action. The loving bestowment of the Holy Spirit in intimate relationship enthrones before our minds the glory of the resurrected Saviour, which automatically transforms our conduct (II Co. 3:18). "Sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace" (Ro. 6:14).

To rescue mankind from its destination of judgment, the Lord Jesus pictured Himself as "the good shepherd" who "lays down His life for the sheep," in order that "they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10-11). He was very tearful as He watched the multitudes in their selfish pursuits, "because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd" (Mt. 9:36). Salvation has been provided for all men, without any secret reservations: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mk. 16:15). All who are willing to experience "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21) enter into a loving relationship with their Saviour- "I know My own, and My own know Me. . . and they follow Me" (Jn. 10:14, 27). He will be with them in life: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:20). He will be with them in death, for He said: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies" (Jn. 11:25). "I go to prepare a place for you; . . . I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (Jn. 14:2-3). "I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy away from you," were among His parting words (Jn. 16:22). "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." said the resurrected and glorified Christ (Re. 2:10). "The truth shall make you free. . . If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:32).

Franklin Park, Illinois,
January, 1980.

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CHAPTER 1

The truth about OUR NATURAL OBSERVATIONS

"Every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God" (He. 3:4).

"The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and the firmament is declaring the work of His hands" (Ps. 19:1).

"Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse" (Ro. 1:20).

It is absolutely illogical to believe that nothing produces something, or that profoundly intricate designs have come into existence by self-generation. The more simple and natural conclusion is that there is an immeasurably great Creator and Benefactor back of all the remarkable existences that we observe and experience. The law of cause and effect is practiced by everyone.

I. MAN'S INNER PERSONALITY AND ABILITIES

Our inner personalities and abilities are profound to contemplate (Ps. 8:4).

- A. **WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF AN ABILITY TO THINK**, to reason, to view facts and draw conclusions. We can picture events in our minds that are not actually occurring at that moment, or have imagination. We can relive old experiences and events, or have memory. We compare our thoughts and actions to standards of right and wrong that we have formed, with approval or disapproval, or have conscience. We perceive that there are realities that are not material, such as our thought processes and conclusions, which give us the idea of spiritual existence. This makes possible God-consciousness as we contemplate the Divine manifestations in creation and revelation.
- B. **WE RECOGNIZE A FEELING OR AN EMOTIONAL ABILITY WITHIN OUR BEINGS**. We experience reactions to what we think upon or do, which are either pleasant or disturbing. We can experience love and tenderness as well as hatred. Parents feel something remarkable toward their children. Children look upon their parents with veneration and respect. True romance as a genuine friendship, with all its beauty, may flourish. Above all, we may feel a love for God and be drawn with great motives toward worship—the most serene of pleasure—to which God always reacts with blessing.
- C. **WE ARE ALSO CONSCIOUS OF AN ABILITY TO DIRECT OUR OWN ACTIONS**, an ability of self-determination or free will. It is we ourselves that originate our own decisions by causing our minds to act. We have a feeling of authority in our own limited sphere. Let nothing ever persuade us that we do not possess this God-given Divine likeness.
- D. **WE OBSERVE THAT OUR PERSONALITIES FUNCTION AS AN INTEGRAL WHOLE**—not as a collection of parts acting independently of each other. It is our wills that direct our minds to think and to persist in a process of thought. This results in emotional reactions or experiences, which can only follow thought patterns even though physical elements are involved. Emotions cannot be activated or controlled directly. The mind evaluates the whole proceeding, with appropriate response, which we call an ability of conscience, and registers its

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occurrence that we call memory. Our personalities are a harmonious whole, with profoundly diverse but interrelated abilities.

II THE PHYSICAL BODY OF MAN

Our bodies or external selves are wonderfully made, beyond comprehension. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14).

Our bodies are delicate, complicated machines exactly adapted to our personal endowments. We can relate and communicate to other beings and substances through our five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Diligent thinkers not only spend long lives studying the endless mysteries of the human body, but find that they have to concentrate upon certain parts or functions of the body to make much headway because of the vastness of the whole field of knowledge. We will merely enumerate areas of profound mystery in our bodily makeup.

1. Our bodies are composed of simple and cheap materials, worth only a few dollars as raw materials but of incalculable value in their chemical combinations.
2. A skeleton forms the framework, with its diverse bone structure and muscles.
3. Tissues and other structures are composed of an incredible number of cells.
4. Skin, the outside covering, embodies sense perceptions and several million pores.
5. The head and the brain are the center of all activities and directives.
6. The nervous system extends from the brain with its complicated network, carrying messages back and forth from all parts of the body.
7. The eye is a most mysterious mechanism, taking a continuous moving picture and conveying to the brain through a million "seeing" elements.
8. The ear, nose, mouth, neck with vocal cords, chest and lungs are intriguing.
9. The heart sends the blood to all parts of the body through some 60,000 miles of passageways at about 72 beats per minute, performing an enormous amount of work every day.
10. The mysterious blood stream with its uncounted millions of cells performing various functions carries the source of life to all parts of the body.
11. The elaborate digestive system extracts what is valuable from the food passing through it for distribution by the blood and rejects the rest.
12. The mystery of offspring involves details of personality and characteristic physical traits, embodied in infinitesimal elements of life.

III. MAN'S PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS

Our surroundings or external observations could provide an eternity of investigation — from the infinitesimal to the inconceivably immense (Ps. 19:1).

- A. **THE VAST UNIVERSE** in its unimaginable expanse and its precise regulation of endless masses overwhelms any attempt to contemplate or appreciate. The great telescopes pushing deeper and deeper into the abyss of space have expanded man's concept of the cosmos more than a thousandfold. The 200-inch telescope of Palomar Observatory in California is said to have penetrated to a distance of 1000 million light years, one light year being about 6 million million miles. A newer Russian 237-inch telescope is said to reach out 50 per cent further into the universe. One star is said to be so large that if it were our sun, the orbit of the earth would be millions of miles inside its surface.

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- B. **THE EARTH IN RELATION TO ITS SOLAR SYSTEM AND TO THE UNIVERSE** exhibits endless features of design and regulation. The earth's orbit around the sun at a distance of 92,900,000 miles, traveling at a rate of 18 miles each second, produces temperature ranges for our form of life. A part of this design is the earth's rotation every 24 hours to provide proper absorption and relief from the sun's rays. Thus the sun, with a surface temperature lately measured to be 9820 deg. F., does not scorch or freeze out life. The great centrifugal force caused by the earth's 1000 miles per hour surface speed of rotation is more than balanced by the mysterious force of gravity, which gives weight to masses and keeps them in place. In addition, there is the amazing regularity of the heavenly bodies as they go about their orbits, which has required the development of timing devices of remarkable accuracy, enabling computer calculations as to where planets will be many years in advance.
- C. **THE WONDERS OF THE EARTH** in its adaptation to plant and animal life as well as for man provides unending marvels of planning and design.
1. The earth's atmosphere is of such composition (approximately 78 per cent nitrogen and 21 percent oxygen) as to provide the breath of life for all land animals and for man.
 2. Plant life is a counterpart to the requirements of breathing creatures. Plant life absorbs carbon dioxide which they exhale and produce oxygen which they require. Joseph Priestley discovered oxygen gas in 1774.
 3. Plant life embodies within itself astonishing characteristics and the source of growth, oftentimes with great energy and stature. How tendencies and uniformity of product can be contained in seedlings or roots is beyond analysis. This mystery of life is contained for long periods of time awaiting a proper environment for germination and growth.
 4. Animal and bird life function by endless curious instincts and have abilities of perception entirely beyond our understanding. What guides birds on their long flights and return, fish swimming thousands of miles and finally coming back to their starting point, animals in their journeys, and the like? It seems that we are driven to believe in an endless Divine guidance of the creature as an outlet of wisdom and benevolence, since we cannot conceive as to how these fantastic abilities can be possessed by these non-moral creatures. Perhaps God is giving these evidences of providential activity to inspire faith in man as to the Divine existence.
 5. Plant and animal life are closely interrelated and have their counterbalances and checks. Vegetation is adapted to animal life and makes use of mobile creatures to carry pollen from plant to plant. Excessive growth or existences are prevented by these numerous relationships. Man is a part of this relationship and is provided with the needs of life. What is good for food also brings pleasure in eating, since man was created with the ability of taste.
 6. The laws of reproduction are highly mysterious. It is thought that ultramicroscopic genes, an element of the germ plasm, determines all human, animal, and vegetable characteristics. How can complicated organisms and life cycles, intricacies of design and beauty, be propagated through such minute life-germs? How can cycles and rhythms be conveyed? For example, a monarch butterfly lays its egg on a milkweed plant, from which a caterpillar emerges and feeds, soon spinning itself into a cocoon. In 12 days it is transformed into a beautiful butterfly, with the same markings as its parents, and will soon be ready to migrate up to several thousand miles and return in the spring to repeat the cycle. Man is truly exposed to inconceivable mysteries, for which scientists can find no explanation.
 7. Nature with plant and animal life is clothed with exquisite beauty, color schemes, and harmony. Gorgeous colors and designs characterize plants, leaves, and flowers. The tiniest creatures and plants are adorned with beauty when viewed under a microscope. The snow flake descends with its six-sided pattern, trillions upon trillions of them, with never two crystals exactly alike but all with exquisite patterns. The beauty of the sky, the clouds, the rainbow, the innumerable stars, the setting sun, the rising moon, the brilliance of the mid-day sun, are all

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impressive beyond words. Surely, the great Author and Sustainer of the universe possesses aesthetic appreciation and desires to share these beauties and mysteries with moral beings.

IV. THE NATURAL CONCLUSION OF ALL OUR OBSERVATIONS

Our minds are driven to a firm conclusion, if allowed to function unrestrained, that there must be a Designer and Creator who has brought all these profound wonders into existence and sustains them by Divine power.

The law of cause and effect is understood and practiced by everyone in the trivial things of life. Every effect must have an adequate cause. That all the created wonders that we observe could have happened by chance leads to such mathematical absurdities that it is most incredible to think that anyone would embrace it. "By the work we know the workman," was a motto appearing on a factory coffee cup. We may thus form many fixed conclusions concerning the Divine Workman by observing "the work" of creation and faithful oversight.

The Creator and Sustainer of all things:

- I. Must be incomprehensibly **GREAT IN POWER OR ENERGY**, or all-powerful as far as our concepts extend. The cause must have greater energy than the product or activity.
- II. Must be exceedingly **GREAT IN KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM**, greater than the product of creation with its endless intricacies of design.
- III. Must be of **GREAT KINDNESS AND GOODNESS**, judging from the many benevolent adaptations which we observe. Basic needs always have a provided means of satisfaction. The beautiful and the attractive are an evidence of the goodness and love of the Creator in surrounding man with pleasant things.
- IV. Must be **ABSOLUTELY FAITHFUL**, the discharge of responsibility, judging from the perfect consistency and regularity in which events are observed to occur.
- V. Must be separate from the product of creation or must be **ABOVE MATERIAL EXISTENCES in the realm of the SPIRITUAL** or unseen, even as we affirm our real selves to be above our physical existences and as forces exist in the universe without physical reality, like the force of gravity.
- VI. Must be **EVERYWHERE PRESENT** in the vast universe, in contrast to our localized existence.
- VII. Must possess an existence **NOT LIMITED BY TIME**, as we perceive ourselves to be, or must possess endless duration or eternal life.

THE EMPHATIC RESULT of all these observations is that all moral beings, in the right use of their faculties, affirm their perpetual **OBLIGATION** to regard supremely with appropriate veneration the Being and happiness of God, the great Creator and Benefactor of the universe. The rights and happiness and welfare of our fellowmen are observed to be equally important to that of ourselves. We, therefore, owe equal obligation to others.

Thus it is that man is utterly "without excuse" in his choice of and persistence in selfishness or supreme self-interest, having "exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever" (Ro. 1:20, 25). The Apostle Paul expressed man's obligation in his great benediction: "Now to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only true God, be honor and glory forever and ever" (I Tim. 1:17).

V. THE OBSERVED STATE OUR WORLD

Many inconsistencies and antagonisms to this beautiful and profound arrangement of created existences are observed to exist.

A. MANY DISAPPOINTMENTS AND DISILLUSIONMENTS CLOUD THE INNER EXPERIENCES OF

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OUR LIVES, which often develop into calamities. Our bodies frequently experience pain and deterioration in the struggles of life, until overtaken by death which could not have been our Creator's plan. Surrounding us we find unrest, hatred, crime, wars, which provide endless tensions and leave their trail of agony and sorrow. Nature itself seems to be unfriendly and oftentimes violent and destructive. The needs of life must be labored for against antagonists, hunger and starvation are common, climate is often burdensome, injustices prevail, pestilence, disease, and calamities leave trails of death. Creatures of all sizes are antagonistic to us and to each other. Insects and bacteria prey upon our food and bodies with devastating results.

- B. SOMETHING DREADFUL HAS OBVIOUSLY GONE WRONG IN MORAL RELATIONS.** There must be a profound reason for this admixture of tragedy in the presence of amazing good. No one in his right mind could choose that this situation should exist. Someone must be responsible. If the great Creator and Benefactor chose that such a situation should exist, or had a secret will that was being worked out, then the most impossible gloom settles down over our minds for we have no one in whom our intelligence can confide. If there has been a catastrophic rebellion by moral beings and the great Moral Governor has reacted in righteous moral responsibility, then we can look through the clouds of tragedy and find a basis of intelligent worship in full knowledge that God's loving purposes have been frustrated by man. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" (Ge. 18:25).
- C. OUR CONSCIENCES AFFIRM THAT WE HAVE BEEN GUILTY OF REBELLING** and perpetuating a moral revolution against our intelligence, of refusing to live our lives in supreme recognition of the Divine Being and the obvious rights of our fellowmen:
1. Conscience is a function of the intellect-comparing what we are to what we know.
 2. A personal judgment seat—analyzing a given situation and proportioning guilt.
 3. Conscience is not inerrant, but always active—depending upon the mind's understanding of what is right conduct.
 4. The Holy Spirit uses every available means to enlighten the mind of every moral being: Jn. 1:9; 12:32; 16:8-11; Acts 17:27; Ro. 1:20; I Tim. 2:4; II Pe. 3:9.
 5. This moral enlightenment is sufficiently strong to indelibly impress every mind with evidences of the Divine existence, with some sense of compassion, and render everyone guilty: Ro. 2:12, 14-16.
 6. This is evidenced by all tribes of peoples having some form of religious exercises—ceremonial tortures and supreme sacrifices testify of deep guilt of conscience.
 7. The conclusion is that a tragic rebellion must have taken place to account for evil in the presence of overwhelming good—conscience affirming that each one of us is somewhat responsible.

The whole mass of humanity appears to have joined in and perpetuated this rebellion. Thus we might expect that there would be radical Divine reactions to man's refusal to conform to God's loving and wise moral government and that just consequences were being meted out by a dutiful Moral Governor. God must restrain sinful development and reward its due. This would involve the whole creation of which man is the center. Man's consciousness of guilt does, therefore, exonerate the Creator from hasty charges and deficiencies and directs man to concentrate upon the positive aspects of his wonderful discoveries.

- D. WE OBSERVE CONSTANT EVIDENCE OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD**, we are endlessly impressed by the profound intelligence and wisdom of God, and are amazed at the greatness and power of God. Surely a God of goodness, profound intelligence, and unlimited energy will bring about a revelation to man's understanding as to how all things came about and the reasons for the admixture of tragedy amidst unending goodness. We would, therefore, expect that there would be a "Bible" which would reveal inner secrets of the Divine Being and lead mankind into

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truth and measures of mercy.

The universal prevalence of religious exercises among peoples who have never heard of Biblical revelation establishes the fact, therefore, that **ALL MEN AFFIRM THEIR OBLIGATION TO GOD AND MAN** and have a sense of personal guilt. These exercises generally involve great solemnness and personal sacrifice in various rituals and ceremonies, even to the offering of human sacrifices and self-inflicted torment. This demonstrates the fear complex that springs from a deep feeling of guilt. This guilt can only arise from their natural observations, along with the testimony of conscience and the direct enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, as to their relations and obligations to a great First Cause that must exist and to their fellowmen.

The Holy Spirit must also impress those humbling themselves in a guilt of conscience with a concept of the possibility of mercy from the Supreme Being they are seeking to contact and appease. Apart from such motivation, it would appear that mankind would not seek God at all. The Lord Jesus said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth (speaking of His atoning death), will draw all men to Myself" (Jn. 12:32). "He (the Holy Spirit) shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (Jn. 16:14). "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" (Lk. 6:27), thus imitating God the Father, who bestows kindnesses upon all in perfect love (Mt. 5:44-45, 48) and seeks to lead to repentance by "His kindness and forbearance and patience" (Ro. 2:4).

However, "there is salvation in no one else (the Lord Jesus); for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation," Was the Lord's commission (Mk. 16:15). "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name every one who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:43). Earnest missionaries of Christ are moved to travel to certain places to preach the Gospel, as Philip (Acts 8:26-29) and the Apostle Paul (16:6-13). Many, responding to the moral light they have, have been moved to journey to a place where they come in contact with the Gospel. Astonishing statements are made as to the publicity that the life, miracles, teaching, and death of the Lord Jesus received (Jn. 12:19; Acts 26:26), and the effectiveness of the Apostolic Church in its outreach (Mt. 24:14; Acts 1:8; 17:6; 19:26-27; 24:5; 28:30-31; Ro. 1:8).

REMARKS

The impressions that we allow our natural observations to have upon our minds are in accordance with the response we are willing to make in adjusting our way of living:

First: We do not allow ourselves to have a greater concept of God than we are willing to conform to. To dwell upon or contemplate the greatness and character of God is to increase our sense of obligation and the value of any experiential relationship that is offered through profound measures of reconciliation. If we are unwilling to respond to such lofty opportunities, we must avoid such contemplation as much as possible to make our unwillingness to conform as tolerable as we can (Ro. 1:28, 18). Unbelief is anti-belief and requires persistent mental activity in an endeavor to reject evidences confronting us on every hand (Jn. 3:19-20).

Second: We do not allow ourselves to have a greater concept of ourselves than we are willing to conform to. To consider ourselves as a product of the love and wisdom of God, in the Divine "image" and "likeness" (Ge. 1:26), is to establish the sanctity of personality, which impels toward a life of true intelligence and honor. If we are unwilling to conform, we have to degrade our evaluation of ourselves and our abilities to a more comfortable level of insignificance and supposed unavoidable bondage, by indulging in the speculations of evolution and similar assumptions.

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CHAPTER 2

The truth about **THE BIBLE, THE DIVINE-HUMAN WORD OF GOD**

"When you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God" (I Th. 2:13).

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16).

"No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Pe. 1:21).

The Bible was not given to prove the existence of God, but to reveal profound facts concerning the God that man already knows to exist from his natural observations and experiences. God has condescended to reveal the origin of all existences and the calamity of moral rebellion that has taken place. Inner secrets of the Divine Being have been made known in compassionate redemption, in the hopes of winning man back into happy fellowship for which he was created. God had to begin this long process of enlightenment directly to receptive individuals and bring about the advent and sufferings of His blessed Son.

In the giving of the Bible, there came to be written 39 books in what comprises the Old Testament or the Old Covenant, written by about 30 authors over a period of about 1100 years. The great climax was the giving of the moral law, the Ten Commandments, in the wilderness of Sinai. "Moses went up to God" upon the Mount (Ex. 19:1, 3). "God spoke all these words" (Ex. 20:1), also prescribing a sacrificial system of mercy and worship which the nation Israel was to formally adhere to, although sacrificial offerings had been practiced since the days of Adam and Eve. In addition, God gave to Moses many civil and social laws for the benefit of the nation Israel as they lived before the nations of the world.

The New Testament, comprising 27 books written by 8 authors over a period of less than 50 years and covering a period of time of about 100 years, records the greatest series of events in man's history—the advent and the accomplished atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the culmination of man's enlightenment. "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks," the officers had to admit. "Grace and truth" were brought to light (Jn. 1:17). After His atoning sufferings and resurrection, He commissioned His disciples to go forth with the glad tidings of God's great condescension and abounding mercy (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-18; Lk. 24:46-48; Jn. 17:18; 20:21). The Apostle Paul was given a direct commission (Ga. 1:11-12) as "an apostle of Gentiles" (Ro. 11:13). The blessed Gospel would bring results in the lives of all who submit to it (Ro. 1:16).

The Bible is a loving endeavor from a bereaved Godhead to rescue everyone possible from a world in rebellion. "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10), "that the world should be saved through Him" (Jn. 3:17). "God our Saviour . . . desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:3-4). God spoke through Isaiah: "Come now, and let us reason together" (1:18). The Lord Jesus put "the light of life" on exhibition (Jn. 8:12). The Bible is God's plain message to the lowly and the simple (Mt. 11:25-26) and was not intended to require great scholarship to arrive at its essential message. The simplest possible interpretation is what God intended man to understand. God is not seeking to hide truth or involve mankind in great mysteries, but to make the way of life

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plain and simple. The Apostle Paul's commission was "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light" and be reconciled to God in forgiveness (Acts 26:18). Each sincere servant of Christ faces the sifting process as he seeks to discern God's mind and message. The anointing of the Holy Spirit has been promised to guide us (I Jn. 2:27), in fulfillment of the Saviour's words (Jn. 16:12-15).

It is fundamental in Biblical interpretation that the words used in the Bible be interpreted by their usage in various other places in the Bible and not be pressed to extreme or detailed meanings that were not intended. In other words, the Bible must be permitted to be its own interpreter or modifier of meanings. This is particularly true of analogies or figures of speech that were brought in to enliven the text, which were especially used by the Lord Jesus. Generally these illustrations were meant to convey one main idea. If we ponder all the details of each illustration and attempt to incorporate our findings into the Biblical meaning, we may go beyond what was intended to be taught and have difficulty fitting other Scriptures into our so-called new discoveries. The greatest possible simplicity must always be our rule of interpretation.

THE TWO TABLES OF STONE WRITTEN BY THE FINGER OF GOD

"Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I (Moses) am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully" (De. 5:1).

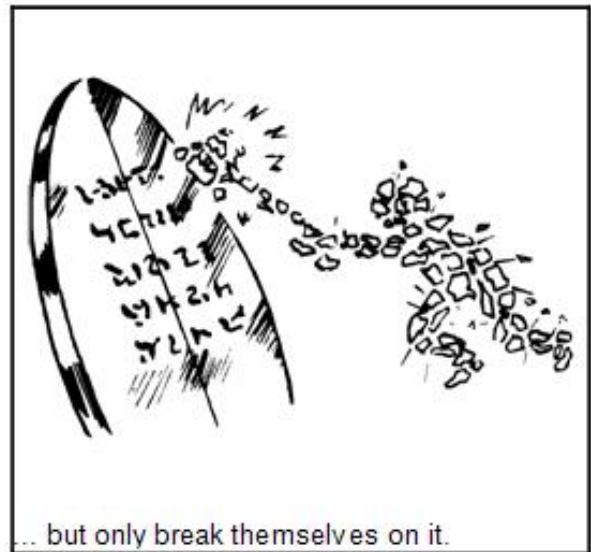
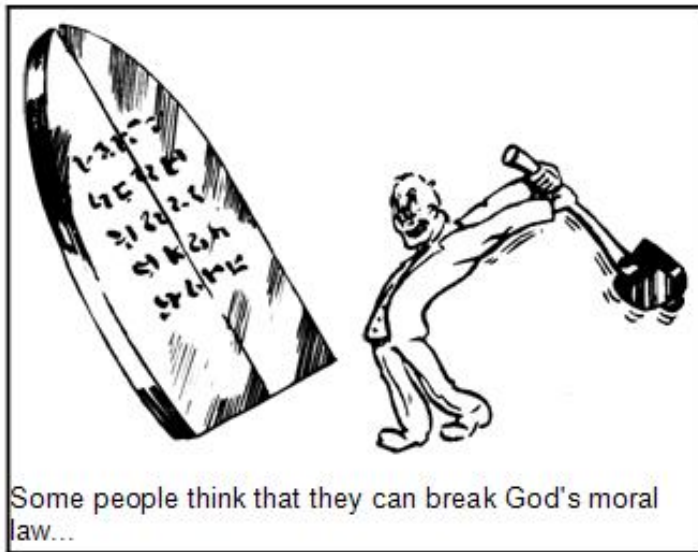
The people said: "Go near and hear all that the Lord our God says; then speak to us all that the Lord our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it" (De. 5:27).

The Lord said to Moses: "They have done well in all that they have spoken. Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!" (De. 5:28-29).

Moses wrote: "The Lord gave me the two tablets of stone written by the finger of God; and on them were all the words which the Lord had spoken with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly" (De. 9:10).

The Lord Jesus said: "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill" (Mt. 5:17).

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The Lord Jesus asked a lawyer, who had inquired about eternal life: "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" He answered: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." The Lord Jesus said to him: "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live" (Lk. 10:26-28).

THE PROCESS OF IMPARTING SPIRITUAL TRUTH TO MANKIND

This process of imparting truth to lost mankind was exceedingly difficult. No mechanical recording of facts would avail anything, since truth had to be understood and digested. This is impossible except the learner will agree to modify his life as the concepts of truth unfold. This involved great Divine humiliation to develop human channels so that revelation of intimacy would not lead to sinful exaltation, which would prevent comprehension. This Divine problem is recorded in the life of the Apostle Paul (II Co. 12:7-10). This process of bringing about concepts of truth and making them available to all has been as follows:

1. **CONCEPT OR VISION OF TRUTH**—Responsive channels of truth had to be given profound experiences of the Divine presence to astonish them with awe and awaken a true perspective or realization as to how great and holy God is and how small and deficient they are: Ge. 15:1, 5-6; Job 42:5-6; Ex. 3:2-6; Is. 6:1-5; Mt. 16:15-17; 17:1-18; Acts 26:12-16; I Co. 9:1; Re. 1:9-18.
2. **REVELATION OR IMPARTATION OF TRUTH**—This has been a time-consuming process in history during which God slowly imparts His truth, His will, and His plans to humble leaders by developing a variety of circumstances and tangible illustrations of spiritual concepts. The most profound impartation was through the incarnation of the Lord Jesus, who impersonated truth in our circumstances, with the accomplishment of redemption and resurrection. "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17): Ge. 12:1, 7; Ex. 19:3; 24:15-18; Nu. 12:6-8; Mt. 5 to 7; 7:28-29; Mk. 3:13-15; Jn. 16:12-15; Acts 26:16; Ga. 1:11-18; Ep. 3:3-5; Re. 1:1-3, 10-11, 19.
3. **INSPIRATION OR RECORDING OF TRUTH**—A mysterious Divine-human activity in which historical facts as well as profound revelations of truth were recorded by human authors, who selected their material and their words

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under the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that facts were inerrantly recorded. This involves what evil men have said and done as well as those in submission to God. Even complaints and vindictive attitudes of spiritual leaders are recorded, leaving us to conclude that these often were not God's governmental attitudes. **INSPIRATION** has to do with the accuracy of the record. We must decide by study, meditation, and prayer where God has spoken and where man has spoken. Weaknesses and failings of great spiritual leaders are recorded, an added evidence of inspiration. John wrote profound truth from his vocabulary, Luke and Paul from theirs of greater learning--a genius of the Holy Spirit's operation: Ex. 4:10-12; 24:3; Le. 1:1; I Sam. 3:21; II Sam. 23:2-3; Ps. 19:7-9; 119:11; Is. 1:2, 10; Zech. 1:3-4; Mt. 5:17-18; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 24:25-27, 44-47; Jn. 16:13-15; I Co. 2:9-13; II Tim. 3:16; I Pe. 1:10-12; II Pe. 1:21; Re. 1:11, 19.

4. **ILLUMINATION OR ENLIGHTENMENT OF TRUTH**—The Holy Spirit will guide humble minds to understand revealed and recorded truth: Mt. 5:6; Lk. 10:21-22; Jn. 5:39; 7:17; 14:26; 16:8-11, 13-14; Ro. 15:4; I Co. 2:12; Ep. 5:17; Col. 1:9-10; I Jn. 2:20, 27.
5. **CONCEPT OR DEVELOPED PERSPECTIVE OF TRUTH**--Through study, meditation, and prayerful consideration, factual truth becomes a part of our personalities as we are led into concepts or perspectives of truth which are not reducible to words. This is the true objective of the whole process of revelation and inspiration: Acts 17:11; I Tim. 4:13-16; II Tim. 2:15; I Pe. 2:2-3; II Pe. 3:18.
6. **MINISTRY OR PROPAGATION OF TRUTH**—Through special called-out ministry and by all those reconciled to God: Mk. 3:14-15; Lk. 10:2; Acts 6:3-4; Ep. 4:11-15; II Tim. 2:1-2; Acts 2:42; 8:4; I Th. 1:8.

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CHAPTER 3

The truth about
THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF GOD

"I am the Lord, and there is no other; besides Me there is no God" (Is. 45:5).

"Thus says the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, I dwell on a high and holy place" (Is. 57:15).

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come" (Re. 4:8).

"God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him" (1 Jn. 4:16, 8).

"God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (1 Jn. 1:5).

The foundation of all knowledge and experience of God is the acceptance of all the evidence that our minds have been confronted with in our natural observations of ourselves and our surroundings. The idea of cause and effect is deeply ingrained in every moral being. In every task performed we instinctively recognize that the result is the product of what we have done. We observe endless profound objects and arrangements which neither we nor other beings like ourselves could possibly originate and sustain. Since we know that intricacies of design do not come about by chance, we are driven to the conclusion that there is a Creator and Sustainer of all the profound and great things that we observe.

The Bible enlarges our comprehension of the great Being of God. God was under no obligation to reveal all that He has of the Divine secrets, but has done so to inspire confidence that He is a God of intelligence and truth. By revealing His moral character and inner reactions because of sin, God is seeking to persuade mankind to forsake their rebellion and experience His great loving compassion in redemption.

I. THE NATURE OF GOD

The Godhead are revealed in the Bible as **A TRINITY OF PERSONAL SPIRITUAL BEINGS** living in an endless duration of time. They have the ability of intellectual activity. They experience emotional reactions. They possess moral freedom (the power of self-determination), or free will.

A. **A TRINITY OF PERSONALITIES** of equal endowments and attributes, who are in absolute oneness of purpose and activity, designated Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Ep. 4:4-6.

1. While the Old Testament emphasizes the unity of God, as distinguished from the belief of pagan nations in a great multitude of gods, there are clear references to a plurality of Persons in the Godhead and some that point to this plurality as a Trinity.
 - a. Plural nouns and pronouns are applied to God: Ge. 1:1, 26; 3:22; 11:7; 48:15; Is. 6:8.
 - b. Distinctions are made in the Godhead that would be uncalled for apart from a plurality of Divine Persons: Ge. 1:1-2; 6:3; 19:24; Nu. 6:24-26; Ps. 2:7 (Jn. 3:16, 18); 51:11; Is. 6:3; 63:9-11; Zech. 2:10-11.
2. In the New Testament we find the threefold personality of the Godhead emphatically asserted.

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- a. Specific instances are:
 - 1) Our Lord's baptism: Lk. 3:21-22.
 - 2) The bestowal of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son: Jn. 14:16-17; Acts 2:32-33.
 - 3) The baptismal formula as commissioned by Christ: Mt. 28:19.
 - 4) The ministry of the Holy Spirit: I Co. 12:4-6, 11.
 - 5) The apostolic benediction: II Co. 13:14.
 - 6) The Lord Jesus was sent to earth from His eternal preexistence by the Father: Jn. 17:5, 18; Ga. 4:4-6 (also the Holy Spirit); He. 1:1-2.
 - 7) The Father and the Holy Spirit are distinguished from each other: Ro. 8:26-27.
- b. Each of the Members of the Trinity is called God or claimed full Deity:
 - 1) The Father very frequently: Jn. 6:27; I Co. 8:6; Ga. 1:1, 3.
 - 2) The Son, the Lord Jesus Christ: Lk. 4:12; Jn. 1:1, 18; 5:17-18; 10:30, 33; 20:28; I Co. 8:6; Col. 2:9; Tit. 2:13; He. 1:8; II Pe. 1:1.
 - 3) The Holy Spirit: Acts 5:3, 4; 13:2; 15:28; I Co. 2:10-11; Ep. 2:22; He. 9:14.

B. Yet A DIVINE UNITY OF PERSONALITIES—A compound oneness.

1. The Old Testament emphasizes the unity of God: Ex. 20:3; De. 4:35, 39; 6:4; Is. 44:6. The word "one" (De. 6:4, quoted by the Lord Jesus, Mk. 12:29) in the Hebrew means "united," indicating a compound unity or a unity of parts rather than a simple unity.
2. The plural Hebrew word for God, "Elohim," is often used with a singular verb (as Ge. 1:1, 27), indicating a profound unity of action.
3. In His high-priestly prayer (Jn. 17:11, 21-23), the Lord Jesus likened the unity or oneness of His essential Being with the Father to the most intimate of all human relations, the spiritual oneness between Himself and the true Church, called "the body of Christ" (I Co. 12:27; Ep. 5:30), and between fellow-believers by virtue of the baptism or partaking of the Holy Spirit (I Co. 12:13). The word "one" is in the neuter gender, expressing a unity. While always remaining separate individuals, those "born of the Spirit" (Jn. 3:6) are "to preserve the unity of the Spirit" (Ep. 4:3), "with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27), "maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose" (2:2).

By making these comparisons, our Lord conveyed the idea that the oneness that exists among the Members of the Godhead is a moral (or voluntary) oneness of character and relationship, a united continuous choice to live in the realm of perfect love or true benevolence in all moral relations and responsibilities. The concept of salvation is elevated thereby and the profound nature of the glorious Trinity somewhat exposed to our limited vision.

Evidently from the foregoing, it is proper to refer to the Godhead in both the plural and the singular.

The plural is proper because there are three Personalities so distinct that They may perform specific functions and actions separately. And yet there is a profound unity among the Members of the Godhead. Evidently this is a compound unity, as in Ge. 1:1 and 1:27, where the plural "Elohim" for God acted together in creation in such a manner that a singular verb could be used. We must, it appears, lean away from an elementary concept of unity into the realm of compound unity.

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C. The Godhead are **SPIRITUAL IN ESSENCE**, not corporeal (or having a physical existence). Divine spiritual essence is a reality, a distinct entity or substance which could be seen if we were able to endure such great revelation, as God explained to Moses (Ex. 33:20). The Lord Jesus referred to the Godhead as having "shape" or "form" (Jn. 5:37) and said that "He has seen the Father" (Jn. 6:46). David expressed the hope of beholding the "face" and "form" of God (Ps. 17:15).

1. God's essential spiritual nature is immaterial: Jn. 4:24 ("God (is) Spirit"); Col. 1:15 ("the invisible God"); I Tim. 1:17; He. 11:27; Lk. 24:39.

We cannot now understand how personal identity can exist in a purely spiritual realm and must depend upon our own spiritual consciousness, implanted by the creative hand of God, that we exist apart from our material bodies (Lk. 16:22-31; II Co. 5:1-8; Phil. 1:21-24). Similarly, God exists apart from material substance and is to be contacted through our spiritual consciousness (Mt. 6:6; Jn. 4:23-24; Acts 17:24-29; Ro. 8:16). We have this common basis of spiritual understanding, since we were created in the "image" and "likeness" of God (Ge. 1:26). In our present sphere of life "we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Co. 5:7). "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 20:29).

2. The essential Being of the Godhead never has and cannot be seen by our earthly material consciousness: Jn. 1:18; I Tim. 6:15-16; I Jn. 4:12.

God's intimate servants and spiritual leaders have been favored by unspeakable manifestations of the Divine essence: As Abraham (Ge. 12:7; 17:1-3; 18:1-3, 13); Jacob (Ge. 32:30); Moses (Ex. 24:9-11; 33:11, 18-23; Nu. 12:6-8, "form" or "likeness"); Gideon (Jud. 6:11, 12, 21-22); Samson's parents (Jud. 13:6, 21-22); Isaiah (6:1, 5; Jn. 12:41); Stephen (Acts 7:54-56); Paul (I Co. 9:1; II Co. 12:1-4); John, the Apostle (Re. 1:12-18).

The designations, "the angel of the Lord" and "the angel of God," appear in some of the above passages and in a number of other places in the Old Testament (as Ge. 22:11-12, 15-18; Ex. 3:2-6; 14:19-20). The Hebrew word rendered "angel" means messenger. These designations are thought to refer to the Lord Jesus in His pre-incarnate eternal existence, as they have reference to the actions of Deity and yet there are distinctions in the Godhead (as Is. 63:9-10). "The Angel of the Lord is the visible Lord God of the Old Testament, as Jesus Christ was of the New Testament" (Amp. O.T.).

3. Since God has no material essence, no external images are to be made to represent the Divine Being: Ex. 20:4.
4. In the resurrection the redeemed shall receive "a spiritual body" (I Co. 15:44-45) like "the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:21). "We shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is" (I Jn. 3:2). We now have our natural (or soulish) body and see spiritual realities "in a mirror dimly" (I Co. 13:12) and thus must "walk by faith." Evidently, when we receive our "spiritual body" a whole new realm of spiritual perception will dawn. The heavenly life will be busy and happy in the direct exploration of spiritual reality—"then face to face." "His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face" (Re. 22:3-4). The resurrected and glorified Christ now has a tangible spiritual body (Lk. 24:39), "the first fruits of those who are asleep" (I Co. 15:20). Thus there has been a change in the manifestations of the Godhead since the Incarnation. "Because I live, you shall live also, said the Savior in anticipation of His resurrection (Jn. 14:19).

D. The Godhead are **LIVING IN AN ENDLESS DURATION OF TIME** and have successions of thoughts, experiences, and volitions, or a chronology of events, in Their existence, as set forth in the following passages:¹

1. Those describing the Godhead as living in a succession of time: Is. 57:15; Ps. 102:24-27; 95:10-11; Zeph. 3:5; Zech. 1:12; He. 13:8; Re. 1:8.
2. Those referring to the Godhead as engaging in the process of reasoning and decision, inviting man to join in this process: Ge. 1:26-27; Is. 1:18; 55:8-9; Jer. 29:11; 44:21-22.

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¹ See "Philosophical Influences In Early Church History," at end of section, for the development of the "eternal now" concept of God's existence.

Our only concept of reasoning is the process of thinking one thought after another in a succession of time and coming to a conclusion, which we did not have at the beginning of the process. There is no hint in the Scriptural record that God is not actually thinking along with us in the same process of time that we are living in. Duration or succession is absolutely imperative to the reasoning process. Our ability to think is just as worthless without a duration of time to act in as an automobile would be without a road to operate upon.

3. The Godhead are represented as experiencing emotional reactions of pleasure, grief, and indignation in accordance with man's attitude and conduct: Ge. 6:5-6; 22:12; Ps. 78:38, 56-61; 95:10-11; Is. 12:1; Eze. 6:9; 16:42-43; Micah 7:18-19; Zeph. 3:17; Zech. 1:12-16; Lk. 15:7, 10.

These verses, among many others, show the variableness of Divine experiences in the duration of time, in response to man's treatment of God's love and blessings. Great climaxes of happy and grievous reactions are often involved as God observes man's obedience and extreme rebellion. God controls His vindictive emotions and manifests wrath only in righteous judgment in His responsibility as the Moral Governor of the universe.

4. The Godhead are said to perform specific actions at definite periods or instants in a succession of time: Ge. 2:3; Ex. 20:11; 31:17; He. 4:4; De. 2:25; Josh. 10:14.

Allow God to exist in a duration (or succession) and all is natural and highly exciting. He then can have new thoughts, make new decisions, and perform acts of unspeakable wisdom. Then He can look back upon His works and have Divine complacency that they are "very good" and be "refreshed" by contemplation.

5. God is said to be exerting continual care and oversight over those in happy submission to Him, making observations, reacting thereto, and planning their protection: De. 11:12; 23:14; I Kgs. 22:19; II Chr. 16:9.

They were to live their lives in realization that their God was constantly watching their behavior. God's loving presence could only be a reality if they continued in purity of life and devotion.

6. The Godhead have made decisions to do certain things or have made changes in Their plans, as a result of making certain observations of man's condition, rebellion, or change of attitude in humiliation and prayer: Ge. 6:5-7; Ex. 2:23-25; Ex. 32:7-14 (fervent intercession of Moses); Nu. 11:1-2; De. 9:18-19, 25; I Sam. 15:10-11, 23, 35; II Kgs. 13:3-5; 19:16, 20, 28; II Chr. 7:12-16; Jonah 3:10; Jonah 4:2.

Allow the Godhead to be living in a duration of time and we have graphic accounts of God's reactions against rebellion, and His sympathetic and moving response to humbleness and repentance. Prayer actually moves a compassionate God, who is concerned with our welfare, and changes things. We have in II Kings 19:14-37, for example, the following sequence: A dire need, humiliation before God, earnest petition, God having heard the prayer and considering the situation, God's reactions, deliverance, and judgment upon the enemy.

7. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus into humanity brought about changes and experiences in the inter-personal relations of the Godhead which cannot be conceived of apart from a succession of time or a true chronology of events: Jn. 1:1-2, 14; 6:38; 8:42; 12:23, 28; 16:27-28, 17:4-5, 11-12; 20:17; Acts 2:32-33; Ga. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-11; Re. 3:20-21. See top chart, opposite page.

There was an eternal duration of past time when the Triune Members of the Godhead had Their perfect fellowship together. This was before the Second Person took upon Himself a catastrophic change of existence through His incarnation by way of the Virgin Birth. Then there was a period of time when the Son of God as the Son of Man "tabernacled among us" in the special enduement of the Holy Spirit and in sacred prayer fellowship with the Father. Then there was the second greatest event in the history of mankind (second only to creation), when the Savior in His lonely atoning sufferings said, "It is finished." Then His subsequent resurrection life and ascension introduced a change into the very realm of the Godhead—a God-man in the heavens, ever living "to

make intercession." How can anyone in simple-mindedness conceive of such immense inter-personal changes in the essential nature and experiences of the Godhead without allowing a true chronology of succession in the Divine existence? These tremendous facts confound philosophical speculations.

8. The Holy Spirit began His special earthly activity in the present dispensation at a distinct point of time, involving inter-personal events in the experiences of the Godhead: Jn. 7:39; 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-8; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4, 33; Ep. 3:2-6.

The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, is the executive Agent in bringing to pass the program of God on earth, particularly as regards man's salvation and the communication of the will of God to man. In Old Testament times the Holy Spirit came upon selected individuals at selected times to reveal truth, guidance, and to energize them in bestowing spiritual gifts. Profound changes were to be made in the Gospel age, in that a new intimate spiritual relationship with the resurrected and glorified Christ was to be established through the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit. New profound blessings and manifestations were to be the common experience of those reconciled to God. This new "stewardship of God's grace" could not be bestowed until the advent, atoning death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus (Jn. 7:39). Thus we have a specific point of time in the durative experiential life of the Godhead when these new manifestations of the Holy Spirit began. "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper," said the Lord Jesus concerning the then future time of accomplishment (Jn. 14:16). Obviously, there is a genuine chronology in the experiences of the Godhead. Frequent reference is made in the New Testament to another distinct point of time when these blessed privileges shall be terminated in a future climax of judgment.

9. God is represented as having made many decisions concerning distant plans which He expects to bring to pass in the process of time, representing them as future in His own activity: Ge. 3:15; 12:1-3; I Sam. 2:35; Is. 7:14; Dan. 2:44; Acts 1:7; II Tim. 1:9-10 and Tit. 1:2 ("long ages ago," lit., "before times eternal," ASV); I Pe. 1:10-12; Acts 15:14-17; Ep. 1:10; Re. 1:1; Acts 17:31; 1:11.

These passages have been selected to represent long-distant plans that God the Father has made in His dispensations of love and mercy toward mankind. Because of man's rebellion and persistence in wickedness, God has had to modify His plans and also pursue dispensations of justice and judgment as a righteous Moral Governor. These plans are general in scope, although they often involve many details, and do not necessarily involve a knowledge of all that shall develop or be decided upon in the course of time. They indicate that God the Father has taken forethought, experienced reactions, and has made decisions in a past duration of time, and has declared many future events which He has determined to bring to pass in His great mercy and regulation of world affairs.

SUMMARY

The theological dogma that God is an "eternal now," or that time (or succession) is not an element in the Divine existence, is evidently a philosophical rather than a Biblical concept. In the Bible God is presented as a living Being who: 1) walks or dwells with men, 2) performs definite acts at definite times, 3) rests or ceases and contemplates activity, 4) observes, thinks and is reasoned with, 5) remembers, 6) is grieved, 7) is jealous, 8) is provoked to anger and then causes His wrath to rest, 9) is moved with compassion, forgives and comforts, 10) delights and rejoices, 11) hearkens unto men, 12) repents, 13) changes His plans, 14) makes new decisions, etc. These various acts, states of mind, or experiences obviously conflict and cannot coexist at the same instant in a particular series of events, and thus require the chronological element of time for their occurrence. God is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Is. 57:15, ASV).

When one endeavors to show how a God who is timeless (or an "eternal now"), or who does not have a succession of actions or events in His basic existence, can make a choice in time, (which is not a reality to enter into a

succession of time and bring about a chronology of thoughts, reactions, decisions, and actions, which were always being experienced in His timeless existence), grave complications arise which the plain and simple record of Scripture appears to know nothing about. An "eternal now" God would not have a duration of time in which to make a choice to enter into a duration of time, to bring about experientially a genuine chronology of events.

- E. The Godhead are represented in the Bible as **POSSESSING THE ABILITIES OF PERSONALITY**. Man is said to have been created in the "image" and "likeness" of God as to his spiritual (or immaterial) nature, his essential personality (Ge. 1:26-27). Our analysis of our own abilities of personality, therefore will aid greatly in understanding the nature of the great Divine Personalities.

We shall see in our discussion of man's constitution that we are to think of ourselves as whole personalities with functions or abilities, and act as a complete unit in all that we do. We are not to think of ourselves as having "spirit" and "soul" segments that can act independently. We evaluate personality, therefore, in terms of what such a being is able to do. Personalities have the mysterious ability to originate action and are not controlled by some causation acting upon the will. To be able to make a decision for action, there must be the ability of reason or intelligence, which enables one to have a mental picture of a proposed action in a perspective of our moral relations. The mind works with the will in the development of action in the process of reasoning. The will directs the mind to think upon a certain action and the process of analysis has a reflex action back to the will as to whether the process begun is to be pursued further. The will is the mystery of personality which originates action and decides what we shall be occupied with. The ability of personality to originate and be responsible for all actions is the foundation of moral responsibility and accountability.

Free will and intelligence could function on the basis of what is right and proper, but would lack the delicacy and sensitivity of contemplation if there were no capacity of emotional response. Everything we might do would be mechanically right, but would be monotonous if there were no reactions of evaluation. There would be no ability to appreciate the desirable and avoid the undesirable, no pleasure or pain, no happiness or disappointment, no joy or sorrow. It must be remembered that in the functioning of personality, emotional response is not under the direct control of the will but is an automatic reaction to what the mind is being directed to consider, observe, or reason upon. But it is this ability to respond or react that forms the incentive to keep on thinking upon, or continuing in, a certain course of action. Without the ability of response we would not have the joy of appreciating moral worth. We could not venerate and worship the great Being of the Godhead.

It appears that conscience is not a separate entity of personality, but is a continuous operation of the mind in approving what we know to be right and condemning what we know to be wrong. When our minds approve what we are occupied with, this pleasurable satisfaction promotes a desire to keep on being so occupied. It brings about a deep restfulness that we are living according to true intelligence, or in a state of love. Love, then, is a directive of will in choosing to fulfill what is right and proper in our moral relations, but it is not a directive without warmth of conscience and emotional pleasure. In the darkest hours of our Savior's life, just before the Cross, He prayed that His dear disciples "may have My joy made full in themselves" (Jn. 17:13). It was "for the joy set before Him" that our Savior "endured such hostility by sinners against Himself" and finally "the cross, despising the shame" (He. 12:2-3). In His mind He envisioned the great multitude of repentant sinners in happy reconciliation to God because of His life and atonement. Such joy comes because of the ability of personality to have satisfaction and pleasure when we know we are giving ourselves for that which is right and for the greatest good. The Lord could give His joy only to those who would join Him in devoting their lives to the most worth-while objectives, to anyone who will "deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Lk. 9:23).

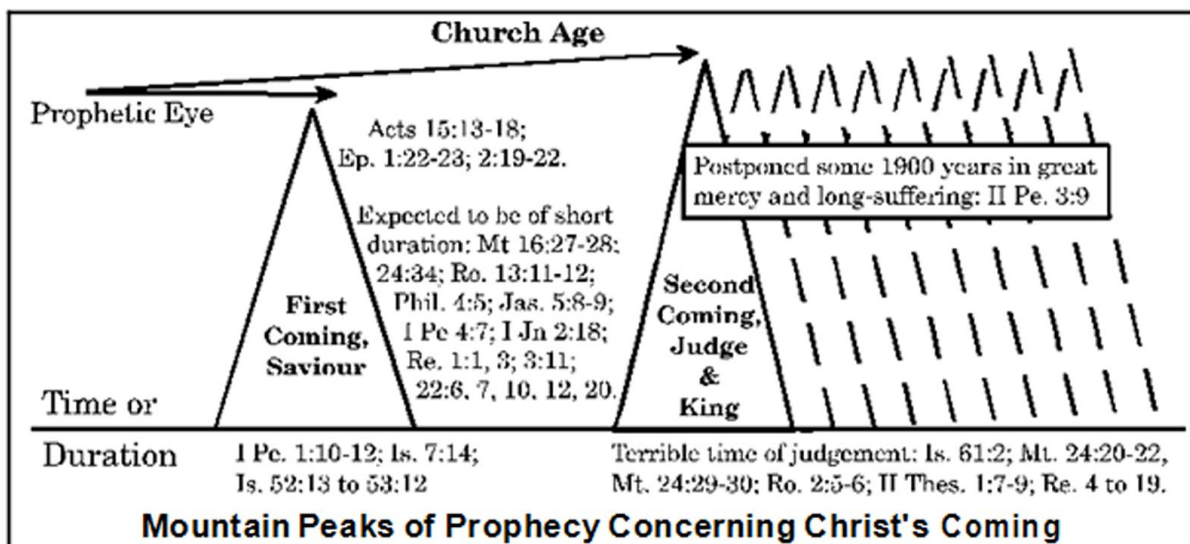
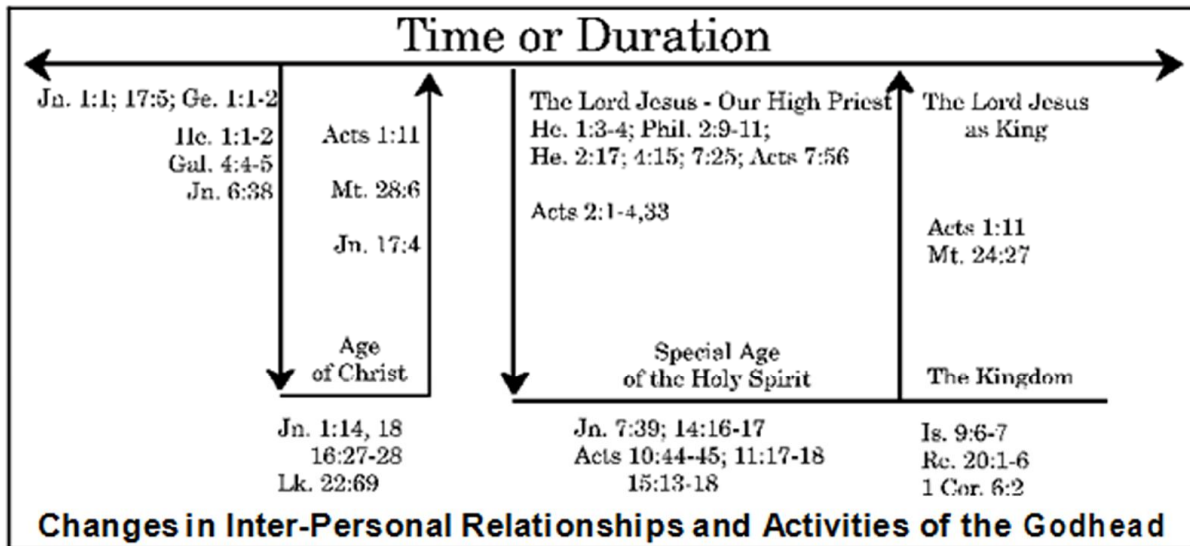
To our happy discovery, the Bible describes the Godhead as living Personalities, having the abilities of evaluation and invention, of sensitive reactions in contemplation, and of creative origination of activity. They are not described as some immense impersonal force in haphazard activity. The Godhead are not under a fate of activity, a victim of Their own impulses, but have the mysterious ability of voluntary moral choice, or self-direction. They have chosen to use their immeasurable energies in a constructive or benevolent manner, the results being called "the wisdom of God."

Notes:

It should overwhelm us with joy to learn that the Bible represents God as a great First Cause who entered into creation with emotional sensitivity and delight. The God of the Bible is not some sort of accidental force on the loose in the universe originating things at random (as evolutionary theories seem to imply). Nor is God a concentrated immeasurable force programmed for some kind of activity (to use computer language). In fact, there would be no Bible if these tragic concepts were true—we would all be at the mercy of gigantic impersonal forces.

The Bible is an account of God's love and sensitivity toward man in providing for and seeking man's reconciliation. Could anything be more moving than the tender account as to how "the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground," and then animated His creation by breathing "into his nostrils the breath of life," so that "man became a living being" in the Divine Image (Ge. 2:7)? Man being a tiny replica of his great Creator could only find happiness in relating himself to the Source of his life. We have considered the in-depth declaration of the Lord Jesus: "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9). In other words, multiply our Lord's earthly "exhibition" of the Godhead as "the Son of Man" by the infinity of greatness. We are then challenged to view with profound humility and worship an ever-enlarging concept of the Personalities of the Godhead.

1. The Godhead possess intellectual activity or personal **INTELLIGENCE**: Ex. 32:7-14, 30-33; I Sam. 2:35; Ps. 139:17-18; Is. 1:18; 41:21; 55:8-9; Jer. 2:1-13; 29:11; Micah 6:1-3; Ro. 8:27; I Co. 2:10-11.
2. The Godhead possess the ability of **EMOTIONAL REACTIONS** of happiness or disappointment in accordance with man's attitude: Ge. 6:5-6; II Chr. 16:9; Ps. 78:38, 58-61; 95:10-11; Is. 1:2; 5:4; 12:1; Eze. 6:9-10; Micah 7:18-19; Zeph. 3:17; Zech. 1:14-16; Mt. 18:23, 27, 34-35; 23:37; Lk. 15:7, 10; Jn. 4:23; Re. 3:20.
3. The Godhead possess the power of **FREE WILL** (or self-determination): Ge. 1:26; 3:22-24; 6:6, 12-13; 9:11-12; Ex. 32:7-14, 30-33; II Kgs. 20:5-6; Is. 12:1; Jn. 5:21; 10:18; Acts 1:7; I Co. 12:11; Jas. 1:18; I Jn. 4:14.



II. THE NATURAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The Godhead are revealed in the Bible as possessing profound **NATURAL ATTRIBUTES** of unspeakable greatness.

An attribute is a description of some quality of being or character, or of something that is true about a person or thing. A personality is not a bundle of attributes, so to speak, but possesses such an existence concerning which it may be said that certain qualities or characteristics are always there. The following attributes are natural, involuntary, or inherently belong to the essential Being of the Godhead:

- A. **ETERNITY OF BEING** is a natural attribute of the Godhead: Ge. 21:33; De. 33:27; Ps. 9:7; 41:13; 90:2; 93:2; 103:17; Is. 26:4; 40:28; 44:6; 48:12; Ro. 1:20; 16:26; He. 9:14; Re. 4:8.

Notes:

From our natural observations we conclude that we ourselves had a beginning, and as far as this earthly life is concerned have a termination. There must be a cause that is not subject to our temporary limitations. We were caused or brought into existence by our parents, they by theirs, and so back through the ages. A point is reached in the long chain of cause and effect where a First Cause is arrived at. This First Cause must have self-sustaining (or un-caused) life. Hence, the idea of eternal existence springs up in our minds. The idea of an eternal First Cause also arises in our minds from our observation of the constancy of the many things and operations about us. God being un-caused must therefore be independent of our limitations. The Bible overwhelmingly establishes the idea that time or duration is an element in God's existence, and equally asserts that the Being of God is without beginning or ending. God, therefore, inhabits eternity, and beyond this we cannot go in our thinking.

B. **OMNIPRESENCE** is a natural attribute of the Godhead, by which it is intended that the Being of God pervades all space and is everywhere manifested at all times: I Kgs. 8:22, 27; Ps. 139:7-10; Prov. 15:3; Is. 57:15; Jer. 23:24; Mt. 18:20; 28:20; Acts 17:24, 27-28; Ep. 4:6; He. 4:13.

1. God is everywhere present in spiritual essence. Just as it is our very nature to be localized in one place, so it is God's very nature to be everywhere present at the same time. While God occupies all space, He is not identified with the objects of space. This is beyond our understanding and places the nature of God's Being in the realm of mystery. The mystery is not surprising since we cannot comprehend the vital relation of our own spiritual essence with our physical body. We know from our own experience and observation that we are more than the mere physical, yet to define ourselves we cannot.

We act upon and assume evidences for the existence of things on every hand that we do not understand. Who understands what electricity is? Or magnetism? Why is there a magnetic north pole? Who understands how our rooms can be filled with radio waves from all over the world, and television waves, without our being in the least impaired thereby? Who understands why light and sound waves travel as they do? What proof do you have that there is a wind? Various theories exist, but who understands? To observe what something does is not the same as understanding what that something is. Thus in our daily lives we act upon what we have evidence for, and so it must be concerning God. If we understood all about the nature of God, God would not be God.

2. While the Godhead are everywhere present in the universe, Their essence is particularly concentrated (or manifested) in a distinct place in the universe called "Heaven." This is where the "throne" (or rule of God) is in operation: I Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 11:4; 103:19; Mt. 6:9; Jn. 14:2-3; Acts 7:55-56; II Co. 12:2-4; Re. 3:21; 4:2; 5:11-13; 20:11; 21:2, 22-23.
3. The existence of God is not established by direct understanding, therefore, but by:
 - a. Natural evidence—Every harmonious arrangement of existences must have an adequate First Cause.
 - b. Observations of present Divine activity and response—There is great uniformity in sustaining and regulating greatly diverse existences, and strong reactions towards moral beings in accordance with their voluntary attitudes and actions.
 - c. Spiritual consciousness—We affirm our real personalities as having a separate existence from our physical bodies, which are subject to our dominion. Death (or the termination of the mystery of life) is a reality to everyone. The idea of the spiritual only needs to be proved when we deny our native consciousness. Thus we can visualize the spiritual essence of God as creating and dominating the physical creation. Tribes of peoples throughout the world have devised modes of religious worship seeking to gain the favor and appease the Deity they have concluded must exist. Thus, exhibiting great guilt of conscience and fear. Man can only fear what he visualizes as existing. His exertions of fear will be in proportion to the vividness of his persuasions.

Notes:

To the true Christian, the evidence for the existence of God is the consciousness of his conversion experience (Jn. 3:3). There are many other evidences of God's presence along the way of life (Jn. 14:21, 23). The New Testament is filled with descriptions of spiritual experiences that are to take place in our consciousness.² Spiritual experiences with God become the strongest evidences of all, since they are direct (Ro. 8:16) and do not have to be interpreted by the mind as do all human experiences. It was the vitality of Christian experience that empowered the early church with such energy of persuasion that opposers said: "These men who have upset the world have come here also" (Acts 17:6). In the early terrible persecutions, it was the overwhelming fullness of Divine persuasion that enabled the Christians to view the lions (who would soon kill them in front of large crowds of unbelievers) as their friends. These new "friends" would soon usher them into the very presence of their Lord. The multitudes of antagonists who came to see Christians being devoured soon found that their own unbelief was being devoured instead. The dying Christian's songs of love and victory haunted them. God must be a reality if human beings can experience such overwhelming persuasion. Great final efforts to stamp out Christianity around 300 A. D. failed, so the Roman rulers had to make peace with this great spiritual army or be conquered by it. But sadly enough, the conquest of Christianity into acceptability in the eyes of the world became the beginning of deterioration. What persecution could not do, popularity did.

- C. **OMNISCIENCE**, or a knowledge of all that is knowable, is a natural attribute of the Godhead: "His understanding is infinite (or beyond measure)," said the Psalmist (147:5). "There is no searching of His understanding," wrote Isaiah (40:28, ASV). Job was told of the God who is "perfect in knowledge" by his advisers (37:16). The Apostle Paul extolled the greatness of God: "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Ro. 11:33). John wrote that "God is greater than our heart, and knows all things" (I Jn. 3:20), with the idea that no objects of knowledge are withheld from God. "All things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (He. 4:13). The Lord Jesus had said that the Father "sees in secret" (Mt. 6:6).³

There is considerable evidence from the Scriptures that future choices of moral beings (when acting freely in their moral agency), have not been brought into existence as yet and thus are not fixities or objects of possible knowledge. This applies to actions of the Godhead as well as to the self-caused actions of men. To say that the smallest details of Divine action down through the countless ages of eternity have always been in the Divine mind, is to say that God never experiences climaxes of decisions as a result of contemplation, or that God never originates anything new. This is fate applied to the Infinite. Choice is impossible without the origination of something new.

Yet God is represented in the Bible as making new decisions, as pondering situations and as making up His mind in conformity thereto. He also changes His mind when certain reactions take place. The Scriptures do not even hint that these descriptions of Divine actions are mere adaptations to our way of thinking, but simply and beautifully put them forth as revelations of the great God. These profound portrayals of the great unknown should excite all of us as we seek to lift the veil of our limited vision.

The extent of God's knowledge can only be learned from a painstaking reading of the Bible. The Berean Christians thus examined the teachings of the Apostle Paul (Acts 17:11). "Theology has much to unlearn before it will be either reasonable or Biblical," said one. Some of the main passages of Scripture will be cited as we seek to summarize the extent of the Divine knowledge of present and future events.

1. God has absolute, perfect knowledge of all that is taking place at the present time in the entire universe, extending to men's thoughts as well as actions, the disposition of every particle of matter, the action of every force, and the like: I Kgs. 8:39; Prov. 15:3; Jer. 32:19; Eze. 11:5; Mt. 12:36-37; Jn. 2:24; Acts 1:24; He. 4:13.

Each Member of the Godhead is pictured as continually active in searching, investigating, or examining men's innermost beings (using the same verb in present tenses): Ro. 8:27 (the Father); Re. 2:23 (the Lord Jesus); I Co. 2:10 (the Holy Spirit). The Godhead are often represented as coming about Their knowledge through Their omnipresence and observation.

Notes:

² See Section XII on Transformation.

³ See "Philosophical Influences In Early Church History, "at the end of section, for the development of the idea of total absolute foreknowledge of every event in all eternity.

2. Many future choices, actions, and mass reactions of men appear to be known to God beforehand and form the basis for many detailed plans of events that God purposes to bring to pass in making reconciliation for all men possible and in His government of world affairs. For example:
 - a. The rejection and putting to death of Christ, the Messiah and Savior, whom God purposed to send into the world because of sin: Ge.3:15; Is. 53:2-3, 12; Zech. 12:10; Mk. 8:31; 9:12, 31; Mt. 20:17-19; 21:33-39, 45. The Lord Jesus would come as "the light of the world" (Jn. 8:12), as a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners" (He. 7:26), into a world that "loved the darkness rather than the light" (Jn. 3:19), energized by and under the dominion of "the evil one" (Ep. 2:2; I Jn. 5:19), "the father of lies" (Jn. 8:44). The Savior's total witness "that its deeds are evil" (Jn. 7:7) would call for such a revolutionary change that God the Father expected a total rejection by the masses and made His plans accordingly. Satan would finally be utterly conquered (Lk. 10:17-18; Ro. 16:20; Re. 20:1-3, 10). But this would only happen after having brought great sorrow and suffering to the Savior through his many evil emissaries in religious and political leadership (Mt. 4:9; 27:20).
 - b. God revealed to Moses that after his death Israel would rebel and require judgments to bring them back to repentance and forgiveness: De. 31:16-21. Many times God had experienced Israel as "a stubborn people" (De. 9:13), and was observing "their intent" or inner attitude then, even before the blessings of the promised land (De. 31:21). Moses affirmed that they were rebellious while he was still with them, with the hallowing influence of his Divine experiences, "how much more, then, after my death?" (De. 31:27).
 - c. Jeremiah, the prophet (626-580 B.C.), was a subject of knowledge before conception, evidently because of God's special plan and purpose to raise up a prophet to give final warning to Judah of the Babylonian captivity, which God was bringing about because of their sins: Jer. 1:5, 7. Jeremiah experienced very special Divine influence and enduement from early life, that appears to be almost compelling, and went forth with great sincerity.
 - d. Because of God's knowledge of man's extreme unwillingness to receive the truth and repent of sin, God knows that the world will never be converted to Christ but will become more and more determined in pursuit of selfish gratification: Mt. 24:14; II Th. 2:3-4; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:13. The Lord Jesus was asked, "Are there just a few who are being saved?" (Lk. 13:23), and He had to agree with great heaviness of heart. Comparatively few would enter "the narrow gate" and walk the "narrow" way to life (Mt. 7:13-14). Thus God has had to make His plans accordingly and is taking out "a people for His name" from all nations (Acts 15:13-14).
 - e. God determined, "according to His own purpose and grace," to make possible the forgiveness of sins through the sacrificial death of Christ "long ages ago" (lit., "before times eternal"), and thus the blessings of the Gospel were not of recent origin: II Tim. 1:9-10; Tit. 1:2.
 - f. The concept of the plan of atonement through the sufferings of Christ was worked out as a possibility "before the foundation of the world" and the creation of man (I Pe. 1:20), and resolved upon as a certainty "from the foundation of the world" (Re. 13:8, AV). The former passage may be rendered: "Having come to be perceived beforehand, indeed before (the) foundation of (the) world," the Greek perfect tense suggesting a process of thought before the conclusion. In Re. 13:8 we have the words: "The Lamb came to be slain from (the) foundation of (the) world," as the Authorized Version correctly renders it, again using a perfect tense. This would indicate that the sacred spiritual sufferings of the Savior unto death in a future incarnated humanity became a certainty in the mind of God from the moment (early in history) that man sinned. This also made redemption necessary, as a means of reconciliation, to be brought to pass in a future duration of time (Acts 3:18; 4:27-28).

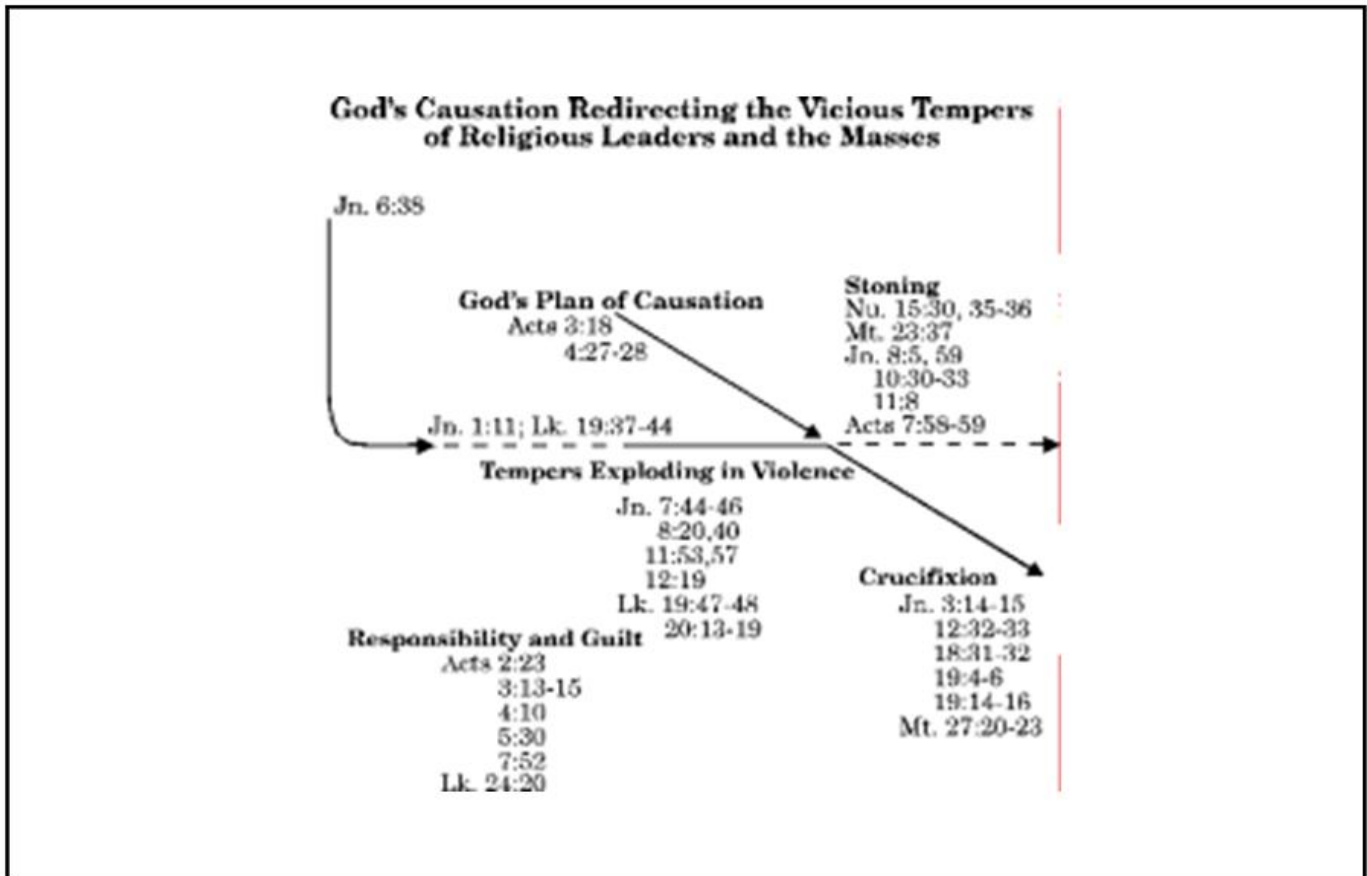
- g. It was affirmed at the Jerusalem Council that God's present program of gathering out from the world all who will respond to the Gospel, before fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies by the return of the Lord Jesus and the establishing of the millennial kingdom, was not some new Divine plan but was "known from of old": Acts 15:13-18 (ASV, 1901, also ASB).
- 3. Many events and future plans that God has decided upon and prophesied as certain to come to pass appear to be associated with the idea of causation.

Scripture reveals that God can control the human will in the absolute sense—and thereby setting aside, in such acts, its normal moral freedom and accountability and placing it temporarily under a law of cause and effect (as De. 2:25; Jer. 50:9; Re. 17:17). In matters of personal salvation, however, God never coerces the will but always maintains a delicate balance of moral freedom (as De. 30:19, 15-20; Is. 1:18-20; Jn. 5:40; Ro. 2:5-11; Re. 3:20).

- a. Abraham's descendants would spend about 400 years in Egypt (actually becoming 430 years): Ge. 15:13-15; Ex. 12:40-41.
- b. "The king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion": Ex. 3:19-20. God purposed to judge Egypt for their sins and cruel persecution of the Israelites and would harden Pharaoh's heart, or allow him to remain unpersuaded in his stubbornness, to be the occasion for these righteous judgments (Ex. 11:9-10). God finally destroyed the Egyptian army in the Red Sea by hardening the hearts of Pharaoh and the Egyptians to pursue the Israelites with great violence and determination (Ex. 14:4, 5, 8, 17). God's causation extended from their minds into the physical realm, "He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty" (Ex. 14:23-25, 27).
- c. Cyrus, king of Persia, was prophesied about 150 years before his great mission of making provision for the returning Jewish remnant from the 70-year captivity which God had determined upon. Is. 44:28-45:4. God could cause him to be so named, brought into power at the desired period, and move him to make his proclamation (II Chr. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4).
- d. The 70-year Babylonian captivity was determined upon by God as judgment upon Judah for their rebellion against God's rulership: Jer. 25:11-13; 29:10-14. Jeremiah was raised up as a special prophet to warn the nation of the coming catastrophe (Jer. 1:4-10). As a last measure, he was instructed to publish these warnings in a book. "Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I plan to bring on them." But God's pleadings and warnings were rejected (Jer. 36:1-7; 37:2).
- e. It was prophesied in Old Testament times that the Messiah would be rejected and would endure sufferings characteristic of crucifixion. And our Lord specifically mentioned crucifixion in New Testament times: Is. 52:13-53:12; Zech. 12:10; Mt. 20:17-19; Jn. 12:32-34.
 - 1) The sacred Atonement was to consist in the Savior's voluntary spiritual suffering unto death in total mental realization of the dreadful sinful rebellion of mankind. This rebellion was against the reasonable moral government of a loving God. The Atonement did not consist in man's rejection, brutal treatment, and putting to death of the Savior. God the Father "made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf" (II Co. 5:21). The Savior must identify Himself with sinners so intimately that He is treated as if their sins were His, if the seemingly insurmountable problems of reconciliation were to be solved. He must be the great High Priest who voluntarily places the sin of mankind, not upon the head of an innocent animal, but upon Himself, with dreadful heart-broken solemnness, until it crushes out His holy and spotless life: Jn. 1:29; 6:51; 10:17-18; He. 2:9; 7:26-27; I Pe. 2:24; Mk. 15:37, 39.
 - 2) How is God going to provide the Savior with a duration of time in which His penetrating agony over man's sin can be brought to the climax of death? How can God do this while faced with,

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- a) the expected certain rejection of the loving Savior when He came to earth (Jn. 7:7),
- b) the usual stoning to get rid of Him (Jn. 10:31-33),
- c) provide a public forum for all men to see,
- d) and while Christ was in full consciousness so He could experience the penetrating agony of man's sin.



God long determined to exert a causative mental preference in the minds of the rebellious leaders and the multitude so they would all manifest their tempers in demanding crucifixion rather than stoning: Mt. 27:22-23; Acts 3:18; 4:27-28. See chart and Scriptures.

- 3) Since such victims were usually conscious for several days, this period would provide the Savior with a duration of time in which He could display publicly before all men His agony of mind and heart because of sin. And this would not interfere with their moral responsibility and guilt in their rejecting the Messiah: Jn. 1:11; Acts 3:13-15; 5:30.
- 4) "The blood and water" that flowed from the Savior's side when it was pierced proved to be strong evidence that He died from a broken (ruptured) heart. It appears He did not die from the crucifixion. It is also noted that His unusual early and astonishing death as observed by the centurion (Mk. 15:39) also

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confirms a death from spiritual agony: Jn. 19:32-37; Mk. 15:43-45.

Descriptions representing the dreadfulness of such double agony (of spiritual and physical suffering), therefore, were given by inspiration in Old Testament times, particularly to Isaiah and the Psalmist David (Psalm 22). They were brought into many trying experiences to prepare them to write such solemn things. Our Lord with deepest realization foretold His crucifixion and agonized in the Garden to be delivered from that threatened violent death by stoning. Stoning would make impossible the Atonement for which He came. His prayer was heard and He was delivered (He. 5:7).

- f. God's knowledge of man's extreme unwillingness to respond to His overtures of reconciliation has led Him to make many detailed plans as to the course of the ages, which have been prophesied in Old and New Testaments, many of which are still future: Is. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:5-6; Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14; Mt. 24 and 25; Acts 1:11; I Th. 4:16-17; Re. 1:1, 7; 4 to 22.

God planned and prophesied the advent of the Savior and the accomplishment of redemption, as we have seen. He also planned the bodily return of the Lord Jesus to establish an earthly kingdom of righteousness. Many details of this return were prophesied in the Old Testament, with many more prophesies by our Lord and the New Testament writers. God will judge nations and individuals in absolute righteousness. Their destiny will be determined upon the basis of their reactions to God's measures of mercy. The many details foretold in Revelation chapters 4 to the end will take on new meaning when they are being fulfilled, and will show God's wisdom in revealing them. The sum total of all of God's dispensations will be a grand and unending oblation to the Triune Godhead (Re. 19:1-9).

God can prophesy these many things because He has determined to bring them to pass by His direct causation. He is "the Lord God, the Almighty" (Re. 4:8). The exact time of the return of the Lord Jesus from heaven to close the present Church age of God's great mercy does not appear to be a fixity in the Divine mind. We are in a great parenthesis which does not seem to have been prophesied in Old Testament times. The prophets were given to see the two peaks of Christ's first and second coming, without visualizing the valley of time in between them. There appears to have been a great extension of this parenthesis of time in the mercy of God, over what was expected in New Testament times. See chart on page 22.

In addition to God's long-range plans of general dispensations on earth, many plans have been made as to the existence and rulership of nations. "The Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whom He wishes, and sets over it the lowliest of men" (Dan. 4:17). Some prophecies of God's plans have been given (as to Daniel, Dan. 2:36-43; 7:1-7). We are to pray about God's present decisions (I Tim. 2:1-2).

4. Many Bible passages, when taken in their natural meaning, appear to indicate that God does not have absolute foreknowledge over all His own future actions, nor over all those of His moral creatures. Examples are:
 - a. God is said to have repented or regretted that man had been created, when it became evident how stupendous and persistent man's indulgence in sinful rebellion had become: Ge. 6:3, 5-7, 12. The word "repent" and its derivatives is used to describe the actions of God some 33 times in the Old Testament (Ge. 6:6; Jud. 2:18; II Sam. 24:16; Jer. 26:19; Zech 8:14), and can only indicate an aroused state of grief and disappointment. There are some exceptions where He changed His mind because of happy reactions. See page 111 for Old and New Testament words for repentance.
 - b. God experienced a climax of blessing when Abraham was about to carry through God's strange command to slay his son Isaac on an altar: Ge. 22:12.
 - c. God was determined to wipe out the whole nation Israel after the golden calf apostasy and start a new nation through Moses, but changed His mind through the humble and reasoning intercession of Moses: Ex. 32:7-

14.

- d. God was waiting to see how the nation Israel reacted in humility after the golden calf crisis before determining His judgment upon them: Ex. 33:5.
- e. Israel's complaining amidst blessings suddenly brought forth God's judgment, which was stayed by their humility and the prayer of Moses: Nu. 11:1-2.
- f. God expected to discover from the 40-year wandering in the wilderness Israel's true heart and reactions to His loving provisions: De. 8:2.
- g. God had changed His mind about driving out some of the nations of Palestine because of Israel's sin: Jud. 2:20-22; compare 3:1-5 with Ex. 33:2; 34:24. God expected to find out from these nations whether Israel would be faithful and true or not.
- h. God very reluctantly gave Saul to be king over His chosen people Israel, in response to their demands (I Sam. 8:6-7), and later repented or regretted His choice of Saul after Saul disobeyed: I Sam. 15:10-11, 23, 35. Saul had an impressive background and was "a choice and handsome man" (9:1-2), was anointed by the Holy Spirit for "God changed his heart" (10:6, 9-11). The natural interpretation is that if God had foreseen Saul's rebellion, He would not have chosen him to be king. Samuel's grief must have reflected God's grief (I Sam. 15:11).
- i. God changed His mind and decided to add 15 years to King Hezekiah's reign over Judah, because of his humble prayer: II Kgs. 20:1-7.
- j. God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem, but in the process God was moved with mercies and changed His mind, staying the angel's hand from further judgment: I Chr. 21:11-15. God had moved David to register all Israel because of needed judgment (II Sam. 24:1). Of the three means of punishment offered to him, David elected to fall under the direct judging hand of God for he felt that God was more merciful than men.
- k. When King Rehoboam of Judah and the leaders humbled themselves when threatened with judgment, God changed His mind and granted them "some measure of deliverance," or modified the severity of His planned judgment: II Chr. 12:5-8.
- l. God declared through Jeremiah that He will change His purposes of judgment and blessing in accordance with man's reactions toward His dispensations: Jer. 18:5-10.
- m. After Jeremiah had gone throughout Judah, warning of the coming Babylonian captivity of 70 years which God had determined to bring to pass against them for their rebellion against His loving plans (25:8-11), he was instructed by God to proclaim in the temple the possibility of God changing His purpose of judgment if they would respond in repentance, all to no avail: Jer. 26:2-7, 12-13. Jeremiah was brought to justice and threatened with death, so God had to bring about the promised judgment.
- n. Joel, during a previous period of judgment, set forth the fact that God might be induced to repent of His pronounced judgments if man would sincerely repent in deep humility and exposure of heart: Joel 2:12-14.
- o. God sent Jonah to pronounce Nineveh's destruction in 40 days. God changed His mind and spared the city when one of the greatest recorded times of repentance took place: Jonah 3:2, 4, 10. This is exactly what Jonah feared might happen because of God's great mercy (Jonah 4:2).
- p. Judas was chosen to be one of the twelve apostles to serve God and be a witness to the Gospel and revealed truth. He obviously was partaking of this truth, but rebelled and became an apostate—thus frustrating the

Notes:

loving plans of his Master: Acts 1:25; Mt. 10:2-4; Lk. 6:12-13; Mk. 3:14-15. The reasons why the Twelve were chosen are given below. If the Lord Jesus chose to bestow extended labor of preparation upon one whom He certainly foresaw would fall of the intended mission, it would appear that an unwise and inconsistent choice was made. Judas had no authority, he merely "became a guide to those who arrested Jesus" (Acts 1:16).

- 1) The Lord Jesus chose the Twelve from His disciples after an all-night of prayer to the Father: Lk. 6:12-13.
- 2) The threefold purpose in calling the Twelve is plainly declared: Mk. 3:14-15.
- 3) Judas was in a state of salvation when chosen and sent forth to represent Christ: Lk. 9:1-2; Mt. 10:8 (12:25-26); 10:16, 20 (Jn. 8:44); Mk. 6:7, 12; Lk. 9:6; Jn. 13:20.
- 4) Judas rebelled against his Master (Jn. 6:64, 70-71), joined himself to Satan (Lk. 22:3; Jn. 13:2, 27), and thus fell from his "ministry and apostleship" (Acts 1:17, 25).
- 5) It does not appear that the treachery of Judas was specifically prophesied in the Old Testament, nor that the Lord Jesus expected his apostasy until He perceived its development in his mind. If our Lord expected it all the time, why was He "troubled in spirit" or heart stricken at its development (Jn. 13:21)? It is obviously presented as a tragic surprise. The following are the passages involved and suggested literal translations for careful study: Jn. 6:64 "But there are some of you who are not believing. For Jesus was knowing from the beginning who they are who are not believing and who it is who would deliver Him up." "From the beginning" most likely refers to their unbelief or turning of heart, which Jesus was observing (Jn. 2:24-25). See Mt. 19:4, 8; Jn. 15:27; 16:4; Acts 11:15; 26:4; Phil. 4:15—"from the beginning" of the thing spoken of.

Jn. 6:70—"Did not I choose out for Myself you the twelve, and out of you one a devil is?" This strongly implies that he was not such originally, but became so (Lk. 22:3; Jn. 13:2, 21).

Jn. 6:71—"For this one was about to be delivering Him up, one out of the twelve." Nothing is prophetic here, merely stating his purpose.

Jn. 13:11—"For He was knowing him who was delivering Him up, therefore He said, Ye are not all clean." Here was a present activity.

Jn. 13:18—"Not concerning all of you am I speaking; I Myself am knowing the ones I did choose out for Myself; but thus is the Scripture fulfilled (or again illustrated): He who is eating My bread did lift up against Me his heel." Our Lord is referring back to a purely historical event in the life of David, where his counselor Ahithophel betrayed him and joined Absalom's rebellion (Ps. 41:9, see II Sam. 15:12; 16:23), which was similar to His sad experience. Since David wrote of "my close friend, in whom I trusted," the Lord Jesus in applying this passage must have felt similarly and had trusted Judas.

In Jn. 13:18 and 17:12 we have the conjunction "hina" with a verb "to fulfill," which may be translated either "in order that might be fulfilled," as in the case of a specific prophecy, or "so that was fulfilled" indicating a re-fulfillment or an application of an Old Testament historical situation or declaration.

Jn. 17:12—"While I was with them I Myself was keeping them in Thy name whom Thou didst give Me, and I guarded (them), and no one out of them perished (or did destroy himself), except the son of perdition, so that the Scripture was fulfilled." What Scripture our Lord had in mind is not known, perhaps Ps. 41:9, as above.

Acts 1:16-17, 20—"Men, brethren, the Scripture, which the Holy Spirit did speak beforehand through

David's mouth, must have been fulfilled in the case of Judas, who became a guide to those who took Jesus. For that having been numbered with (us), he was among us and did receive the allotted portion of this ministry . . . For it has been written in the Book of Psalms, 'Let his habitation become desolate and let no one dwell in it, and his office let another take.'"

Reference is back to Ps. 69:25, where we notice a plural pronoun used, not a singular pronoun which would be the case if this had been a specific prophecy to Judas.

The other reference is to Ps. 109:8, where the words, "let another take his office." are a part of a context extending from verse 6 to verse 19. This whole passage is a pronouncement against "adversaries from the Lord" (20). Since only one small part of this passage is referred to, it would appear that the brief quotation in Acts 1:20 is intended as an application of a previously pronounced judgment upon a typical enemy of God. Obviously, if this had been a specific prophecy of Judas, the whole passage would have been referred to and not just five words. Peter's reference to the Holy Spirit speaking "through David's mouth" must relate to his lifetime inspiration in his writings (II Sam. 23:2), and not to any specific prophecy concerning Judas, as the Lord Jesus spoke of (Mk. 12:36).

- q. The exact day of Christ's return does not appear to be firmly fixed as a matter of knowledge. Neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit know: Mk. 13:32; Mt. 24:36. It will occur when the Father in His authority decides that it should. (Acts 1:7), which is His supreme prerogative (Jn. 14:28; I Co. 11:3; Re. 1:1).
- r. The coming of Christ and the fulfillment of end-time prophecies of judgment and the establishment of the millennial kingdom was expected to take place during apostolic or New Testament times, but has been delayed these many centuries by the long-suffering and mercy of God: Mt. 16:27-28; 24:34; Ro. 13:11-12; Phil. 4:5; Jas. 5:8-9; I Pe. 4:7; I Jn. 2:18; Re. 1:1, 3; 3:11; 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20. See sketch on page 22.

The coming of Christ will be a time of great judgment upon the ungodly (Is. 61:2; Ro. 2:5; II Th. 1:7-9). Peter confronts the scoffers with the reasons for God's loving delay (II Pe. 3:3-9). How could New Testament revelation uniformly portray the soon coming of Christ if it was fixed in the Divine mind that some 1900 years would elapse?

- s. Names can be blotted out of the Book of Life, plagues can be added, and souls shut out from the Tree of Life upon certain conditions of persistent rebellion against God: Re. 3:5; 22:18-19. If the entire course and destiny of everyone was known to God, those who do not continue faithful unto the end would never be written in the Book of Life or have an expected part in the Tree of Life.

D. **OMNIPOTENCE**, or the possession of power or energy of personality without limitation, is a natural attribute of the Godhead: Ge. 17:1; Ex. 6:1-3, 6-7; Job 33:4; Ps. 91:1; Jer. 32:17-19; Eze. 10:4-5; Joel 1:14-15 ("Almighty" used 47 times in the Old Testament); II Co. 6:16-18; Re. 1:8; 4:8; 11:15-17; 15:2-4; 19:5-9, 14-16; 21:22.

Thus the Bible inspires the concept that God is all-powerful, or possesses power or energy of personality without limitation as far as force is concerned. Nothing shall fail to be done for lack of Divine energy. This, however, does not mean that there are no limitations imposed upon Divine omnipotence. God has power (control) over His power.

1. Natural impossibilities are limitations in the operation of Divine omnipotence. For example, God "cannot deny Himself" (II Tim. 2:13); cannot modify His natural attributes (He. 11:6); cannot make a thing to be and not to be at the same time; cannot abolish the laws of mathematics, two and two can never equal five in any realm.
2. God's nature and moral character impose penal limitations. God is able to do whatever He wills (except with moral beings), but His will is limited to doing those things which are in harmony with His wise and holy and perfect character. God cannot do things contrary to Himself. This is not a defect in Divine omnipotence but a perfection of the Divine Being.

Notes:

3. God's will limits His abounding energy, in that God simply has not chosen to bring to pass everything that is possible. God has not exhausted Himself in what He has purposed to bring into existence.
4. Man as an endowed moral being has been given the ability to limit the omnipotence of God in his sphere of life. Mankind by their rebellion against God and their obstinacy in refusing the mercy and forgiveness through the atoning death of Christ have imposed very great limitations upon God's will and happiness (II Kgs. 17:12-15; Is. 1:2-4; 63:10; Zech. 1:2-4; Mt. 23:37). God in creating moral creatures with the power of contrary choice made this a possibility. Evidently the achievement of a moral world of beings who would voluntarily choose to live intelligently was deemed of greater value than an unlimited display of omnipotence.

God is now choosing to live with a restrained sovereignty. The only way to assert His total sovereignty would be to eliminate all disobedient moral beings from the universe, or to keep them continually under pressure of absolute control by an intruding mental causation. But to compel moral beings to act is to eliminate the reason for their creation. The power of contrary choice establishes the moral worth of voluntary worship. When the Lord Jesus prayed, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10), He was affirming that man was limiting the will of God on earth.

III. THE MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Another class of attributes, designated as **MORAL ATTRIBUTES**, are said to characterize the Members of the Godhead. Moral attributes involve the element of choice, or have a voluntary causation to them. They are not natural attributes in that they are not endowments of God's existence, but are moral in the sense that they are the result of a disposition of will. They exist because each Member of the Godhead perpetually chooses that they should be so. Moral character must be an active something. It cannot be a static fixity of some sort back of the will, causing its actions. Moral character is dynamic; it is the whole personality in action; it is what we are doing with our endowments or abilities of personality and the moral understanding which we possess.

Before summing up what the Bible has to say about God's moral character, we must remind ourselves as to what are the essentials of moral action and what kind of action determines moral character. Since man has been created in the moral image of God (Ge. 1:26-27), what principles are true of God will also be true of man.

Firstly, if there is to be moral action and moral character, there must be the endowments of personality. We have abundantly seen that the Divine Being is not an impersonal force but Triune Personalities. The Godhead possess **PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE** (the faculty of reason and perception), with its ability of **CONSCIENCE** (self-evaluation). The Godhead also possess that endowment of being that can have a response, or **EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES** which develop the sense of the valuable. Finally, the Godhead possess the ability of **FREE WILL** (the power to originate action). Free will is the ability of self-direction (or self-decision), it is that ability that can put intelligence to work in arriving at a decision for action, that propulsion of will or energy to get things done, that faculty of self-determination (or self-causation) that has only one's self to blame for one's own actions.

Secondly, for such a personal being to have moral action, the intelligence must be in possession of intellectual comprehension of truth and understanding to give direction to those choices that ought to be made. There must be moral light as to what is right conduct and what is wrong conduct, all things considered. We read in I John 1:5 that "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." The Lord Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (Jn. 8:12). The Godhead are, then, the very essence of moral light. They are able to guide Their own actions to absolute perfection. The Psalmist said, in addressing God: "O Lord, God of truth" (31:5). The Lord Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of truth" (Jn. 14:17). In the minds of the Godhead, therefore, is the absolute standard as to which moral actions are right and proper. The Godhead view all moral beings in absolute perspective of their relationships and character, and Themselves in total supremacy.

Thirdly, we need to understand the true nature of moral action and moral character. Not all actions of a moral being are of the same importance. Some actions result from other actions or dispositions. A moral action must be an act

of will, not something back of the will causing it to act as it does. A moral action is to act in accordance with the moral light of truth residing in the intelligence, or to act contrary to it. Such moral actions of will must be positive and definite and cannot be partial. A moral being cannot partly will to take a certain action and partly refuse at the same time. A decision of will may change from moment to moment, but when acting in a certain direction it is always definite and positive, and cannot be partial.

As we break down the many actions of a moral being, we discover that there are:

1. **SUPREME CHOICES** (or ultimate choices), which determine the overall destination of life, and
2. **SUBORDINATE CHOICES** that are made to further the prevailing supreme choice, and
3. **EXECUTIVE, OR ROUTINE CHOICES** that involve no new decisions, but support the existing physical life.

All who analyze moral character seek to press a person's actions back to the supreme motive (or reason) for doing things, and recognize that any action that can be traced further back as to why it was done does not in itself determine moral character. We must, therefore, press the chain of decisions of will back to the point where we encounter a state of will that has no reason for its existence, except that the personality involved has so chosen of his own independent volition. In other words, the underlying motivating force of life is the supreme reason why anything is done, and thus determines one's moral character.

Having considered these essentials of personality and moral character, we are now prepared to enumerate and classify the moral attributes of the Godhead. An attribute is a quality or characteristic, and a moral attribute is such a trait of character that is true in the realm of voluntary activity. We shall observe that some of the moral attributes of the Godhead are dependent upon others. In fact, all the moral attributes of the Godhead appear to be reducible to two:

- 1) A supreme choice by each Member of the Godhead to be motivated by love (perfect benevolence) in all that is done, and
- 2) the absolute faithfulness (or unchangeable persistency) in perpetually maintaining this disposition of love.

Let us allow our hearts to rise in profound worship and adoration as we consider what appears to be the greatest revelation of the Divine Being granted to man. Many dark questions of providence and judgement are viewed in a very different light under this amplification of Divine actions and reactions.

- A. **GOD IS LOVE.** The essential or basic moral attribute of the Godhead is embodied in the words, "**GOD IS LOVE**" (I Jn. 4:8, 16). "Love" as so used is not primarily an emotional state, but is an attitude of will to bestow kindnesses upon others according to perfect intelligence of what is right and proper. Partiality (or favoritism) must spring from selfish preference of one above another.

There are only two directions that a moral being can take in a supreme rule of life. A personality can choose to be intelligent or unintelligent, to fulfill all obligations toward all moral beings or not to do so, to be partial or impartial. An admixture is impossible. The one is a state of virtuous love, the other a state of selfishness. God possesses a perfect comprehension of what is right and proper in every circumstance. Each Member of the Godhead perpetually chooses to be motivated by love or perfect benevolence in all that is done, fulfilling all obligations with absolute impartiality by treating every moral being with perfect intelligence.

1. The words "good" and "goodness" are frequently used to describe the essential goodness of God:
 - a. Good: II Chr. 30:18-19; Ps. 25:8; 34:8; 86:5; 100:5; 106:1; 119:68; 145:9; Jer. 33:11; Nahum 1:7; Mt. 5:44-48; 19:16-17; 20:12-15.
 - b. Goodness: Ex. 33:19; 34:6-7; Ps. 27:13; 31:19; 33:5; Jer. 31:12, 14; Ro. 2:4.
2. Love is ascribed to each Member of the Godhead:

Notes:

- a. The love of God the Father is the source of all true love in the world: Jn. 3:16; Ro. 5:5; 8:38-39; II Co. 13:11, 14; Jn. 2:15; 4:7-8, 16.
 - b. The love of Christ is referred to: Jn. 15:9; Ro. 8:35; II Co. 5:14; Ep. 3:19; II Tim. 1:13.
 - c. The Holy Spirit is known by His operations of love: Ro. 5:5; 15:30; Ga. 5:22.
3. This loving disposition of the Godhead was the mainspring of redemption:
- a. God the Father: Jn. 3:16-17; Ro. 5:8; Ep. 2:4; I Jn. 4:9-12.
 - b. The Lord Jesus: Jn. 15:13; Ga. 2:20; Ep. 5:2; Re. 1:5.
 - c. The Holy Spirit: Lk. 1:35; Mt. 1:18, 20; Acts 10:38; He. 9:14; Jn. 16:13-15.
4. Man is commanded to follow God's example in the continual choice of love, indicating that it is a voluntary state: Jn. 5:42; 15:9-10; I Co. 13; 14:1; 16:13-14; Ep. 5:1-2; I Tim. 1:5; I Jn. 2:5; 4:8, 16; 5:3; Jude 21.
- B. **HOLINESS** is a moral attribute of the Godhead, or more properly is an attribute of love: Le. 11:44-45; Is. 6:3; I Pe. 1:15-16; Re. 4:8.

The primary idea of the Hebrew word rendered "holy" is that of cutting off or separation, and thus properly means worthy of veneration or reverend. The New Testament Greek equivalent has a similar meaning. Holiness in God is a dynamic state of being, rather than a static (or fixed) something somewhere in the Divine nature. It is a descriptive term of the character of God which is established by right moral action and of moral beings who are voluntarily fulfilling Their moral obligation, or are conforming to their moral light or perception of truth. Holiness is an evaluation that is due to virtuous moral beings. It is a tribute of praise and veneration because a moral being has chosen to be virtuous when such an one might have chosen otherwise.

Holiness does not do anything, therefore, and consequently is not properly a moral attribute, but attaches an atmosphere of sanctity to the whole character and actions of the Godhead because They have chosen to be guided by intelligence and benevolence in all Their actions—without the least taint of arbitrariness, partiality, or self-assertiveness. Holiness is not something one has, but something one is. "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (Le. 11:44; I Pe. 1:16) is plainly a description of God's manner of living, with a strong admonition to man to follow in the ways of his Creator.

- 1. "God is love," or is living in a state of good-will, or true benevolence (I Jn. 4:8).
 - 2. "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (I Jn. 1:5). "He Himself is in the light" (1:7), or is subjecting Himself to the perfect scrutiny of His own absolute intelligence and is, therefore, perfect in all conduct. The Lord Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (Jn. 8:12), by which He meant that His manner of living was the world's standard. He could say, "Which one of you convicts Me of sin?" (Jn. 8:46), and thus was "separated from sinners" and was called "holy" (He. 7:26). He affirmed that this walk in "the light" is true life (Jn. 8:12). See "Light" outline on page 41.
 - 3. Therefore, the Godhead are holy in the absolute sense and are worthy of the veneration and worship of all. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come," is the continual ovation in heaven (Re. 4:8).
- C. **RIGHTEOUSNESS** is a moral attribute of the Godhead, or more properly is an attribute of love: De. 32:4; Job 36:2-3; Ps. 11:7; 19:9; Is. 45:21-23; Jer. 9:23-24; Dan. 9:7, 14; Hosea 14:9; Jn. 17:25; Ro. 14:17; He. 1:8-9; Re. 15:3.

Righteousness is simply a disposition to deal rightly with every moral being. Righteousness as a moral attribute of

God is God's determination to treat every moral being according to his conduct and to dispense justice among moral beings. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" ("do right?", KJV), declared Abraham (Ge. 18:25). Just as holiness describes the voluntary disposition of love back of all actions, so righteousness describes the many individual actions that issue forth from this disposition of love in the conduct of God's responsibilities toward His moral creatures. If God should show leniency and partiality toward some and be more strict with others, He would have to do so for some selfish reason. But if there is any selfish reason for any of God's actions, God has ceased to be benevolent and impartial. Thus righteousness toward all moral beings is dictated by the perfect, virtuous love of God. The righteousness of God is manifested:

1. In Divine reactions against all disobedience and pleasures in obedience of His moral creatures, with a registry of every guilty and virtuous action: Ps. 138:6; He. 6:10; Jas. 4:6; I Pe. 5:5.
2. In establishing a court of final judgment to evaluate the guilt of each moral being in all fairness before all men: Ro. 14:10-12; II Co. 5:10; He. 9:27; Re. 20:12.
3. In the eternal separation of those who love Him and desire to live virtuously, compared to those who have insisted on living in their own rebellion of heart—with due rewards and sufferings: Dan. 12:2; Mt. 25:46; II Th. 1:6-10; Re. 20:15.
4. In the forgiveness of repentant sinners through faith in the substituted sufferings of the Lord Jesus: Ro. 3:24-26; I Jn. 1:9.

D. **LOVING-KINDNESS AND MERCY** is a moral attribute of the Godhead, or more properly is an attribute of love: Ps. 86:5; Is. 54:8; Lam. 3:22; Ro. 2:4; Ep. 2:4; Jas. 5:11; II Pe. 3:9.

The choice to live lovingly (or in a state of voluntary good-willing) does something to all our relations, for we read, "Love is patient, love is kind" (I Co. 13:4). This is the opposite of allowing the righteous feelings of vindictive justice towards those who have injured us to hold sway in our beings. The loving disposition of the Godhead has completely overcome all feelings of vindictive justice, which man's rebellion and persistence in wickedness has caused to arise in the Divine Being. Now, instead of this insistence on strict justice, mercy and forgiveness is offered upon certain necessary conditions which will make happy reconciliation possible.

Loving-kindness and mercy is a tendency to be lenient and kind toward the unworthy, which is the meaning of the word "grace" so often applied to the Godhead (Tit. 2:11). This is the quality of humiliation and self-abasement, a willingness to jeopardize proper standing and recognition out of compassion to the undeserving. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." It is the sacrificial impartation of life rather than a conservation of life. It sacrifices its own welfare and just due to grant to other moral beings its storehouse of blessings. "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus," wrote the Apostle Paul. Here Paul was describing the willingness of the Son to leave the profound serenity of heaven and enter the area of our humiliation, so that He might give His life in atonement for the sins of the whole world (Phil. 2:5).

Pardon and forgiveness cannot be brought to pass unless God's righteous obligations as Moral Governor can be satisfied. Nor can it happen unless man is willing to repent and embrace the conditions of mercy. It is here that the blessed atonement of Christ enters as the greatest fact of world history:

- a. It upholds God's moral government by showing forth the awful nature of sin and its just due of eternal punishment.
- b. It reveals God's inner hatred of sin and how terrifying have been the effects of sin upon the Members of the Godhead.
- c. It furnishes the crushing force to subdue the tremendous structure of human pride, humbling man to the place

Notes:

where God can pour out His storehouse of blessings in tender kindness.

- d. It provides the means for man's complete transformation and affectionate motivation in a newness of life.

The only thing left is for man to repent of all sin and stupidity and seek the face of God in proper humbleness. Man must identify himself in a committal of faith to the sufferings of Christ for his sins, as the only hope of his forgiveness and spiritual restoration from a state of ruin. God, then, can become joyful in loving forgiveness, consistent with His righteous obligations, "because He delights in unchanging love" (or loving-kindness) (Micah 7:18-19).

- E. **WISDOM** is a moral attribute of the Godhead, or more properly is an attribute of love, since wisdom is the benevolent use of the abilities of personality: Ps. 104:24; 136:1-9; Prov. 3:19; Jer. 51:15; Ro. 11:33; I Co. 2:7 (1-10); Ep. 3:8-10; Col. 2:2-3.

Wisdom is intellectual ability and knowledge put to work by love to devise designs and plans that tend to good and usefulness. Wisdom, then, is the net product of the personal abilities of the Godhead, the knowledge of the Godhead, and the willingness to use these endowments in a benevolent or loving way. It is the net end-product of the Being and character of the Godhead. It is what the Personalities and knowledge of the Godhead can do when applied in a benevolent or loving way. It is an amalgamation of a loving purpose with the intellectual ability to design, an emotional ability to guide and evaluate, and the energy of personality to bring it to pass.

Wisdom is more than moral character, since it is caused by or is the fruit of moral character. Wisdom is higher than knowledge, since it is the benevolent use of knowledge. Wisdom is knowledge tempered and harnessed by goodness. Wisdom is more than the endowments of personality. It is the product of personality, lived in a right and useful way. Thus wisdom is one of the most crowning moral attributes of the Godhead.

While the design and creation of the vast universe with all its furnishings is a product of God's wisdom, it appears that the greatest achievement of God's wisdom relates to the accomplishment of redemption and the spiritual blessings granted to those who respond. The blessed plan of salvation through the sufferings of a substituted Savior was a crowning manifestation, and also its accomplishment in spite of man's rejection and violence against his own Redeemer (I Co. 2:1-10). Profound wisdom is also manifested in the plan of the mystical Church of Christ, as amalgamated together in a living organism by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in this glorious age of grace (Ep. 3:1-12). Throughout the endless ages of eternity, the redeemed shall marvel at the unending manifestations of the wisdom of the Godhead.

- F. **TRUTHFULNESS** is a moral attribute of the Godhead, or more properly is an attribute of love: Ex. 34:6; Ps. 25:10; Is. 65:16; Jn. 14:6, 17; 17:3, 17; I Th. 1:9; II Tim. 2:15.

As long as the Godhead are love, They must be truthful, since there would be nothing to prompt untruthfulness. By untruthfulness a selfish heart attempts to gain something that is not due to it, and to cover up its true character. But God's perfect benevolence simply desires to manifest itself in its true character and has nothing to cover up or conceal. God the Father is said to be "the God of truth" (Is. 65:16); the Lord Jesus could affirm, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6); the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" (Jn. 14:17). Truthfulness in absolute perfection is a must, therefore, as long as impartial love prevails. The Scriptures are called "the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15) because "men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Pe. 1:21).

SUMMARY: To sum up those moral attributes of the Godhead which are in reality attributes of God's voluntary character of perfect love (impartial good-will toward all moral beings), we may say that:

Perfect love must treat every moral being in absolute righteousness,

Perfect love will be tempered by lovingkindness and mercy toward all men, when righteousness is not sacrificed

thereby,

Perfect love will engage the faculties and endowments of personality to devise and produce manifestations of wisdom,

Perfect love will be 100% truthful in all revelations and expressions of factual knowledge.

Holiness is the proper evaluation of this whole wonderful proceeding, but since all actions proceed from love, holiness more specifically is a true evaluation of the voluntary disposition of love.

- G. **FAITHFULNESS OR UNCHANGEABLENESS** is a moral attribute of the Godhead: De. 7:9; Ps. 102:25-27; Lam. 3:23; Mal. 3:6; I Co. 1:9; 10:13; II Tim. 2:13; He. 13:8; Jas. 1:17; I Pe. 4:19; Re. 1:5-6; 5:9-10.

When it is said that the Godhead are faithful or unchangeable, it is intended that the Triune Personalities of the Godhead have always maintained, and will always maintain, a voluntary disposition of impartial good-will toward all moral beings. Or, we may say that "God is love" in essential moral character, always has been in a state of love, and always will be in a state of love. Because of this absolute stability, we may have perfect confidence that the Godhead will always deal righteously, will always be merciful when possible, will always exercise wisdom in all actions, and will always be perfectly truthful in all manifestations.

In moral character, therefore, the Triune Godhead are absolutely committed to a state of perfect love, without the slightest interruption. Thus Moses could write: "The Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God" (De. 7:9). The Psalmist could say: "Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end" (Ps. 102:27). Jeremiah could extol God in the words: "Great is Thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:23). Malachi could quote God as saying: "I, the Lord, do not change" (Mal. 3:6). Paul could confidently affirm: "God is faithful," and "He remains faithful" (I Co. 10:13; II Tim. 2:13). In Hebrews it could be declared: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever" (He. 3:8). James not only could say, "with whom there is no variation," but also, "or shifting shadow (or shadow cast by turning)" (Jas. 1:17). Peter admonished his fellow Christians to "entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right" (I Pe. 4:19). This perfectly virtuous and uninterrupted conduct of the Godhead form the foundation of the heavenly chorus. It is in heaven where every superlative will be heralded as God's holy will is done in every iota: "To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen" (Re. 1:5-6). Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth" (Re. 5:9-10). "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come" (Re. 4:8).

PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCES IN EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

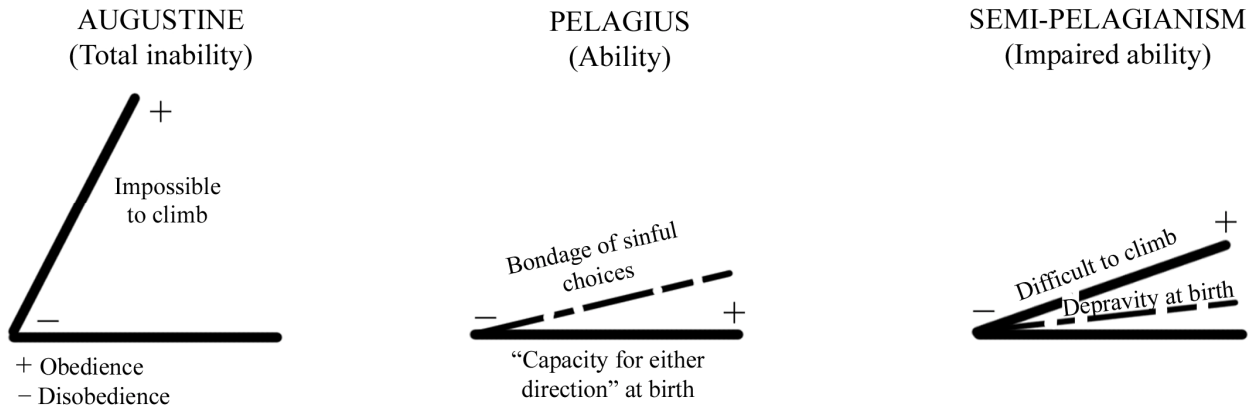
Speculative philosophy soon began to replace and complicate the simple understanding of the early Church on the manner of the Divine existence and of man's free will and voluntary destiny. Forgetting the warning through the Apostle Paul (Col. 2:8), mysterious concepts began to replace simple expressions of heart-felt Divine relationships.

1. Greek philosophers Socrates (470?-399 B. C.), Plato (427?-347), and Aristotle 384-322) had deified man's mind to the point of confrontation with Divine revelation.
 - A. This influenced a compromise in the essential Gospel message: I Co. 2:2.
 - B. It led to a dissatisfaction with the provided spiritual contemplation of Christ: Col. 2:3.
 - C. A simple demand of reconciliation became confused: Acts 17:30.

Notes:

- D. The dynamic of the early Church deteriorated: Acts 17:6.
2. Some early Church Fathers brought this love of human wisdom in competition with love and simple devotion to Christ:
 - A. Justin (the) Martyr (about 100-165 A. D.) had admired Plato before conversion, felt he led toward Christ.
 - B. Clement of Alexandria (about 150-220 A. D.) called philosophy "a sort of preliminary discipline... given to the Greeks."
 - C. Origen of Alexandria (about 185-254 A. D.) is said to have written the first systematic treatise on Christian theology, about 250 A.D., greatly furthering the trend of theological speculation by introducing the allegorical method of searching for hidden mysterious meanings of Scripture.
 3. Freedom of Christian worship was granted in 313 A. D. by Constantine and his co-emperor Licinius, by 380 A. D. it had become the exclusive state religion.
 - A. The unsaved now began to populate the Church.
 - B. Established clergy came into prominence, with speculative theological inquisitiveness.
 - C. Formality of worship commonly replaced spiritual joy and heart worship.
 - D. Philosophical-theological statements began to replace simple Biblical statements of truth.
 4. This restless curiosity began to tamper with the simple concept of the Godhead as living Personalities dwelling in an endless duration of time.
 - A. Philosophical idea that God is above time rather than living in time formulated—an "eternal now," or existing in the past, present, and future all at once.
 - B. Every single action of the Godhead and all moral beings eternally known—no new accessions of knowledge, no new decisions, no new observations.
 - C. No successions of thoughts or actions in the Divine mind.
 - D. Resulted in the Godhead being removed from our conscious understanding, with deadening effect upon our spiritual lives.
 5. A conflict arose as to man's ability to obey God and to respond to the necessary demands of the Gospel.
 - A. Augustine (354-430 A. D.) came to totally deny man's ability to obey God or respond to spiritual reasoning. He is said to have written the first treatise on anthropology—man spiritually dead by birth. See page 70 for "The Trichotomy Dual Nature Concept of Personality."
 - B. Pelagius (about 360-420 A. D.), was an earnest British monk. He lectured throughout Europe, stressing an excessive ability of man's free will—man well, with a "capacity for either direction" at birth, since each personality is created by an act of God for each physical procreation by mankind. Sinful choices, however, establish a bondage of habit which makes virtuous choice increasingly difficult. Pelagius' successors, Coelestius and Julian, stressed greater extremes of man's ability.
 - C. Semi-Pelagianism became the moderating position to a considerable extent, denying both excesses and affirming that man is able to deny himself and obey God, but difficult and needing Divine help—man sick.
 - D. The three opinions may be illustrated by walking on a level field or climbing a hill:

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E. Along with man's assumed inability, Augustine vigorously promoted his idea of absolute Divine sovereignty, or that the will of God was being done in every tiny particular. Salvation was all of God by the sheer force of a new birth, which caused a spiritual awakening to God-consciousness. See page 70 for "The Trichotomy Dual Nature Concept of Personality."

F. Utter confusion of simple words has resulted. From dictionary definitions:

A certain event will inevitably come to pass,
 A necessary event must come to pass, while
 A contingent event may or may not come to pass.

But now as a result of Augustine's influence, one frequently reads: An event may be necessitated and yet be contingent, and the outcome of a decision of free will may also be certain—(a complete distortion of fundamental ideas).

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CHAPTER 4

The truth about **MAN'S CREATION AND RELATIONSHIPS**

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over... all the earth...' And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him" (Ge. 1:26-27).

"God . . . made from one every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,.. He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:26-28).

"We are the temple of the living God; just as God said, I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Co. 6:16).

"Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (I Co. 10:31).

The Godhead in Their satisfaction of blessed fellowship (Jn. 17:5) desired to create an order of beings who could evaluate and become a part of these joyous experiences. The blessed possibilities of happy fellowship in God-man and man-man relationships in pursuit of the mystery of life in a physical world and universe setting was the motivating purpose in creation. There was to be no end of man's happiness and blessedness as capacity for Divine presence was endlessly enlarged.

I. MAN'S ABILITIES AND ENDOWMENTS OF PERSONALITY

Man is qualified by his endowments of personality to enter into happy fellowship with his Creator and with his fellowman.

Man in his spiritual or real essence was created as a tiny replica of the great God, to possess in finite miniature the abilities and qualities of being that God possesses in His infinite realm. Certainly this is implied in the narrative in Ge. 1:26-27 and 2:7. The words "image" and "likeness" are very similar in meaning. "Image" conveys the idea of a shadowing forth, from a root, to shade. It is thus a shadow, phantom, resemblance, or likeness. "Likeness" is defined as a similitude, image, or resemblance, from a root, to be like, to compare. The word is used of shapes cast in molds (II Chr. 4:3) and of an appearance resembling something (Eze. 1:16). The similitude of man to God is also implied in admonitions of comparison, as in I Pe. 1:16 (from Le. 11:44) and Mt. 5:48. The Lord Jesus in His essential humanity so resembled the Being of God that He could say: "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9). Man like God, therefore,

has been given functional capacities of personality that make possible individuality and moral character, with the possibility of blessed fellowship:

- A. **ABILITY OF INTELLECT**, or reasoning powers and understanding, imagination or a mental picture of what is not seen, God-consciousness and self-consciousness, conscience or self-evaluation, and memory or an indelible record in complete perspective of what has taken place. This ability is commonly referred to in Scripture as an ability of 'spirit' and "mind".. Job 20:3; Prov. 20:27; Is. 1:18; 26:3, 9; 55:8-9; Mk. 12:28-31; Jn. 4:23-24; Ro. 7:23-25; 12:1-2; I Co. 2:11-12, 16; Ep. 2:3; 4:23; Phil. 4:8; Tit. 1:15; He. 8:10.

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- B. **ABILITY OF EMOTION** or experience, as a reaction to what is thought or acted upon, the area of satisfaction and happiness, of pleasure and pain, of worship and adoration, commonly referred to as an ability of "soul": Ge. 2:7; I Co. 15:45, 44; Nu. 21:4; Job 10:1; Ps. 42:1, 5-6; 63:5-7; 84:2; Is. 61:10; Mt. 11:28-30; 22:36-37; Lk. 1:46-47; 12:19-21; I Pe. 1:22-23.
- C. **ABILITY OF FREE WILL** or self-determination, the ability to originate our own actions, the self-caused energy of personality, the essence of moral character, commonly referred to as the "heart" of man: Ex. 36:2; De. 4:29; 5:29; I Sam. 7:3; I Kgs. 8:38-40; Ps. 10:3-4; 57:7; Jer. 17:9-10; 29:12-13; Dan. 1:8; Mk. 7:21-23; 11:22-24; Lk. 9:46-47; Acts 7:39; 11:23; Ro. 6:17 (16-18); 10:9-10; I Co. 7:37; II Co. 9:7; He. 3:8 (7-9), 12; 4:12.

Man is not to be thought of as a divisible being, with distinct parts that can act independently and be segregated and examined separately. Man is rather to be thought of as an integrated whole personality, with the above endowments or abilities incorporated into his consciousness. Each of these abilities involves the whole personality in a unified action. Man is a psycho-physical personality having both spiritual and physical elements, a dichotomy having an "inner man" and an "outer man" (II Co. 4:16). "We," as complete personalities, are living in our "earthly tent which is our house," and will be "torn down" (II Co. 5:1). The Christian hope is "to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord" (8). The Lord Jesus spoke about "the outside" and "the inside" of personality as He rebuked hypocrisy (Lk. 11:39-40). He spoke of "heart," "soul," and "mind" as comprising our personalities (Mt. 22:37; Mk. 12:29-30; and approved Lk. 10:27-28). See page 70 for "The Trichotomy Dual Nature Concept of Personality."

Man is, therefore, a whole personality, having:

- (1) an intellectual function or mind, or a spiritual function enabling man to be God-conscious as well as self conscious;
- (2) a soulish function qualifying for experiences or reactions; and
- (3) a "heart" function or the mysterious endowment of self-determination...

all joined to a bodily existence capable of physical activity. A personality has a "heart" or will to take action, a "spirit" and "mind" to think about action in a God-man and man-man perspective, and a "soul" to experience and appreciate action. See "The Avenues of Personality" chart on page 57.

NATURE OF PERSONALITY

ENDOWMENTS: Man was created in "the image of God," as to his immaterial essence, with abilities of:

INTELLECT: Reasoning powers Imagination God-consciousness Self-consciousness Conscience Memory

EMOTION: or experience of what is thought and acted upon.

FREE WILL: or self-determination-the ability to originate our own actions.

PHYSICAL EXISTENCE: All adapted and amalgamated into a harmonious physical existence.

OPERATION: A complete unified entity, not a collection of isolated parts which can function independently:

EVERYTHING WE DO:

Proceeds from a decision of **WILL**.

Involves our **INTELLIGENCE** and perception.

Leads to **EMOTIONAL REACTIONS** or experiences.

Is approved or disapproved by the **CONSCIENCE**. (More or less according to one's moral enlightenment.)

Notes:

Is registered in the **MEMORY** in complete perspective. (A composite picture of the whole procedure, with all the factors involved.)

(Instinctive non-moral actions, like pulling the hand away from a hot stove, are spontaneous habits acquired through mental conclusions of the past.)

II. MAN'S RELATIONSHIPS

The real essence of man's life was intended to consist in the full expression of his personality in blessed fellowship with God and with his fellowmen, with supreme satisfaction and happiness.

Man has been placed in relationships that afford this opportunity for expressing his whole personality. This was God's plan. For this man was designed and created. "In Him we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28). "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (I Co. 10:31). "You also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit" (Ep. 2:22). The word "dwelling" stresses the idea of a permanent dwelling place in contrast to a sojourner. The blessed fulfillment of these planned relationships can only be found in man's proper recognition of his relationships and fulfillment of their obligations. Man was never intended to find happiness in selfish independence, but was to be a supplementary outlet for the great Being of the Godhead.

A. **SPIRITUALLY OR VERTICALLY**, man was created to have an absolutely intimate relationship with the Godhead, making possible perfect and continued fellowship: Ge. 1:26-27; 17:1; Ex. 33:11, 14; I Chr. 28:9; II Chr. 6:30; 16:9; Is. 57:15; Zeph. 3:17; Mt. 28:20 (Ga. 2:20; Col. 1:27); Jn. 2:24-25; 4:23-24; 14:23; 17:3, 23; Acts 17:24-28; He. 4:13; I Jn. 4:16; Re. 3:20.

Man's relationship to the Godhead was to be absolutely unique in that it was not to depend upon external manifestations, as every other relationship of man does. Our relationship to God was to be direct and real and continuous in a blessed state of communion and enjoyment of the Divine Personalities.

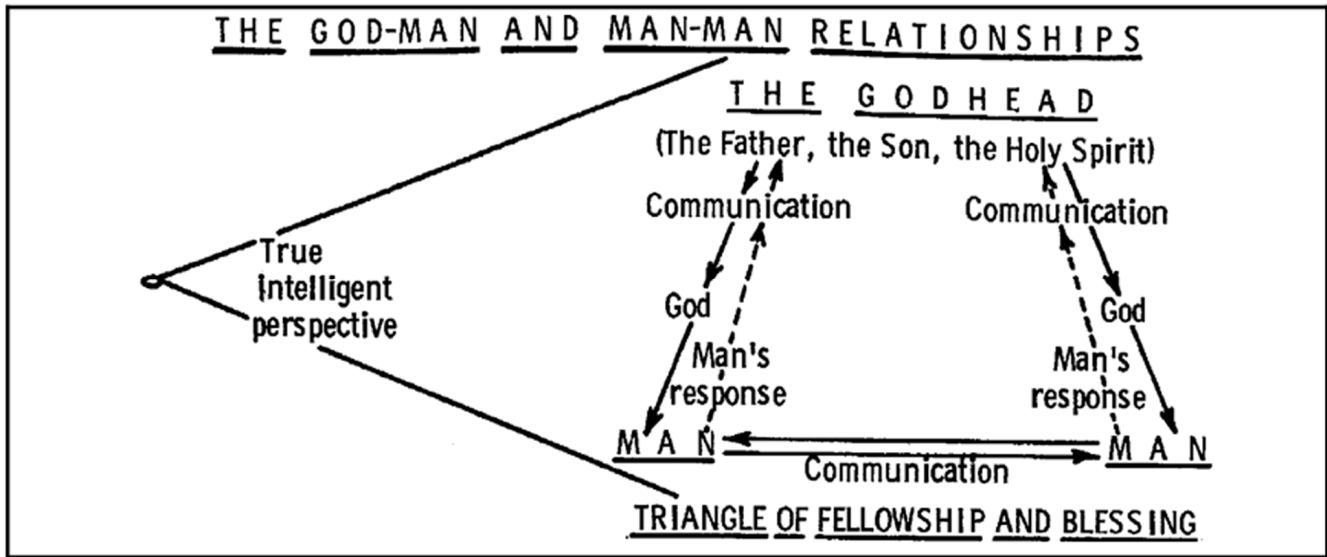
B. **SOCIALLY OR HORIZONTALLY**, human associations with means of manifestation and communication through the five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching: Ge. 2:18, 20 (man "alone" amidst the animals); Acts 17:26 ("He made from one, every nation of mankind"); Ge. 11:1, 4 (companionship is natural); I Sam. 18:1, 3 (David and Jonathan); Mt. 22:36-40 (the twofold relationship); Jn. 17:21-23 ("that they may all be one"); Acts 2:41-47 (the early Church); Ro. 15:32 ("refreshing rest" by friendship); Ep. 4:25 ("members of one another,"); II Tim. 1:3-5 (Paul and Timothy); I Pe. 3:7 ("a fellow-heir of the grace of life," a spiritually related marriage); I Jn. 1:3-4, 7 ("you also may have fellowship with us, . . . so that our joy may be made complete"). How happy are the possibilities of human friendship in the mutual presence of the Godhead.

C. **PHYSICALLY OR MATERIALLY**, the world and the universe, with its diverse life and activity, as a profound environment contributing to man's relationship and happiness with the Godhead and with his fellowmen:

1. The world and the universe is a tangible manifestation of the character and greatness of God that greatly inspires admiration, confidence, gratitude, and worship: Ps. 8:3-6; 104:24; 136:1-9; Prov. 3:19; Jer. 51:15; Acts 14:15.
2. Man's surroundings were also intended to present a congenial and inspiring atmosphere for fellowship and happiness with one another, with endless fascinating discoveries, as well as being designed exactly to meet every physical need (Ge. 2:9). Happy occupation would provide a constructive medium of communication. Toil, antagonisms of nature, pain, sickness, and death were to be unknown in buoyant invigorating activity (Ge. 2:8-17).

Notes:

THE TRIANGLE OF FELLOWSHIP AND BLESSING



"The eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His" (II Chr. 16:9).

"The true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23-24).

"This is eternal life, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (Jn. 17:3).

"In Him (God) we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28).

"Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (I Co. 10:31).

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word (said Jesus); and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him" (Jn. 14:23).

"That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us" (Jn. 17:21).

"That you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I Jn. 1:3).

"They were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:46-47).

"That I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company" (Ro. 15:32, Paul to the Roman church).

"Longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy" (II Tim. 1:4, Paul to Timothy, "my beloved son").

III. MAN'S MORAL OBLIGATION

The unalterable condition of happiness for the Godhead and for all moral creatures must be an intelligent recognition of all moral relationships and a devoted fulfillment of all obligations perceived by the mind.

Notes:

This unchangeable condition of happiness is a willingness to conform our lives to the dictates of intelligence, or to live in a manner that is right and proper in all our moral relations. The Godhead are fulfilling Their obligations with absolute perfection, and thus it is said that "God is light" (I Jn. 1:5). We are to conduct ourselves according to the enlightenment received from our own minds as they perceive our moral relations and obligations, and from the Bible as the Word of God (Jn. 3:19-21). God will never require anything that is arbitrary, but only what is founded in absolute reason and truth. This involves the perpetual recognition of God as the Supreme Ruler of the moral universe and others equal with ourselves as happy subjects of the kingdom of God: Ps. 5:2; 84:3; Mt. 5:3; 6:33; 7:21-23; 18:1-4; Jn. 3:3; Ro. 14:17.

A. **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS** were given to define man's obligations (Ga. 3:19) and can never be changed or suspended in our present relationships: Ps. 19:7-8; Mt. 5:17-18; Ro. 7:12, 14; I Tim. 1:5, 8-9.

As recorded in Ex. 20:1-17 and De. 5:1-22, the Ten Commandments require:

- 1) supreme love to God (De. 6:5), forbidding every form of mental idolatry;
- 2) prohibits the making and worshipping of images;
- 3) declares against all irreverent or careless use of the name of God;
- 4) commands a sabbath day every week for rest and meditation, refraining from all unnecessary work (Mk. 2:27-28);
- 5) honor and love to parents;
- 6) declares against murder;
- 7) adultery;
- 8) theft;
- 9) false witness or misrepresentations of every sort; and
- 10) covetousness, a dissatisfied state of mind which the New Testament calls idolatry (Ep. 5:5; Col. 3:5).

Obviously, God thought the Ten Commandments were loving and reasonable and their obedience the only gateway to Divine and human happiness, or He would not have prescribed them. Moses, the elders and the people, and succeeding leaders also thought so: Ex. 24:3; De. 5:1, 23-24, 27, 28-29; 6:24-25; 8:1-2, 6, 11; 10:12-13; 11:22-23; 26:16-19; 28:47-48, 58-59; 30:8-10, 11-14, 15-20. Evidently Joshua also thought so (22:5), also Ezra (7:23-26), also David (Ps. 19:7-11; 40:8) and another psalmist (119:97-99; 165-168), also Solomon (I Kgs. 8:57-61), a prophet (II Kgs. 17:13, 7-18), Daniel (9:9-11), Micah (6:8), and Stephen (Acts 7:51, 53).

B. **THE LORD JESUS REAFFIRMED THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, REDUCING THEM TO TWO:** Mt. 22:36-40 and Mk. 12:28-34. "On these two commandments depend (is being hung or suspended) the whole Law and the Prophets" (Mt. 22:40). Also see our Lord's previous approval of a lawyer's summary (Lk. 10:25-28), which is still in effect.

1. "The great and foremost commandment"—supreme obligation of love to God, embracing the first four of the Ten Commandments. This was previously summarized by Moses in De. 6:5 (3-7)
2. The "second"—equal obligation and love to our fellowman, embracing the last six. This was previously given by God through Moses, Le. 19:18, and by the Lord Jesus in Mt. 7:12.

C. **NEW TESTAMENT REVELATION FURTHER REDUCES THE TEN COMMANDMENTS TO ONE WORD—"LOVE":** Ro. 13:8-10; Ga. 5:14; I Tim. 1:5; Jas. 2:8-10.

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"Love" as here used is not basically an emotional quality, or a static, inactive something, but rather a voluntary state of impartial good-will toward all moral beings, which results in a conduct according to intelligence and truth without any admixture of arbitrariness. C. G. Finney wrote: "Love is benevolence or good willing. . . it consists in choosing the highest good of God and of universal being, for its own intrinsic value, in a spirit of entire consecration to this as the ultimate end of existence."⁴ Man's moral obligation becomes very simple and logical. It is to live according to intelligence or according to what is true in our moral relationships. It is to fit ourselves into the true perspective of the moral universe and be willing to live accordingly. It is to refuse to be a misfit in the realm of God. It is to be willing to live like God lives: "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (I Pe. 1:16).

Holiness is a descriptive term of all who are motivated by a voluntary disposition of love. Just as "God is love" (I Jn. 4:8, 16), so "everyone who loves is born of God and knows God" (4:7). Christians are admonished: "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21). "Love . . . is the fulfillment of the law" (Ro. 13:10). An attitude of loving benevolence toward all is all that God asks or can ask (I Jn. 5:3). Love, or a conformity to intelligence, therefore, is the unalterable condition of happiness for all moral beings--for both God and man. "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love" (Ep. 5:1-2).

IV. THE GOVERNMENT, OR REGULATION OF MAN'S BEHAVIOR

Man was to be regulated by an appeal to the right exercise of free choice in a moral government.

Moral government is an association of moral beings under intelligent supervision of a benevolent ruler. Moral government is an arrangement to regulate the conduct of moral beings by enlightening their minds as to what actions are right and proper, and by solemn pronouncement that certain consequences will follow right action and opposite consequences wrong action. Moral government, therefore, functions upon the principle of promising rewards for obedience and threatening appropriate punishment for disobedience. The subject is allowed to determine for himself what consequences shall be his.

A moral being or moral agent is a creature capable of right and wrong action, or a being endowed with the ability to perceive what is right and proper conduct in his various relations and thus able to be governed by truth addressed to his intelligence. Moral government must be founded upon truth that can be perceived by the mind, so that the idea of oughtness can be developed in the minds of the subjects. The need for such government to guarantee the rights and well-being of all moral beings must be affirmed by the reason. The worthiness and ability of the Supreme Governor must be recognized. It thus becomes the obligation of the Supreme Ruler to govern and the subjects to submit to such wise and necessary rulership.

Moral creatures are a distinct order of creation, the only classification bearing "the image of God," and obviously cannot be regulated by the same procedures as all the rest of creation. Every influence consistent with his moral freedom is being brought to bear upon man's personality to get him to make the right choices (as De.30:19; Josh. 24:15; Is. 1:19-20; Jer. 21:8; Mt. 23:37; Jn. 5:40; Ro. 2:5-11; Re. 3:20). Moral beings must be allowed to be the author of their own actions or their created "image" will be rendered inoperative. If the may or may not of free choice is not allowed to exist, then moral government ceases and all becomes a government of cause and effect. If man was created as a being whose actions had to be caused, God might delight in the profoundness of His operations but could never experience the joy of observing moral creatures who choose of their own self-caused volition to be in happy submission and admiration of His great attributes and moral character (II Chr. 16:9; Zeph. 3:17).

It must at once be obvious that absolute control over moral beings acting in their created ability and freedom of choice is an impossibility. The crowning feature of their existence is that they have been given the freedom to originate their own actions, which must be uncertain and unpredictable in any final analysis. The Lord appeared to Abraham and said: "I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless" (Ge. 17:1). If there was any way for God to cause Abraham to walk perfectly, then all would become mechanical and moral values would evaporate. Moral government

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⁴ Systematic Theology, 1878, pp. 135-136; 1976 edition, pp. 71-72.

involves an amazing study in contrasts as the great God is represented as appealing in humility to the heart of man, so profoundly small in limitations, to conform to His wise and holy ways in blessed fellowship (as Re. 3:20). It is the very essence of moral government that man is the sole author of his own actions. While God exerts strong persuasive influences, in no sense is God the cause of man's moral choices.

A. **FREE, RESPONSIBLE MORAL ACTION** is to be distinguished from all actions that result from external or internal causation. See "The Kingdom of God" chart.

All substances and creatures of every sort must be under some form of government or regulation, or total chaos will result. God would be negligent if He should allow such a catastrophe to develop. Possessing the ability to create, God must also possess the ability to control, as much as is possible in the nature of the case. "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns" (Re. 19:6). "The Lord has established His throne in the heavens; and His sovereignty rules over all" (Ps. 103:19). "The Lord is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works . . . Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endures throughout all generations" (Ps. 145:9, 13). The ovations of heaven will testify to God's righteous rulership: "Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations" (Re. 15:3). Moral action is distinguished:

1. From actions of inanimate creation under the law of cause and effect: Is. 45:5-7, 12, 18; Col. 1:16-17; He. 1:1-3.

Here Divine omnipotence operates by sheer force, either directly or by what we call the laws of nature. Created substances, great and small, do not possess a life of growth or self-locomotion and must be perpetually acted upon to produce whatever results are desired. The cause being brought into existence, the result always follows. This is a simple procedure to a God of unbounding energy and immeasurable intelligence.

2. From actions in animate non-moral creation under instinct, often supplemented by direct Divine impulses: Ge. 9:2; De. 32:11-12; I Kgs. 17:4, 6; Mt. 8:20; 17:27.

In these more intricate areas of creation, most mysterious entities have been incorporated, which produce growth with profound results, establish tendencies of life, and all sorts of curious actions—all of which is totally unexplainable. No doubt these unending marvels of created instincts and impulses to action have been brought into existence to overwhelm man with proof of the Divine existence. From all these wonders, man establishes inner conclusions that can never be expressed. They create obligation to recognize Deity by sheer mental impact.

In non--moral government, under the law of cause and effect, under implanted instincts or by direct Divine impulses, the results are always certain to occur simply because there is no alternative to do otherwise. God designed and created these various existences to be controlled in just this manner. The results may be admirable as a tribute to Divine wisdom and power, but there can be no praise--worthiness or blame--worthiness, since all results are simply the product of Divine causation.

3. From actions of moral beings under governmental providence, which often involves a temporary suspension of moral freedom by God's direct agency: Ex. 11:9-10; De. 2:25; Josh. 11:20; II Kgs. 7:6-7; Ps. 22:28; Dan. 4:17; Lk. 4:28-30; Jn. 7:30; Re.17:17. Since our first parents refused to remain intelligent as voluntary members of the kingdom of God, God has had to introduce innovations in His moral government to maintain a workable world order and bring to pass various events in His dispensations of mercy. Selfishness does not have what it takes to produce a tolerable society if allowed to proceed unrestrained. Man refusing voluntary restraint, God in mercy had to introduce methods of producing involuntary restraint for man's own ultimate good. This was not a part of God's original plan and would not have been necessary if sin had not introduced the confusion of moral values and relationships.

The Scriptures present a whole array of passages describing God's operations in the enforced realm of providence, which are in complete contrast to the many passages that portray God's humble appeal for entrance

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and acceptance in men's hearts. God's operations in this abnormal realm are varied and complicated. As we shall see, oppressive measures have had to be instituted against man from the realm of nature and from the animal kingdom. Instead of pleasant occupation as an outlet for intelligent activity, toil and struggle, pain and hardship, with death at the end of life, have had to be introduced as a judgment for sin and to restrain its further development.

In all forms of regulation by force, by instinct, or by mental coercion, the exact desired effects are achieved. The nature of control is certain and positive because an adequate cause has been provided to achieve a definite result, as contrasted with the uncertainty involved when man is allowed to choose his own actions, unrestrained in moral accountability (see "The Domain of God" chart).

B. MAN'S ENLIGHTENMENT upon his relations and obligations is the directive of right moral action and moral government.

If man is to be held accountable for his actions, he must not only be endowed with intellectual ability but must actually understand what his essential obligations to God and his fellowman are. He must be exposed to an atmosphere of truth that will foster and not hinder these spontaneous mental deductions. Right action can only follow right understanding. He must also understand that moral government does not consist in his being caused to act rightly toward other moral beings, but in his being admonished and urged to do so, enforced by appropriate consequences. He must have some understanding of the rightfulness and blessedness of the consequences that follow virtuous action, and the rightfulness and awful tragedy of the consequences that follow wrongful and rebellious action. These must be so vivid in his imagination as to be an incentive to obey the light of conscience and fear disobedience.

We now ask, "Do all men possess such a compelling enlightenment of mind and conscience as to render them guilty for disobedience and worthy of the threatened eternal punishment of separation from God? If so, what do the Scriptures reveal as the source of this information?"

1. Man is exposed to very great moral light through his natural observations.

"Light" is a figurative expression referring to that which reveals to us what our actions ought to be. "All things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light" (Ep. 5:13). We have seen that "God is light," or is absolute moral perfection in character and conduct, and that the Lord Jesus was "the light of the world." Man is subject to unending observations which portray to him his obligation to God and man. The Scripture affirms the great guilt of every person who has attained the age of accountability and is in possession of his reasoning powers.

- a. These natural observations are the basis of guilt and condemnation: Ro. 1:18-20; 2:11-12, 14-16; 3:19 ("all the world . . . accountable to God"); 3:23 ("all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"). Notice that all who have never heard of the Bible nor of the Gospel are still "without excuse" (Ro. 1:20). While the Gospel greatly adds guilt to those rejecting it, it is not the primary basis of condemnation.
- b. This moral light appeals directly to the mind for acceptance and may be dimmed or its force eliminated by philosophical reasoning: Acts 17:28; Ro. 1:18; Col. 2:8; II Tim. 4:4. Our native unreasoned reactions are very dependable. If we do not want to comply with them, we set about to reason them away. It is thus that men "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro. 1:18), and are taken "captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men" (Col. 2:8). The idea in the last passage is that of being carried off as a prey or as booty, a continuous action.
- c. The sources of this moral light, from which we build our concepts of reality:
 - 1) Our inner personalities and abilities are profound to contemplate (Ps. 8:4). There is within us the ability

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to think, to reason, to view facts and draw conclusions therefrom, to react in emotional response, and to originate our own actions--all functioning as an integral whole in a physical existence.

- 2) Our bodies or external selves are wonderfully made, beyond comprehension, enabling us to contact the world without through our five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching (Ps. 139:14). Our surroundings or external observations could provide an eternity of investigation--from the infinitesimal to the inconceivably immense (Ps. 19:1; Is. 40:26; Jer. 10:12; Ro. 1:20).
 - 3) Daily contact with our fellowmen places us, secondarily, under human obligation--the foundation of "the golden rule" (Mt. 7:12). The wonders of our observations so overwhelm the mind with evidence of a great Designer and Creator, that great contrary effort must be put forth by all who refuse to be guided thereby in their moral decisions.
2. Man is exposed to direct moral influences of the Godhead, enlightening the mind and quickening the conscience: Jn. 1:9; 16:8-11; Ro. 1:18; 2:15; Acts 17:27; Jn. 12:32 (there must be a mysterious drawing power of love being exerted to all who will in the least respond to enlightenment).
 3. Man has been given special moral enlightenment by Divine revelation:
 - a. Before man's rebellion: Ge. 2:16-17; 3:2-3, 8-10. Adam and Eve must have experienced happy climaxes of God's visitations before their rebellion (Ge. 3:8-10), and had specific instructions as to that submission and confidence that would please God.
 - b. Progressively after the Fall: Ge. 3:15, 21; 4:4; 5:24; 6:13; 15:1; 17:1.
 - c. By the giving of the Law and the Ten Commandments: Ex. 19:3; 20:1.
 - d. Through the advent and saviorhood of the Lord Jesus: Jn. 1:17-18.
 - e. Through final New Testament revelation: II Tim. 3:16; II Pe. 1:19-21.
 4. Pronounced consequences of right and wrong moral action are the enforcement of moral government.

Sanction as a legal term is "that which induces observance of law or custom." In law it is "the detriment, loss of reward, or other coercive intervention, annexed to a violation of a law as a means of enforcing the law." Sanctions may be considered as positive and negative, rewards of blessings or penal consequences of suffering. As a simpler term, the word "consequences" has been chosen to represent the sanctions that the righteous God imposes upon moral creatures for their conduct.

The idea of sanctions or consequences, therefore, is unavoidably associated with moral government or a government of moral beings. A moral law is a description of what is right conduct for a moral being in a given relationship. Moral law is always an expression of true intelligence and is to be a help toward maintaining a happy relationship in moral government. But for a moral law to have any force or persuasive energy, consequences must be pronounced to follow conformity or non-conformity. Submission to loving and intelligent rules of action always will be rewarded by blessing and happiness. Rebellion or a refusal to be intelligent in one's manner of living always will be rewarded with appropriate suffering and unhappiness. The whole strength and effectiveness of moral government rests in the pronouncement of just consequences and in their unwavering fulfillment. Apart from consequences, moral law would merely be advice and would achieve nothing toward happy moral relations, which is the purpose of moral government.
 5. There must of necessity be consequences in moral government:
 - a. Or, moral government must collapse, for this is the only means of control: De. 11:26-28; 30:15-20; I Sam

12:13-15, 24-25; Is. 3:10-11; 26:9; Jer. 18:7-10; Jn. 3:36; Ro. 2:6-10; 6:16.

- b. Or, God would be neglectful and cease to be love if He did not enforce His government for the good of His moral creatures: Ge. 18:25; De. 7:9-11.
 - c. Or, God would cease to be righteous and impartial if He did not treat moral beings according to their actions: Ps. 7:9; Jer. 9:24; I Co. 4:5; II Tim. 4:8; He. 6:10.
6. These consequences must be according to exact justice:
- a. God declares His strict impartiality, or that He does not favor one above another in personal salvation or consequences: De. 10:17; II Chr. 19:7; Ps. 62:12; Prov. 24:12; Eze. 18:30; Lk. 20:21 (said of Christ); Acts 10:34-35; Ro. 2:6-11; Ga. 2:6; Ep. 6:9; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:8-9; I Pe. 1:17; Re. 2:23.
 - b. They are based solely upon personal merit or demerit as known only to God: De. 24:16; II Chr. 25:4; Ps. 94:23; Jer. 31:30; 32:19; Eze. 18:20; Ro. 2:6-11; 14:11-12; I Pe. 1:17.

They are and will be in exact accord or in proportion to merit and demerit: Jer. 32:19; Ro. 2:6,12 (guilt in proportion to moral light); Ga. 6:7-8.

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD - SUMMARY CHART

"Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. 19:6)

"The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all." (Ps. 103:19)

MORAL GOVERNMENT

The government of free moral beings (mankind), by presenting motives to their minds to influence their behavior (Free Moral Action), except for necessary interruptions by God, when He over-powers the normal operation of their free-wills in order to enact certain divine plans necessary to maintain tolerable order in a selfish society (Providential Action).

FREE MORAL ACTION

This is government by motive (or persuasion), as opposed to government by force (causation). This is the normal way in which man is governed, whereby he is enlightened as to right wrong conduct, along with the associated consequences. This involves the enlightenment of his mind, the exercise of free will, and the reaction of his emotions as he experiences the consequences of his choices. God influences, but does not cause man's moral choices. Man is author of his own free-will choices and is responsible and accountable for them. By them he chooses the course and destiny of his life. This mode of government (and this mode only) makes possible the very purpose for which man was made—to establish and enjoy voluntary loving relationship with God and with each other.

Gen. 6:5; Deut 30:19; Josh 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; Prov. 1:24; Isa 1:19-20; 45:22; Jer. 18:5-10; 21:8; Ezek. 20:7-8; Matt. 23:37; John 1:11; 5:40; Acts 7:51; Rom. 2:5-11; 6:16; Gal. 6:7-9; Rev. 3:20

PROVIDENTIAL ACTION

This is the abnormal government of God by divine force, whereby man's free-will is over-ruled, his moral freedom and accountability are temporarily set aside, and God causes something to happen in order to bring about some particular plan of His mercy or judgment. In this way God prepares for the salvation of man, constrains the selfishness of governments within certain bounds, and enacts consequences for the moral choices of individuals and nations. This mode of operation was made necessary because of the entrance of sin into the world. It must be noted that God never forces man into salvation – (men choose their own destiny, it is not chosen for them by the providential action of God).

Ex. 11:9,10; Deut. 2:25; Josh. 11:20; Ps. 22:28; Prov. 21:1; Jer. 32:27-30; 50:9; Dan. 4:17, 32; Zeph. 3:8; John 7:30; 18:31,32; 19:9-11; Rom. 13:1; Rev. 17:17

NON-MORAL GOVERNMENT

The government of all creation not capable of making moral (right or wrong) choices. This includes the animate and inanimate kingdoms. Here God rules by force—by the principle of cause and effect. The outcome is always certain and predictable.

ANIMATE NON-MORAL CREATION

Here the mysterious laws of instinct are in operation – those built-in directives of animal behavior which enables them to carry out their designated way of life. The purpose for this marvelous display would appear to be to stimulate man into God-awareness by evidences of a designer immeasurably more intelligent and capable than himself.

Gen. 9:2; Num. 22:22-23; Job 35:10-11; Jonah 1:17; 2:10; Matt. 6:26; 8:20; 10:29; 26:74,75; Mark 5:11-13

INANIMATE CREATION

Here God controls the material universe. This is the control of matter by what we call the "laws of nature", which control the molecules of our bodies and the motions of the stars and galaxies. Again, we have marvelous evidence of order, and intelligent design and power immeasurably superior to our own.

Gen. 6:7, 13; 19:24,25; Ex. 14:16-21; 1 Kings 18:38; 2 Chron. 7:12-14; Ps. 93:1-4; 135:5-9; Isa. 45:5-7, 12, 18; Jonah 1:4, 15; Matt. 8:24-27; Col. 1:16-17.

THE DOMAIN OF GOD

"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live" (De.30:19).

CLASSIFICATION OF GOD'S CREATION	CHARACTERISTICS OR QUALIFICATIONS	METHOD OF GOVERNING	RESULT OF GOVERNMENT	NATURE OF CONTROL
<u>VAST REALM OF MATERIAL CREATION</u>	Mass without self-locomotion	Adequate cause through the "Laws of Nature"	Exact desired effect	Certain and positive
<u>ANIMATE NON-MORAL CREATION</u>	Self-contained life or ability of locomotion and self-reproduction	Adequate cause through the "Laws of Instinct"	Exact desired effect	Certain and positive
<u>FREE MORAL BEINGS</u>	Same as animate, PLUS Ability to perceive, react and choose (A spiritual being)	Appeal to motives by pronounced consequences	Glorious virtue OR degrading disappointment	Uncertain results

"See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known"
(De. 11:26-28).

"As they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations, so I will choose their punishments, and I will bring on them what they dread. Because I called, but no one answered; I spoke, but they did not listen. And they did evil in My sight, and chose that in which I did not delight" (Is. 66:3-4).

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Re. 3:20).

V. THE CONSEQUENCES OF CONFORMITY TO MAN'S MORAL OBLIGATIONS

The rewards of conformity to God's loving and reasonable requirements are most blessed. These happy experiences are what man was created and endowed to enjoy. They were to exist in unbroken abundance forever. Man is in happy submission to God:

- A. **EXPERIENCING FAVOR AND FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD AND WITH HIS FELLOWMAN:** Ge. 3:8; 5:24; 15:1; Ex. 19:5-6; 33:10-11; Mt. 23:37; Jn. 14:23; II Co. 6:16-18; Ep. 2:22; Re. 3:20.

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- B. ALLOWED TO PARTAKE OF THE LIFE-GIVING ENERGY OF GOD:** Ge. 2:9 ("tree of life in the midst"); 2:16 ("eat freely"); Jn. 1:4; 4:14; 5:21, 26; 6:33, 56-57; 7:37-38; Ro. 8:11; I Jn. 5:12.

Before the Fall, man was permitted to "eat freely" of "the tree of life." which evidently maintained his body in perfect health and prevented any deterioration. Through grace, the resurrected Christ is to be made living and real through the indwelling Holy Spirit to become the source of our spiritual life and energize our bodies to greater endurance.

C. RESULTING IN A BLESSED STATE OF PEACE, JOY, AND PRAISE.

1. A blessed state of peace in the depths of the heart: Ps. 29:11; 119:165; Is. 26:3; Jn. 14:27; Acts 24:16; Ro. 8:6; 14:17; II Co. 13:11; Phil 4:7; I Jn. 3:19-21.
2. The buoyancy of overflowing joy: Le. 23:40 (Feast of Tabernacles); De. 30:9-10 (God's rejoicing); Ne. 12:43; Ps. 16:11; 89:15-16; Zeph. 3:17 (God's joy); Jn. 16:22, 24; Ro. 14:17, 22; Ep. 5:18-21; I Pe. 1:8.
3. Spontaneous praise or worship, with singing: I Chr. 16:31, 34; 29:9-13; II Chr. 5:13-14; Ps. 47:6-7; 98:4-6; 139:14; Lk. 24:50-53; Acts 2:46-47; Ep. 5:20; Phil. 1:11; He.13:5,15; Re. 19:5-7.
4. An endless duration of life in God's presence: Jn. 17:3.
 - a. Adam and Eve continued in perfect happiness with their Creator and with one another before their rebellion: Ge. 1:27-31; 2:7-9, 15-17; 3:2-3.
 - b. The blessed Gospel makes possible a reconciliation to God with endless duration of life for all returning to conformity: Ps. 23:6; Dan. 12:2; Mt. 25:34, 46; Lk. 18:28-30; 20:34-36; Jn. 3:14-16; 4:14; 5:24; 6:50-51; 14:2-3; Ro. 6:22-23; II Co. 5:1; Tit. 3:7; He. 5:9; I Jn. 2:25; 5:10-13, 20; Jude 21.

By the great grace and mercy of God, through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus, repentant sinners may be restored in some respects to joys even greater than Adam and Eve experienced before their rebellion against God-- "things into which angels long to look" (I Pe. 1:12).

CHAPTER 5

The truth about MAN'S REBELLION AGAINST GOD

"Sin is lawlessness" (1 Jn. 3:4). "They (all men) are without excuse" (Ro. 1:20).

"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever" (Ro. 1:25).

"Just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper" (Ro. 1:28).

When God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness," God was making the decision of self-limitation. Everything that had been created up to this point was under a law of causation, either by force or instinct. There could be no fellowship, properly speaking, for this involves an ability of reciprocal action. Voluntary responsible action involves the possibility of non-compliance or of contrary choice—the freedom of uncertainty. Virtuous action must be voluntary action. If no contrary choice, then no virtuous choice and no possibility of complacent fellowship. But moral beauty is exceedingly more valuable to God than the sheer mass proportions of the vast universe. The thought of happy reactive creatures, capable of understanding something of His true spiritual essence, was indeed intriguing to the great God. The fall of man, therefore, was possible by virtue of man's created endowments, which made their abuse possible.

I. THE NATURE OF HOLINESS AND SIN

Holiness and sin are free voluntary acts of will or states of mind, and, although strongly influenced, are not caused by any internal force of nature, tendency, or instinct, nor by persuasion from external sources.

Moral choices are self-originated in view of what is perceived by the mind. This makes it possible for man to choose not to be reasonable and launch out on a course of rebellion against all that is right and proper. We may classify all actions of the will and establish what actions of will determine moral character, as follows:

- A. **MORAL CHARACTER** is a voluntary state of activity or conduct that takes place in the experiences and consciousness of moral beings. Moral character is moral action or personal action.
 1. Moral character is not something back of the will causing action, not a fixed entity lodging somewhere in our being, but the action of the will itself.
 2. Moral character is what we are doing with our endowments of personality and the moral light that we possess—our thoughts, attitudes, actions.
 3. Moral action and compulsory action are antagonistic in every sense. What is free cannot be compelled, and what is compelled cannot be free.
 4. Moral action is, therefore, free or self-originated action, and moral character is a description of what habitual actions are taking place.

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5. Scripture addresses man as having within himself the ability and responsibility of self-decision: Ge. 3:11; De. 11:26-28; 30:15-20; Josh. 24:15, 20-24; I Sam. 7:3; 8:7; I Sam. 1:19-20; Jer. 18:7-10; 21:8; 36:3, 7; Mt. 23:37; Jn. 1:11-12; 3:36; 5:40; 7:17; Acts 7:51; Ro. 6:16-18; I Jn. 2:17; Re. 3:20; 22:17.
- B. **MORAL ACTION** or acts of will are positive and definite, and in no sense can be partial in that an object of pursuit can be partly chosen and partly not chosen at the same time.⁵
1. The will always acts as a unit in a given instance.
 2. The will may choose a given course of action at one instance and choose another course of action at a succeeding instant, but not both at once.
 3. There cannot be a mixed moral character at a particular time. Men are either obeying God up to the moral light that they possess or they are not doing so. We cannot choose to be virtuous and selfish at the same time.
 4. Scripture very frequently so indicates, among which are: De. 11:26-28; 30:19-20; Josh. 24:15; I Kgs. 18:21; Is. 1:19-20; Mt. 6:22-24; 12:33-35; Mk. 11:23; Lk. 11:34-36; Jn. 3:19-21; Ro. 6:16-18; 8:6; II Co. 6:14; Ep. 4:22-24; 5:8; Tit. 1:15; Jas. 3:11-12; 4:6; I Jn. 1:6-7; 2:15-17; 5:12.
- C. **CLASSES OF ACTION OF THE WILL.** All actions of will are related, but are not all of the same importance.
1. The most important actions of will may be called **ULTIMATE OR SUPREME CHOICES**, as these establish the purpose and direction of our lives.
 - a. We may choose to live intelligently, regarding supremely the welfare of our great Creator and Benefactor and equally that of our fellowmen.
 - b. Or, we may choose to live unintelligently, with a purpose to concentrate upon our own happiness.
 2. A great multitude of choices are made to bring to pass those things which we think will fulfill our ultimate or supreme choice. They may be called **SUBORDINATE CHOICES** since they are made because of a higher purpose.
 3. Subordinate choices have to be brought to pass which involve no new plans, only a fulfilling of previous decisions, and thus may be called resultant routine choices or **EXECUTIVE CHOICES**.
- D. **THE CLASS OF ACTIONS OF THE WILL THAT DETERMINE MORAL CHARACTER.** What actions of will, or which class of action, are we to examine to establish moral character as virtuous or sinful?
1. Not merely resultant choices or executive volitions. These merely bring to fulfillment previous subordinate choices that have been made.
 2. Not by looking at the means chosen, or by looking at subordinate choices or decisions. These means were chosen to further a previous higher choice that was made, according to one's understanding and expectations, all things considered.
 3. Moral character can only be determined by examining the ultimate or supreme choice that has been made in the exercise of moral freedom.
 - a. Since there is no further reason why the choice was made, except that the endowment of free will and personal functions has furnished the ability to originate personal choice as to how life should be lived.
 - b. Every individual does what he does either because he loves God supremely and his fellowmen equally and desires the happiness of all moral beings according to their relative worth, or because he loves himself supremely and hopes to further his own happiness, all things considered.

⁵ See chart on page 70 for theory of mixed motive or mixed moral character.

- E. **THE MOTIVATING PURPOSE OF HEART**— then, is the only gauge of moral character.
1. As our physical heart goes, so goes our body, and as our inner choice or determination of "heart" or will is, so is our moral character.
 2. Many passages in the Bible use the word "heart" to relate to this inner state of praise-worthiness or blame-worthiness. God is frequently said to search out the purpose of the "heart" as a basis of determining guilt or commendation: De. 5:29; 8:2; I Sam. 16:7; I Chr. 28:9; Prov. 4:23; Jer. 17:9-10; Eze. 18:30-32; Mt. 6:21 (21-24); Mk. 7:18-23; Lk. 8:15; Acts 8:21 (18-24); I Th. 2:4; He. 3:7-8, 15; 4:12-13; Re. 2:23.
- F. **THE NATURE OF SIN.** Sin is not, therefore, an abstract thing which invades and lodges somewhere in our personalities, but is rather an orderly sequence of wrong choices and conduct, involving our whole personalities, which we have launched out upon and energetically persist in until we bow in repentance at the feet of the loving Saviour for forgiveness and reconciliation.

II. MAN'S REBELLION AGAINST GOD

Man rebelled against God by refusing to continue conforming to God's loving and reasonable requirements—the great tragedy of the moral world.

- A. **MAN WAS CREATED PERFECT IN EVERY WAY** and started out on the pathway of life with proper inner balance and perspective (Ge. 1:31). We have seen that:
1. Moral character is moral action, what we are doing with our personalities.
 2. Moral character cannot be created; it must be man's voluntary choice.
 3. Man had every advantage to form his own moral character and become firmly established in righteousness. He lacked no ability, had delightful discoveries of God's character in his surroundings, had blessed moral influences of Divine fellowship, had human companionship, and had special enlightenment.
- B. **MAN CHOSE TO FOLLOW HIS CREATOR**, and established a moral character of virtue and love, as evidenced by plain statements and implications:
1. Man had fellowship with God in naming the animals: Ge. 2:16-20.
 2. Also, certainly, at Eve's creation: 2:21-24.
 3. A tragic change in Divine fellowship took place after the Fall: Ge. 3:8-11.
 4. Man "knowing good" partook of "the tree of life," was later expelled: Ge. 3:22-24.
 5. Eve's reply to Satan indicates her obedience to God's command: Ge. 3:2-3.
 6. Relationship of Adam and Eve radically changed after the Fall, so must have been virtuous and unselfish before: Ge. 3:7-11; 2:25.
- C. **ADAM AND EVE OF THEIR OWN FREE WILLS REBELLED AGAINST GOD**, they rebelled against the loving and intelligent will of their Creator, by blinding their minds to the obvious truths of their relationships and revolting against all the moral persuasion that God could exert to keep them in the path of virtue and happiness.
1. It was a positive act of rebellion by both Eve and Adam: Ge. 3:6.
 2. It was a violation of a known command, not a weakness or deficiency: Ge. 3:3.
 3. It was a dethronement of the supremacy of God and intelligent love, and an enthronement of the supremacy of

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self-gratification and self-centeredness.⁶

4. The inner balance of self-control was completely disrupted—emotions reigned.

D. ADAM AND EVE IMMEDIATELY SOUGHT TO EXCUSE THEMSELVES AND BLAME GOD.

1. Adam, not deceived (I Tim. 2:14), blamed God for creating Eve: Ge. 3:12.
2. Eve blamed Satan as personified in the serpent (Ge. 3:13), and in effect blamed God for permitting the temptation.
3. Eve was deceived at the moment of indulgence: II Co. 11:3; I Tim. 2:14.
4. This deception was voluntary, after a rejection of moral light and understanding:
 - a. Eve plainly understood God's requirements and voiced no complaints against any unreasonableness, as she took God's side against Satan: 3:2-3.
 - b. The word "transgression" in I Tim. 2:14 denotes a violation of known law.
 - c. Satan is allowed only to blind "the minds of the unbelieving" (II Co. 4:4), or those who refuse or reject moral enlightenment.

E. GOD WILL NEVER PERMIT EXCESSIVE TEMPTATION TO OVERCOME ANYONE WHO IS RESPONSIVE TO THEIR MORAL UNDERSTANDING. (I Co. 10:13). Anyone willing to do God's will shall know the truth (Jn. 7:17). God only allows Satan to bring his "deluding influence" to those who receive not "the love of the truth," who want to believe "what is false," and have "pleasure in wickedness" (II Th. 2:10-12). Moral darkness always follows man's voluntary rejection of Divine efforts of enlightenment, and is often represented as taking place suddenly: Mt. 13:15; Jn. 9:39; 12:35-36; Acts 28:24-28; Ro. 1:28.

F. THUS MANKIND MUST TAKE THE FULL BLAME UPON THEMSELVES FOR SIN, for the tragic rebellion and the ever-increasing chaos resulting from sin. Sin is an unintelligent abuse of God-given endowments of personality. In this abuse man has gone contrary to all persuasive energies that the loving Godhead could exert to keep man in the path of intelligent submission. The passions of selfish desire were elevated to the place of supremacy, with the intelligence being directed to be their servant.

III. THE REPRESENTATION OF SIN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

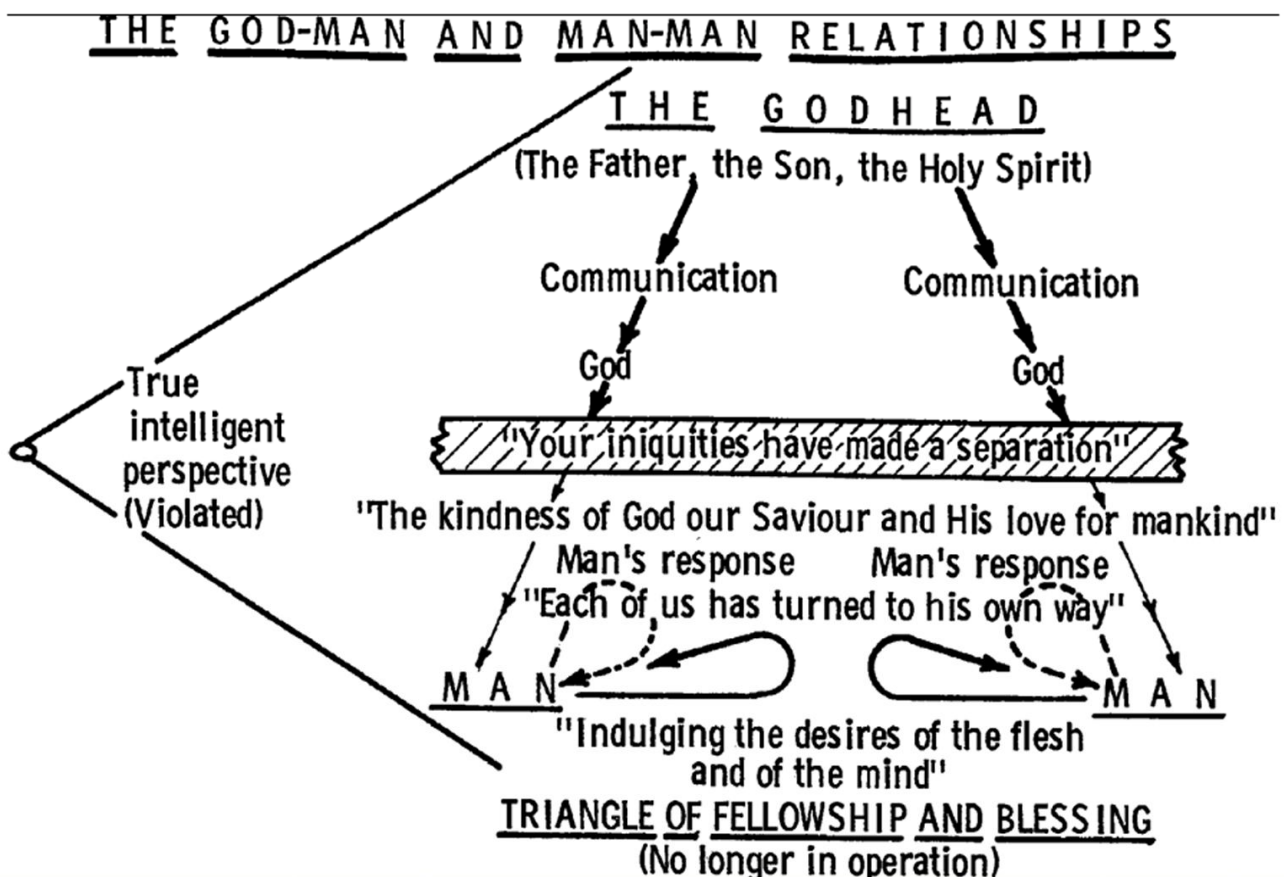
The Old Testament uses words to describe man's sin that show overwhelmingly man's free will or voluntariness in his life of sin, and thus man's great guilt.

Man is described as a rebel against a loving God, not as a subject of pity who has lost his ability of will and thus could not help sinning. Each is held accountable for his own sin, not that of Adam or his forefathers. Sin is a violation of moral light, a refusal to conform to what is known and perceived. The seriousness of sin is according to one's understanding of what the will of God is. Every type of word is used to present the voluntariness and viciousness of sin, only a few references of the many being given. Sin is:

1. To miss or err from the mark, to wander from the path of rectitude planned for man: Ex. 20:20; Eze. 18:4, 20; Dan. 9:5, 15. "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise they became fools" (Ro. 1:21-22).

⁶ See following charts showing that true intelligent perspective has now been violated and emotional gratification made supreme. Also see me-first chart on page 99.

2. To act perversely, or to twist and distort moral character, usually rendered "Iniquity:" Ex. 34:7, 9; Ps. 32:2, 5; Is. 53:6; Eze. 18:20; Dan. 9:5.
3. To transgress or break away from just authority, to be contrary: Le. 16:15-16, 21; Is. 1:2; Eze. 18:30-31.
4. To refuse to obey or hearken, a verb basically meaning to listen or attend to: De. 28:45; Ne. 9:16-17; Dan. 9:10.
5. To refuse to serve God, a verb basically meaning to labor, to work, to work for another, thus to worship and serve: De. 30:17; Josh. 24:14-15; Neh. 9:35.
6. To act treacherously or deceitfully, usually rendered "trespass." Le. 5:15; 6:2; Josh. 7:1; Neh. 1:8.
7. To be rebellious (to make or tend to make God bitter): I Sam. 12:13-15; Is. 1:20; Neh. 9:17.
8. To be stubbornly disobedient, also rendered to rebel: Nu. 14:9; Neh. 9:26; Eze. 2:3; Dan. 9:5.
9. To be wicked or impious (with an idea of strong excitement): I Kgs. 8:47; Is. 57:20; Dan. 9:5, 15.
10. To live worthlessly or without any worthy purpose (with the idea of emptiness or vanity), often rendered "iniquity:" Is. 55:7 ("unrighteous man"); Jer. 4:14 ("wicked thoughts"); Micah 2:1 ("iniquity").
11. To be evil (to spoil or dash to pieces the moral worth that God intended): Ge. 6:5; Ps. 7:9; 51:4; Is. 1:16; Jer. 4:14.



"For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is

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blessed forever" (Ro. 1:25).

"And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper" (Ro. 1:28) .

"Walk in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart" (Ep. 4:17-18).

"To those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled" (Tit. 1:15).

"The wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud. 'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked'" (Is. 57:20-21).

"And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Th. 1:9).

"But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "The kindness of God leads you to repentance" (Ro. 5:8; 2:4).

THE AVENUES OF PERSONALITY

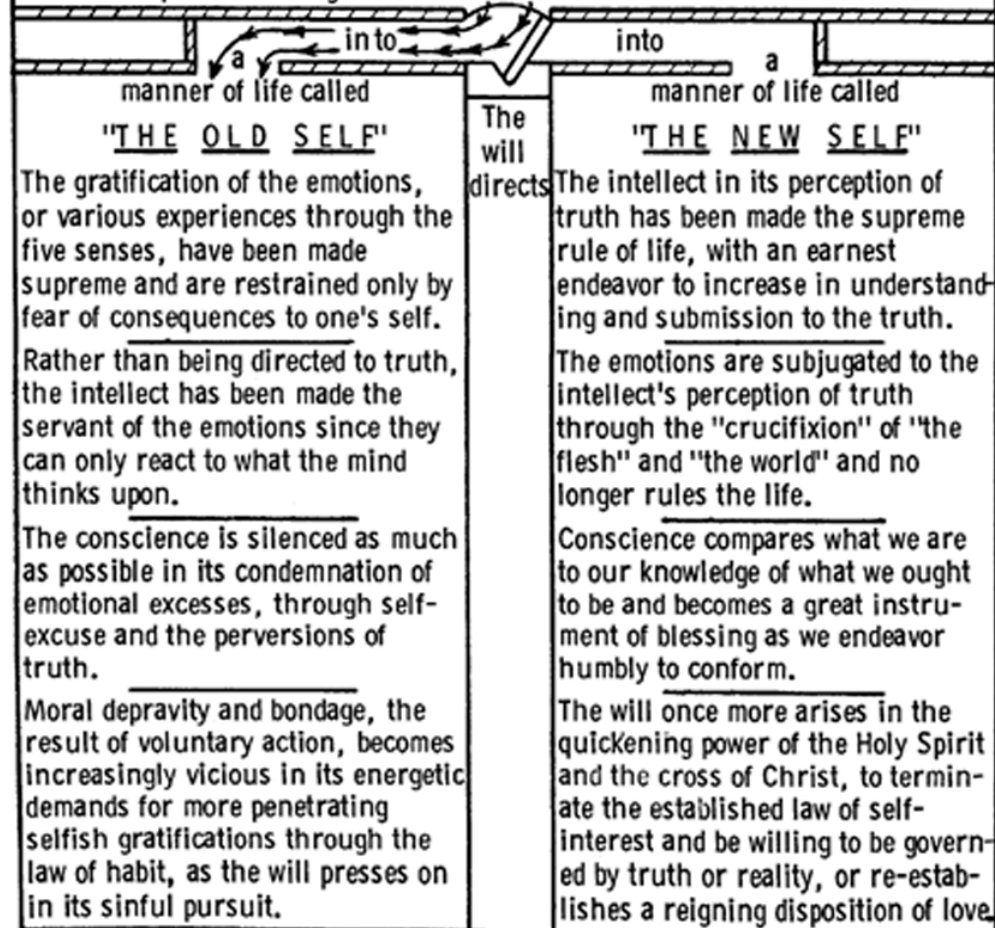
Man's immaterial essence was created in "the image of God," with abilities of:

INTELLECT or spiritual capacity: With reason and understanding, imagination, God-consciousness, self-consciousness, conscience or self-evaluation, and memory.

EMOTION or experience: A "soulish" capacity to react to what is thought and acted upon, involving the five senses.

FREE WILL or self-determination: A "heart" capacity to originate and be responsible for our own actions.

(All adapted and amalgamated into a harmonious PHYSICAL existence.)



See Ro. 6:5-7; Ep. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-11; also Jn. 3:19-21; Ro. 6:16-18; II Co. 5:17.

IV. THE REPRESENTATION OF SIN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament carries forth the same idea of the wickedness and inexcusableness of sin presented in the Old Testament, by the use of many Greek words with different shades of meaning, only a few references being given. Sin is:

1. To miss or err from the mark, to wander from the path of uprightness and honor planned for man, a misdirection of our faculties: Lk. 15:21; 18:13; Jn. 16:8-9; Ro. 2:12; 3:23; I Jn. 3:4-5.
2. To trespass, to fall beside or deviate from the right path of life, to stumble: Mt. 6:14-15; Ro. 4:25; Ep. 1:7; 2:1.
3. To transgress or step by the side of the prescribed path, an overstepping or departure from the way of truth: Mt. 15:2-3; Acts 1:25; Ga. 3:19; He. 2:2.
4. To be lawless, or refuse to conform to Divine law revealed to increase man's understanding of the right way: Mt. 7:23; II Co. 6:14; Tit. 2:14; I Jn. 3:4.
5. To disobey or be disobedient, to disbelieve or refuse belief (willfully or perversely), to refuse to be persuaded, to be obstinate or uncompliant; from a verb to persuade or be persuaded, with a negative prefix: Jn. 3:36; Ro. 2:8; 10:21; Ep. 2:2; 5:6; Tit. 1:16; 3:3; He. 3:18; 4:6; I Pe. 2:7-8; 4:17.
6. To do wrong, to be unjust or unrighteous, to refuse to do what is right: Ro. 1:18; 2:8; I Co. 6:9; Col. 3:25; I Jn. 1:9; Re. 22:11.
7. To be ungodly or to act impiously, without reverential awe toward God: Ro. 1:18; I Tim. 1:9; Tit. 2:12; I Pe. 4:18; Jude 15, 18.
8. To be evil, wicked, or depraved in mind and heart: Mt. 12:34-35; 15:19; Jn. Ep. 6:12; Col. 1:21; He. 3:12.

From this summary of an extended study of the words used in the Bible to describe sin, we look in vain for any proof that sin is anything else than a wrong action. There is always the idea of locomotion or voluntary activity, not a static or inactive something back of the will, received by heredity, which exercises a causation over the will. The dynamic nature of sin and its solemn guilt is portrayed on every hand in such a way that none need err as to what sin is.

V. THE NATURE OF MAN'S SINFUL STATE

All sin can be resolved into a wrong ultimate supreme choice to seek our own happiness supremely, which involves our whole personality and is persisted in without virtuous interruptions from the dawn of moral accountability.

- A. **SIN IS ALWAYS A WRONG VOLUNTARY ATTITUDE OR PURPOSE OF LIFE**, or a wrong motive of heart. Sin is not a fixed something back of the will controlling its actions. The will determines the nature or character, rather than the nature of the will. We are sinners simply because we choose to sin or live selfishly. We are never held accountable for what we are not the author of. Ability is always the measure of responsibility. God has given us the ability to direct our lives, either according to intelligence in recognition of our obligation to God and to our fellowmen, or according to selfishness and unintelligence in the supreme seeking of our own happiness. As previously mentioned, the essence of sin is set forth in the Scriptures as being in the heart of man or in the purpose of will: I Kgs. 11:9-11; II Chr. 12:14; Ps. 28:3; 66:18; 78:37; 95:10; Jer. 17:9-10; Eze. 14:2-3 (2-8); 18:30-32; Mt. 5:27-30; 9:4; 13:15; Mk. 3:5; 7:18-23; 8:17; Lk. 21:34; Acts 8:21 (18-24); Ro. 2:4-6; He. 3:7-15.
- B. **SIN INVOLVES THE WHOLE PERSONALITY**. This wrong voluntary purpose of life or wrong motive of heart involves our whole personality and leaves no room for simultaneous actions from an opposite motive. Since man is

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an integral whole personality with various endowments or abilities, actions of a mixed moral character, partly good and partly bad, are impossible, as previously proved from Scripture: Mt. 6:22-24; Jn. 3:19-21; Ro. 6:16-18; II Co. 5:17.

- C. **BEFORE CONVERSION, MAN IS TOTALLY AND CONTINUOUSLY SINFUL.** This wrong voluntary purpose of life or wrong motive of heart, involving our whole personality, is persisted in without virtuous interruptions, from the dawn of moral accountability. We have chosen to live a life of selfishness which reigns supreme until undone by exposure to the cross of Christ. There is no admixture of good or evil, no interruptions when virtue reigns, no suspensions of selfish supremacy. Sinful indulgence in one form or another is continuous. Many factors in our constitution and environment influence our choice of the main form of this selfish gratification. There are humanly amiable as well as base sinners, with many levels of degradation. But all sinners of every description, from those who claim to have served God (Mt. 7:21-23) to those whom God has given "over to degrading passions" (Ro. 1:26), have one uniform moral characteristic—"There is none who does good, there is not even one" (Ro. 3:12). This is because it is the motive of the heart that determines virtue. This persistency in sin is frequently testified to, as: Ge. 6:5; 8:21; Ps. 10:4; 14:1,3 (53:1, 3); 28:3; Is. 55:7-9; 64:6; Jer. 13:23; 17:9-10; Ro. 1:21; 3:10-12, 23; 6:16-17, 20; Ep. 2:1, 3; 5:8; Tit. 1:15; 3:3; I Pe. 2:25.⁷

VI. MAN ALONE IS TO BLAME FOR HIS SINFUL STATE

Men are the authors of their own rebellion against the loving and reasonable moral government of God, and are fully to blame for the entrance of sin into the world and for its persistent perpetuation from generation to generation.

The Bible is God's personal message to man, in which God purposed to satisfy our minds upon the great problems of life. By admitting man into the secrets of Divine reactions and attitudes, God is endeavoring to enlighten man's understanding as to how the tragedy of sin has occurred and why certain dispensations have had to be taken, purposing to bring man to repentance and forgiveness.

A. SIN DID NOT ENTER THE WORLD BECAUSE MAN WAS CREATED DEFICIENT IN ANY WAY:

1. The moral character of the Godhead is revealed to be love, a voluntary state of impartial good-will toward all moral beings: I Jn. 4:8, 16; Ps. 86:5; Ro. 5:8; II Co. 13:11. Such a God of love could not fail to produce the best possible system that goodness can produce.
2. The Bible ascribes the creation of all things to the intelligence and wisdom of God: Ge. 1:1, 27; 2:7; Ps. 8:3-6; 102:24-27; Jer. 51:15; Acts 17:24; Re. 4:11. Man's creation "In the image of God" was the highest possible endowment. "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good" (Ge. 1:31).

B. SIN DID NOT ENTER THE WORLD BECAUSE IT WAS GOD'S WILL THAT IT SHOULD:

1. God designed and created man to experience and enjoy the Divine presence: Ge. 5:24; Zeph. 3:17; Acts 7:48; 17:24, 28; Ep. 2:22; Col. 1:16.
2. Holiness and consequent happiness is always God's will for moral beings—sin and consequent misery is always contrary to God's will. God has revealed His will to man, which is always to live according to the intelligence or truth of his relations: Ge. 17:1; Le. 11:44-45; De. 10:12-13; Mt. 22:37-40; I Pe. 1:15-16; I Jn. 2:17. For this the Ten Commandments were given (Ex. 20:1-17); for this the Lord Jesus prayed (Mt. 6:10).
3. It is God's revealed will that all should be saved: Mk. 16:15; Jn. 3:17; 17:21; I Tim. 2:3-6; II Pe. 3:9. Therefore, God must always have desired that man should be holy and happy.

⁷ This view of sin as voluntary, unified, and continuous action before salvation was common discussion in great revivals of the last century, Charles G. Finney (1792-1875) being the principal leader. See summary quotation on page 113.

C. SIN DID NOT ENTER THE WORLD BECAUSE GOD FAILED TO EXERT EVERY EFFORT TO PREVENT ITS OCCURRENCE IN A PERFECT CREATION OF FREE MORAL BEINGS:

1. After lovingly providing every pleasure and blessing, God strongly warned Adam and Eve of the dreadful consequences that would result from disobedience, and strongly opposed man's persistence in sin in early history: Ge. 2:16-17; 6:3.
2. Man is represented throughout the Bible as resisting these persuasive pressures to his own calamity, not occasionally but continually: Ge. 6:3, 11-13; Is. 65:2-3; Jer. 7:23-27; 11:7-8; Mt. 23:33-35; Lk. 19:14, 46; Acts 7:51; Ro. 2:4-5; I Th. 5:19. God purposes to fill men's lives with abundant blessings (Jer. 7:23) but is prevented by man's obstinacy.
3. God is pictured as pleading with man in most pathetic words, which evidence a most sincere concern for man's welfare: Prov. 1:24-25, 30; Jer. 2:5, 9, 13; 6:19; 25:4-7; Eze. 18:30-32; Micah
4. 6:2-3; Zech. 1:4; Mt. 23:37; Lk. 19:41-42; Jn. 1:11; 5:40-42; Re. 3:20. Man has limited God's love and brought grief to his Creator and Benefactor (Ps. 78:41).

D. THE AGONIZING GRIEF AND DISAPPOINTMENT THAT SIN HAS BROUGHT TO THE LOVING GODHEAD PROVES CONCLUSIVELY THAT GOD HAS DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PREVENT SIN FROM ENTERING THE WORLD AND FROM BEING PERPETUATED.

God cannot be the author of His own unhappiness. This greatest sorrow will be developed later. Man, therefore, was created perfect in every respect and started out on the pathway of life with proper balance and perspective. God did not create moral character in man as a fixed something. In the very nature of man's constitution this was impossible. Man alone could create moral character for himself by responding to his Creator's love and blessings. Moral character attaches itself only to the actions of the subject. Nothing could be done to guarantee man's continuing in a state of obedience. Man was an endowed personality throbbing with life and equipped to climb great moral heights—or fall to great depths of degradation.

CHAPTER 6

The truth about THE CONSEQUENCES OF MAN'S REBELLION

"Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He does not hear" (Is. 59:2).

"The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He grieved in His heart" (Ge. 6:6).

"I have been hurt by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me, and by their eyes, which played the harlot after their idols" (Eze. 6:9).

"To those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled" (Tit. 1:15).

"So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro. 14:12).

"These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Mt. 25:46).

As a benevolent moving force toward obedience, dreadful consequences were solemnly declared to most certainly follow if man should revolt against his intelligence and all the kind manifestations of His Creator. God in love has declared that He will deal in absolute righteousness with every moral being before the entire universe. The dreadful possibility of man's revolt became a reality. God now has the solemn responsibility of fulfilling the promised consequences toward man as a dutiful Moral Governor, but not without deep experiences of personal agony and compassionate manifestations of mercy.

The dreadful and tragic consequences of man's sinful rebellion against the loving and reasonable moral government of God, and the ever-increasing resistance that mankind has shown towards God's overtures of mercies, are as follows:

I. TRAGIC AGONIZING GRIEF AND DISAPPOINTMENT TO THE GODHEAD

The Godhead had planned to live an absolutely intimate life with man (Acts 7:48; 17:27-28; II Chr. 16:9; Col. 1:16; Zeph. 3:17). The revolt of mankind and the persistent resistance of the great majority against these intimate plans has deeply affected the happiness of the Godhead and has brought unspeakable disappointment. A great many passages in the Bible open to us the secrets of the Divine bosom and convey to us the wonderful fact that the Godhead are just as tender-hearted as They are great. Grief is always in proportion to intimacy and to depth of understanding in contemplating this intimacy. Who can really begin to fathom the sorrow of the Godhead? This tragedy was certainly not the will of God. God could not in any sense be the cause of His own disappointment and grief.

A. SIN HAD DEVELOPED TO SUCH TRAGIC PROPORTIONS THAT GOD'S GRIEF OF "HEART" DROVE HIM TO REPENT OR REGRET THAT MAN HAD BEEN CREATED: Ge. 6:12, 5-7.

As "God looked on the earth" with the sole desire to bless men with Divine experiences of joy and blessing, the Holy

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Spirit now had to "strive with man" to restrain their concentrations upon sin (6:3). This resistance brings endless grief because of great love (Acts 7:51; Ep. 4:30; I Th. 5:19). If striving and wrath were of the nature of God, there would be no grief. Instead of a reign of love in men's hearts, Satan's "beachheads" (Ep. 2:2) and those of "the flesh" or emotional supremacy (Ga. 5:16-17) must be contended with. "The Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God" (De. 6:15). When formal allegiances with the enemy or with selfish perversions are made, the Godhead are very disturbed. When God must have "Indignation every day" (Ps. 7:11) because of love for righteousness, this is an endless intrusion into the Divine happiness.

B. GOD'S GRIEF AND DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE NATION ISRAEL HAS BEEN MOST PAINFUL.

The nation Israel was developed from Abraham to have special intimacy with God as a means of reaching the world (Ge. 12:1-3) and of bringing about the advent and sufferings of the Savior (Ga. 4:4-5). In spite of untold miracles and loving manifestations, God was almost uniformly grieved with the great majority of the nation and had great disturbances of mind in bringing about necessary judgments: Ex. 32:7-14; 33:5; Nu. 14:21-39; De. 5:29; 8:2; I Sam. 8:5-9, 19-22; 10:17-19; 15:10-11, 22-23, 35; II Chr. 36:14-16; Ps. 78:37-42, 56-61; 81:13-14; 95:10-11 (He. 3:7-11); Is. 5:1-7; 48:17-19; Jer. 6:16-19; 11:6-11; 25:3-9; Eze. 6:9.

C. GOD'S GRIEF AND UNHAPPINESS IS DEMONSTRATED IN GOD'S RELUCTANCE TO BRING ABOUT RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT FOR MAN'S SIN.

1. The Bible very frequently testifies of the profound patience and long-suffering of God with rebellious mankind, as in: Joel 2:12-14; Jonah 3:10; 4:2; Micah 7:18-19; Ro. 2:4; I Pe. 3:20 (Ge. 6:3); II Pe. 3:9.
2. When God permitted nations to judge Israel for their sins, He was moved to send deliverance as soon as any evidence of repentance was manifested: Jud. 2:16-18; 10:13-16; Ps. 106:43-45; I Chr. 21:14-15 (even without it).
3. God offered to change His mind about certain planned judgments if man was willing to turn from sin: Jer. 18:7-10; 26:2-7, 12-13; Hosea 11:8-9; Eze. 33:11. Men take advantage of God's mercy and long-suffering (Ecc. 8:1).
4. It was certainly grievous to God, therefore, to bring about major changes in His whole program for man.
 - a. To impose burdens upon man after the Fall, in order to restrain sinful development by too much leisure: Ge. 3:16-19.
 - b. To drive man from the beautiful garden and from "the tree of life," which must have sustained perfect health: Ge. 3:24.
 - c. To see man deteriorate and die, when he was designed to live: Ge. 3:19.
 - d. To allow man to develop "a depraved mind" (Ro. 1:28) so he could walk more comfortably in the moral darkness which he insisted upon having (Jn. 3:19).
 - e. Above all, to assign incorrigible men to a place of eternal confinement called "hell" (Mt. 25:41, 46; Lk. 13:28; Re. 22:11), "prepared for the devil and his angels," whom man chose and continues to choose allegiance to.
5. The Lord Jesus was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Is. 53:3), manifesting the disposition of the entire Godhead (Jn. 1:18; 14:9).
 - a. He wept and had great lamentation, "with loud crying and tears" (He. 5:7), as most men rejected Him: Jn. 1:11; 5:40, 42; Lk. 19:14.

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- b. The blessings which He carried in His bosom had to remain un-manifested and this broke the Savior's heart: Lk. 19:41-42; Mt. 23:37.
- c. He entered our sphere of life "that the world should be saved through Him" (Jn. 3:17), but only a comparative "few" were responding: Lk. 13:23-24.
- d. "He felt compassion for . . . the multitudes," who wandered about aimlessly and did not want the true Shepherd who longed to guide them: Mt. 9:36.
- e. The resurrected Christ and the tender-hearted love of God still pleads with men to reconsider their rejection of Divine mercy: Re. 3:20; 22:17.

II. MAN'S SPIRITUAL SEPARATION FROM GOD

Spiritual separation of man from God's favor, or a state of spiritual death: Ge. 2:16-17; 3:22-24; 6:5; Is. 59:1-2; 64:7; Ep. 2:1, 5, 12-13, 18; 4:18; I Tim. 5:6; I Pe. 5:5; Re. 3:1.

The basic idea of "death" is separation. Under this heading we consider the loss of the positive, the loss of that absolute intimate experience of the Divine life for which man was created and endowed. In losing the Divine favor man has lost the very essence of his intended life. This is why the Gospel comes forth with the blunt statement: "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life" (I Jn. 5:12). To be separated "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Th. 1:9) is to be separated from that real and genuine life that God intended. See chart page 57.

III. MAN'S LOSS OF PEACE AND JOY

Loss of peace and joy, with a permanent distortion of the inner balance of personality by the experience of sin: Ps.. 32:3-5; 51:2-3, 7-9; Is. 48:22; 57:20-21; 64:6; Jn. 3:36; Ro. 3:16-17; II Co. 7:1; Tit. 1:15; I Pe. 2:11; II Pe. 2:20; I Jn. 3:20; 5:12; Re. 22:11.

Man's personality is a complete unified entity—not a collection of isolated parts that can function independently. Everything we do proceeds from a decision of will, involves our intelligence and perception, leads to emotional reactions or experiences, is approved or disapproved by the conscience, and is registered in the memory in complete perspective. As long as we choose to be guided by truth as perceived in the intelligence, our emotional life experiences reactions which are approved by the conscience. This is a state of inner peace and tranquillity, with a satisfaction of joy that we are pleasing God and our fellowmen. Sin is a voluntary state in which emotional gratification is made of supreme concern, with the intellect directed to think thoughts that will further certain selected areas of indulgence. Truth as interpreted by conscience proclaims guilt, bringing about an inner disturbance that can never be silenced by relentless efforts. The will is intimidated into more and more bondage. The whole proceeding is a state of chaos with devastating consequences, contrary to our nature.

IV. MAN'S STRAINED RELATIONS WITH HIS FELLOWMEN

Strained relations with his fellowmen, instead of free, happy, friendship: Ge. 3:7; 4:8; Ex. 20:13-17; Mt. 5:43-44; Ro. 1:24-25, 28-32; Tit. 3:3; Jas. 4:1; I Jn. 2:11; 3:15.

All earthly relations involve communication through the five senses. We communicate our whole personalities in ways that we do not realize. Since all moral actions involve decisions, thought, emotional reactions, and inner experiences, we present to others a total image of our state, not only by our words, but by our facial expressions, our bodily manifestations, and the way we say things. Motives are interpreted; in-depth discoveries are observed. All receive impressions of total communication, although most do not analyze why they are impressed as they are. Only honest and

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virtuous hearts, therefore, can have relaxed friendship. Selfishness is antagonistic to friendship, since we are trying to get more than we deserve from others. Such selfish intentions will somehow be manifested and will bring strife and contention as they are exposed and demanded with increased intolerance. Happy relationships with our fellowmen in selfishness is impossible.

V. MAN'S PHYSICAL DETERIORATION, PAIN AND DEATH

- A. **THE BODY SUFFERS DETERIORATION, DECAY, AND DISINTEGRATION:** Ge. 2:9, 16; 3:22-24; 3:19; Ecc. 12:7; Ro. 8:23; I Co. 15:53-54; II Co. 4:7, 16; 5:1; Re. 21:4. When man was sent forth from "the tree of life," which he formerly was invited to "eat freely," his body apparently was no longer sustained in perfect health. The natural result was deterioration, disease, pain and finally death.
- B. **PHYSICAL DEATH** is a tearing asunder of man's integrated personality, plainly contrary to God's plan: Ge. 2:7-9; I Co. 15:26, 55-56.
- C. **SEPARATION FROM GOD.** The essential personality (spirit and mind, soul, heart) is separated from the body and departs to another realm: Ecc. 12:7; Lk. 16:19-23; II Co. 5:6-9.

VI. MAN'S EARTHLY ENVIRONMENT

Penalties of sin in man's earthly life or environment.

- A. **DECAY AND DEATH IN THE NATURAL WORLD:** Ge. 3:14; 9:2-3; Is. 11:6-9; Ro. 8:20-23.
- B. **MATERIAL CREATION AND VEGETATION CHANGED:** Ge. 3:17-19 (ground made less productive and difficult, antagonistic growth); Acts 3:21; Ro. 8:20-22 (Ge. 1:31).
- C. **MAN EXPELLED FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO HAVE A LIFE-LONG CONFLICT WITH NATURE:** Ge. 3:17-19, 2-24.
- D. **WOMEN TO HAVE SORROW, GREATER BURDENS, PAIN, AND BE IN SUBMISSION:** Ge. 3:16; Lk. 2:34-35; Jn. 19:25-27; I Co. 11:3; Ep. 5:22-24; I Pe. 3:1-2.

VII. DEPRAVITY OF CONSTITUTION

Depravity of constitution, or aggravated, ever-worsening tendencies to self-indulgence, introducing a new conflict with the forces of evil, with ourselves, and with our surroundings: Ge. 3:7, 22 (man now knew evil as well as good); 3:6, 15; Jn. 8:44; Ep. 6:10-18 (a Satanic "beachhead" had now been established within man's heart for endless spiritual warfare against "the world-forces of this darkness"); Ro. 7:21, 24 (it now became easier to do evil than good); I Jn. 2:15-17 (the threefold area of conflict with evil). See diagram on next page.

Depravity relates to that state of constitution and faculties by which it is easier to sin or gratify ourselves than to do what our enlightened mind declares to be right and proper. The strongest tendency is toward certain kinds of indulgences which our constitution and environment has fostered and our wills have chosen to develop by persistent effort. Depravity, then, is simply a voluntary developed habit of conduct that clamors to continue in ever-increasing similar indulgences. Depravity strongly influences, but does not compel, toward wrong action. We choose to follow our inclinations when we sin.⁸

- A. **OUR PROFOUND ENDOWMENTS BY CREATION "IN THE IMAGE OF GOD" MAKES THIS AWFUL DEVELOPMENT OF DEPRAVITY POSSIBLE.**

⁸ See "Philosophical influences in Early Church History," for the controversy of Augustine and Pelagius, and Semi-Pelagian view here presented, the common view before Augustine and quite common up to the Reformation.

1. Our whole being enters into and reacts to everything that we do.
2. Thoughts, experiences, and actions become a part of us through our memories—which help us to climb greater heights or sink to lower depths.
3. Each cycle of actions is added to what preceded, increasing similar evil influence and establishing habits of conduct.
4. A guilty conscience becomes a barrier to change by its depressing effect and our unwillingness to face reality.
5. Our bodies are affected by these excesses because of their intimate involvement with moral choices and greatly help toward continuation.

B. OUR ENVIRONMENT AND RELATIONS, WHICH WERE MEANT TO BE PROFOUND BLESSINGS, BECOME THE MEANS TOWARD GREATER DEGRADATION.

1. Our relations to the earth and its sustaining forces imposes burdens and bodily limitations through toil.
2. Intimate human relationships have been grossly perverted and distorted.
3. Material objects which were to be admired and appreciated have become centers of attachment which are hard to break away from.

C. OUR WEAKENED AND UNBALANCED PHYSICAL CONDITION CONSTITUTES WHAT WE CALL PHYSICAL DEPRAVITY AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL DEPRAVITY.

1. The word "depravity" means very crooked; from the Latin "pravus" or crooked, and "de," intensive or very.
2. Depravity of body is evidenced by the fact that there is no perfect health.
3. Depravity extends to our minds because of a vital connection with the weaknesses of the body, thus limiting their powers.
4. Depravity extends also to the emotions by way of sympathy for bodily ailments and nurture—a cultivation of softness and an opposition to discipline.
5. Physical depravity is not to be thought of as a loss of the ability of free will, but as introducing a bias or tendency toward self-gratification—an impediment which must be overcome by right moral action.
6. Thus physical depravity by birth and circumstance is a reality, but is not the cause of wrong moral action.

D. MORAL DEPRAVITY, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS ALWAYS A VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT WHICH RESULTS FROM THE WRONG CHOICES OF OUR WILLS.

1. It is a state or condition of our moral nature that is the result of what we have done or occupied our lives with.
2. It is a developed habit of life or established character, with a strong tendency to keep on doing what we have been doing.
3. Everyone chooses to develop particular areas of gratification more than other areas, as influenced by many factors and fears of consequences.
4. Every wrong action and indulgence deepens the ruts of our depravity until we develop mighty monsters of bondage, either amiable or degraded as men view things, that require ever-increasing energy of will to counteract: Jer. 13:23; Ro. 7:24; Ga. 5:17, 19-21; Ep. 2:1-3; Tit. 3:3; Jas. 1:14-15; I Pe. 2:11.

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5. Evidently man is able to rise up to do battle with himself in turning away from his sin, since God so commands (Mk. 1:14-15; Lk. 13:3, 5; 24:47; Acts 17:30; 26:18, 20) and nowhere implies that he is unable to do so.

E. THE UNIVERSALITY OF SIN IN THE WORLD IS TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR AS FOLLOWS:

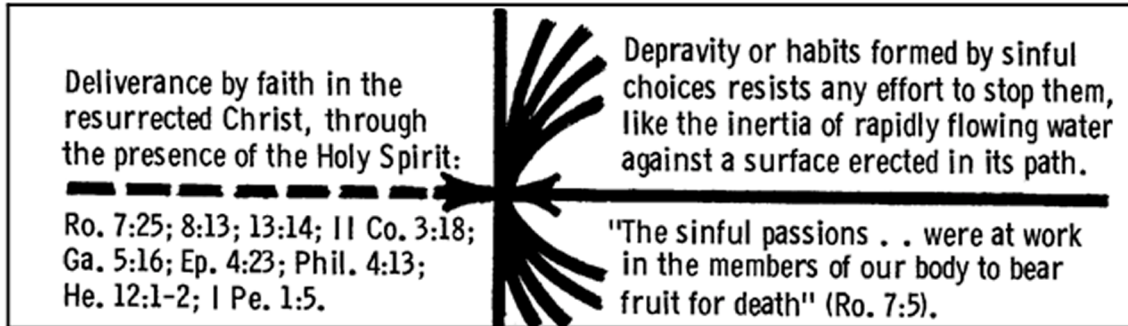
1. Hereditary physical tendencies tend toward softness and self-sympathy, beginning early in life. See lower angle of hill illustration.
2. Physical consciousness and experiences through the five senses are cultivated prior to the dawn of moral accountability.
3. Moral influences of our immediate and social environment lead us to choose similar habits of life by imitation and often persuasion (I Pe. 1:18).
4. At the dawn of moral accountability, as obligation to God and other beings is beginning to be perceived, moral enlightenment appears to make a dim impact because of our already established manner of living.
5. The will now determines to press on in this self-gratification against these new realizations, the habit of self-indulgence now becoming sinful and involves new concentrations in its pursuit (Is. 53:6; Ro. 3:23; I Pe. 2:25).

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DYNAMIC FORCE OF MORAL DEPRAVITY OR SINFUL HABITS

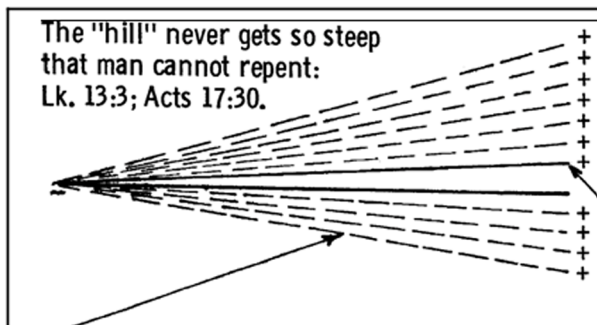
"I find then the principle (or law) that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. . . Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" (Ro. 7:21, 24).

Act of will in repentance, terminating the life of sin: I Th. 1:9-10; I Pe. 2:25.



The Apostle Paul not only experienced wonderful deliverance from his past intense concentration upon religious accomplishments as the means of great pride and public adoration (Phil. 3:4-7), but acknowledged himself to be a happy slave of his Lord and Savior in tender love and affection: Ro. 6:2, 6-7, 14, 17-18, 22; 7:6; 8:2, 3-4, 10, 37; I Co. 11:1; Ga. 2:20; Phil. 4:9.

DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL DEPRAVITY AND INCREASED BONDAGE WITH INDULGENCE



Moral depravity begins at age of accountability, as selfish choice is made against moral enlightenment, bondage increasing as self-gratification is persisted in.

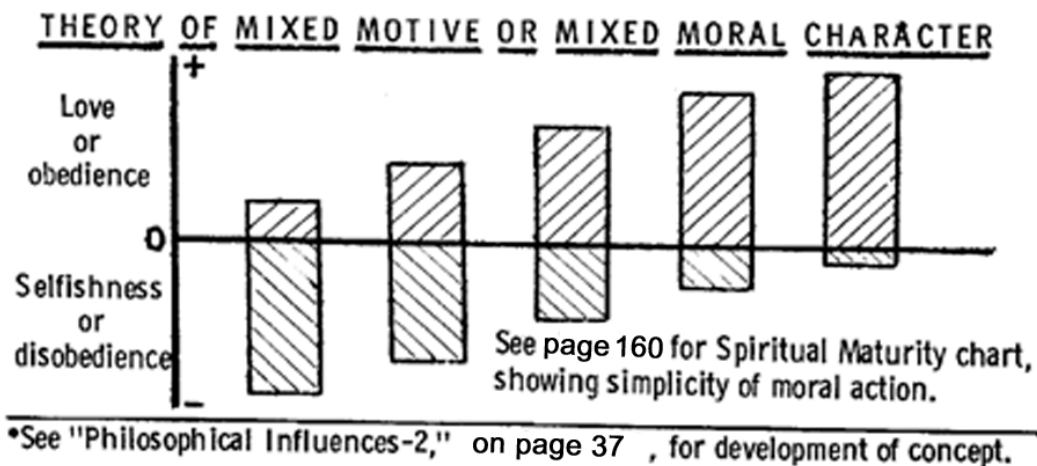
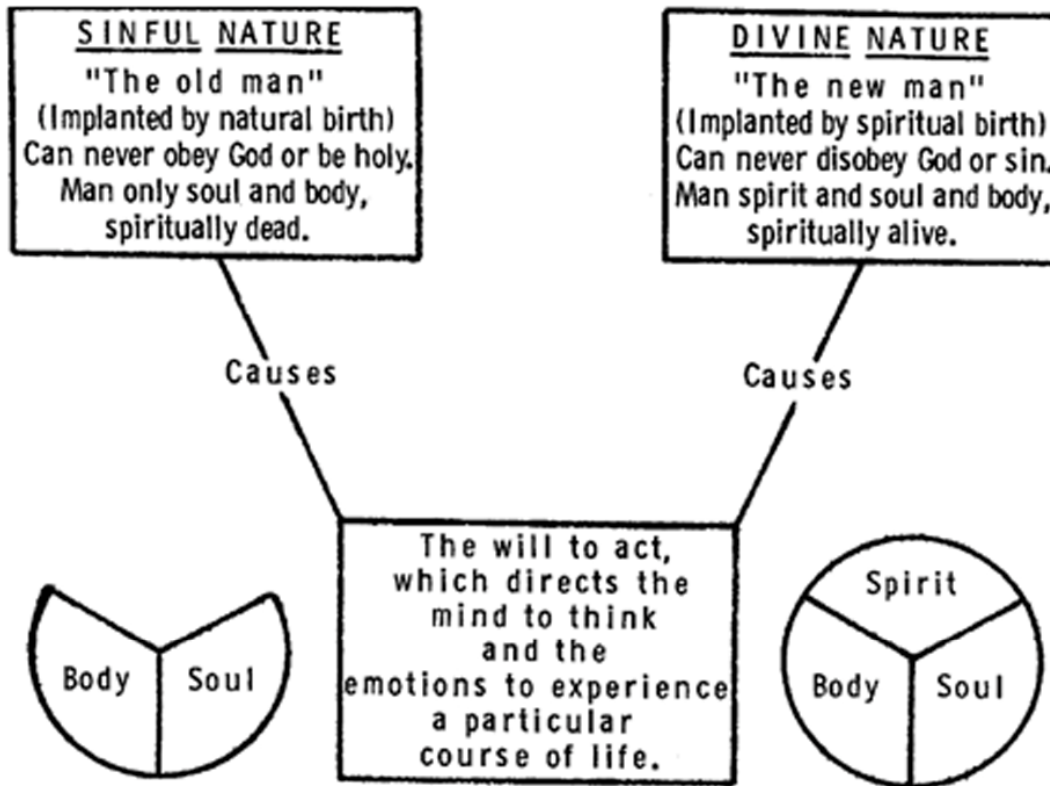
Physical depravity at birth, tending toward self-sympathy, self-cultivation, and self-gratification.

Blessed experiences with our loving Shepherd, "I know My own, and My own know Me" (Jn. 10:14); and "in the comfort of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:31), makes it progressively easier to keep ourselves "in the love of God" (Jude 21). We are satisfied with Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (Jn. 6:68).

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THE TRICHOTOMY DUAL NATURE CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY*

"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Th. 5:23).



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VIII. ENDLESS MISERY AND TORMENT

Endless misery and torment in woeful separation from God and holiness.

A. **THE NATURE OF THIS PUNISHMENT** is described by the most solemn and agonizing words:

1. Death: Eze. 18:30-32; Ro. 6:23.
2. Separation from God: Mt. 7:21-23; II Th. 1:9-10.
3. Continued sinfulness: Re. 22:11.
4. Darkness: Mt. 8:11-12; Jude 12-13.
5. Perish or lost: Mk. 8:34-37; Jn. 3:15-16.
6. Destruction or perdition: Mt. 7:13-14.
7. Wrath of God: Jn. 3:36; Re. 14:10.
8. Punished or punishment: Mt. 25:46; II Th. 1:9; He. 10:29; II Pe. 2:9.
9. Avenger: I Th. 4:6.
10. Avenge: Re. 6:10.
11. Retribution: II Th. 1:8.
12. Torment: Lk. 16:23, 28; Re. 14:10-11.
13. Agony: Lk. 16:24-25.
14. Tormented with fire and brimstone: Re. 14:10.
15. Tribulation and distress: Ro. 2:9.
16. No rest day and night: Re. 14:11.
17. Weeping and gnashing of teeth: Mt. 8:12; 22:13.
18. Figuratively like the gnawing of worms and fire: Is. 66:24; Mk. 9:48.
19. Unquenchable fire: Mk. 9:43.
20. A resurrection of judgment: Jn. 5:28-29.

B. **THE FINAL ABODE OF THOSE NOT RECONCILED TO GOD**, is called in Scripture:

1. Place of torment: Lk. 16:28.
2. Sheol or underworld, the region of the dead: Ps. 9:17.
3. Hades, a similar New Testament word, an intermediate state: Lk. 16:23.
4. Tartarus, a supposed subterranean region, the underworld: II Pe. 2:4.
5. Gehenna or hell, a valley near Jerusalem where refuse was dumped and a constant fire kept, with its vermin, first used by the Lord Jesus: Mt. 5:29-30.
6. The lake of fire: Re. 20:14-15.

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C. **THE FINAL STATE OF THOSE NOT RECONCILED TO GOD.** Scripture words appear to portray an awful remorse of conscience and conscious spiritual torment, rather than actual physical conditions.

1. "Fire" is used figuratively: Mk. 9:49; Lk. 12:49; Ro. 12:20; I Co. 3:13, 15.
2. "Tree" and "chaff" are figurative, so "fire" must be also: Mt. 3:10, 12.
3. If "fire" is literal, so must "worms." "darkness." "cut . . . in pieces," "lake that burns with fire and brimstone" be literal: Mk. 9:48; Mt. 8:12; 24:51; Re. 21:8.
4. The resurrection bodies of the unjust would appear to have immortal characteristics like those of the just, and not be subject to physical fire: Jn. 5:28-29; Re. 20:11-15.
5. The rich man "in agony in this flame" was a disembodied personality, so his memory and conscience must have created the agony: Lk. 16:22-25.
6. Satan and evil angels, for whom hell was created (Mt. 25:41), are spiritual beings with no physical existence to be affected by literal fire.

D. **THE AGONIES IN PERDITION OF THOSE NOT RECONCILED TO GOD,** will be in exact proportion to personal guilt, as openly declared in the judgment.

1. Every one shall be judged only for his own sin, according to the spiritual enlightenment to which he was exposed: Is. 3:10-11; Eze. 18:4, 20; Lk. 12:47-48; Ro. 2: 5-6, 11-12, 16; 14:10-12; II Co. 5:10; Ga. 6:7-8; Re. 20:12-13. "Nature" in Ep. 2:3 is a way of living, as Ep. 5:3-6; Col. 3:5-6.
2. The guilt of one shall never be transferred or imputed to another: De. 24:16; II Chr. 25:4; Eze. 18:4, 20.
3. Romans 5:12-19 does not establish the dogma of the literal imputation of Adam's sin to all his posterity, but merely affirms in a parallelism that just as Adam's sin was the occasion, not cause, of the voluntary disobedience of all men, so Christ is the occasion, not cause, of the salvation offered to all men. "Cause" is the reason for an action, "occasion" the opportunity or circumstance for an action. The whole of mankind are referred to on both sides of the parallelism.
 - a. The article "the" inserted before "many" in verses 15 and 19 adds emphasis, referring to the same group, all men, on each side.
 - b. "All men" appears on both sides in verse 18, obviously all-inclusive.
 - c. Verse 12 simply makes the statement that "death did pass through unto all men because (or for the reason that) all did sin." The climactic action Greek aorist tense is used in both verbs, simply stating the fact that all men have committed sin and thus began to experience spiritual death.
 - d. The same verb and tense appears in Ro. 3:23, which may be rendered: "For all did sin and are (continually) coming short of the glory of God."
 - e. In Ro. 3:12 we have an aorist tense with a different similar verb: "All did turn aside from (the right way), together they were made useless (or, did become depraved)."
 - f. These verses simply narrate the tragic fact that all men have followed Adam's example and have chosen to live supremely selfish lives and thus are under guilt for their own sin.

E. **THE DURATION OF THIS AGONIZING PUNISHMENT IS ETERNAL OR UNENDING:** Dan. 12:1-3; Mt. 25:46; Re. 14:11.

The same words are used to assert this tragic fact as are used to declare the endless glory and existence of the

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Godhead and the endless happiness of all those dying in a state of reconciliation to God. Man's ability and responsibility, and, therefore, man's guilt, is to be evaluated by viewing the dreadful eternal consequences pronounced by a loving and just God.

CHAPTER 7

The truth about **MAN'S RECONCILIATION TO GOD**

"We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (II Co. 5:20).

"God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us." (Ep. 2:4).

"Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith . . . for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Ro. 3:24-26).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I Jn. 1:9).

The verb, to reconcile, conveys the idea of a change or an exchange, to change one thing for another, thus to cause one thing to cease and another to take its place; to reconcile those at variance, to adjust a difference, to restore to favor. The verb has a preposition, with a root meaning "down" prefixed to it, evidently for emphasis of completeness or a revolutionary change in relationship. Examples of the verb and the noun are: Ro. 5:10-11; II Co. 5:18-20.

I. THE OBJECTIVE OF MAN'S RECONCILIATION

How complete must salvation be? Can a God of love and wisdom undertake a partial and inconclusive reconciliation? Can God make plans for less than total capitulation and transformation of man's whole inner personality to do and experience His blessed will?

A. THE HAPPY GOD-MAN RELATIONSHIP OF LOVE AND KINDNESS MUST BE RESTORED.

Man was created, not to live in isolation, but to live his life in most intimate relationship with his Creator and Benefactor (Col. 1:16; Acts 17:28). Man must be brought back into blessed "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" in the fullness of joy (I Jn. 1:3-4).

B. THE HAPPY MAN-TO-MAN RELATIONSHIP OF LOVE AND KINDNESS MUST ALSO BE RESTORED.

Man must be delivered from the state of being "hateful, hating one another" (Tit. 3:3), if happiness is to prevail. "The one who hates his brother is in the darkness" (I Jn. 2:11). Love to God and hate for one's fellowmen can never coexist (I Jn. 4:20). If we are in a relationship of love to God, we will also be to our fellowmen (I Jn. 5:1).

II. WHAT MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVE OF RECONCILIATION

By "means" we understand "that through which, or by the help of which, an end is accomplished." The end to be attained is a restoration of blessed fellowship with God and man, for which we were brought into being. Certain things must be brought to pass to make this end possible. Under this heading we view what must take place, rather than what

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the detailed problems are or how they are to be solved.

A. THE GUILT OF PAST SIN MUST BE FORGIVEN. Ep. 1:7.

1. God as a meticulously righteous Ruler intends to bring absolute justice to every moral being in exact accordance with his moral choices and the moral light he possessed when such choices were made: Mt. 12:36; Ro. 2:16; 14:12; Ga. 6:7; He. 9:27.
2. Only past sins can be forgiven, since God as a Moral Governor can deal only with sins that have actually been committed: II Co. 5:10.
3. Every sin must bring condemnation and defilement, and call forth repentance, confession, forgiveness, and cleansing, with a fresh recourse to the atoning death of Christ: I Jn. 1:9; 2:1-2. The Scriptures say nothing about the present forgiveness of future sins. Future sins must be dealt with as they occur.
4. Forgiveness of past sins can never be merited by anything we do in the future, since we can do no more than fulfill our present moral requirements: De. 6:5; Mt. 22:37-40. All forgiveness must be strictly all of grace.

B. THE SELFISH PURPOSE OF LIFE MUST BE TERMINATED: Lk. 13:3, 5.

1. Man has forsaken truth in his sinful rebellion and is living in moral darkness, refusing enlightenment: Ro. 1:25; Jn. 3:19-21.
2. Man must be persuaded to renounce all conscious rebellion against God and all self-defense, and "come to the knowledge of the truth": I Tim. 2:4.
3. It is impossible to be reconciled to God unless one is willing to begin living a life that is agreeable and pleasing to God: II Co. 6:17-18.

C. THE INNER DEFILEMENT OF SIN MUST BE REMEDIED: Tit. 3:5.

1. Every sinful indulgence has added to our depravity and bondage which has permeated our entire personality: Mk. 7:21-23; I Pe. 2:11; Tit. 3:3; Ep. 2:3; II Co. 7:1; Ro. 1:24; Tit. 1:15; I Jn. 3:20.
2. The devastating consequences of sin, that have become a part of man's personality, must be healed or purified so that a new blessed relationship with God and man might become a reality: Mt. 5:8; He. 12:14; Acts 15:8-9; I Co. 6:11; Tit. 1:15; I Jn. 3:3, 21.
3. This transformation takes place as we break down our hearts before God so that the Holy Spirit can relive before our minds the awful sufferings of heart that the Savior experienced on the Cross for our sins: Ro. 6:6-7; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; He. 10:22.

D. THIS TRANSFORMED LIFE MUST BE SUSTAINED: Col. 1:23.

The Scriptures say nothing about the forgiveness of sins presently being indulged in, nor about the present forgiveness of future sins.

1. Every sin brings guilt and condemnation in the righteous moral government of God, "for there is no partiality with God" (Ro. 2:11): Ex. 32:30-33; I Chr. 28:9; Eze. 18:24, 26; 33:12-13; Mt. 5:22; 18:32-35; Jn. 5:14; Acts 8:18-24; Ro. 8:13; Ga. 6:7-8; He. 10:26-29; 12:14-17; Jas. 1:15 (12-16); 5:9; II Pe. 2:20-22; Re. 3:5; 22:18-19.
2. It was this alarm over the dangerous consequences of every sin that brought forth the First Epistle of John—"that you may not sin" (2:1). The risen and ascended Savior was needed as an advocate "if anyone sins!"
3. Man must be induced and empowered to live in victory over sin, therefore, in order that he may remain free from condemnation by forgiveness: I Jn. 2:17. Measures of reconciliation must be taken that will enable the

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Savior to "save His people from (or away from, implying separation, not in) their sins" (Mt. 1:21). In a real sense repentant sinners "have died with Christ" so that they may "also live with Him" (Ro. 6:8).

E. PREPARATIONS FOR HEAVEN CAN ONLY BE MADE IN THIS LIFE: Re. 21:27.

1. Peace and love will characterize heaven, the main feature being unending fellowship with the Godhead: Jn. 14:2-3; I Jn. 4:16-18.
2. Death introduces all into one of two states, separated by "a great chasm fixed," for "it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment": Lk. 16:26; He. 9:27.
3. Sin is a matter of the "heart" and not the body, and thus death does not introduce any change in moral character: Mk. 7:21-23.
4. The means of reconciliation, therefore, must be such that rebellion is subdued, or this rebellion would introduce conflict into the serenity of heaven. This must be accomplished and sustained in this life: II Co. 6:2. From these many considerations, it is overwhelmingly evident that the reconciliation that must be accomplished is not a technical proceeding taking place somewhere in the domain of God, independent of our vital consciousness, but one that demands entrance into the very "warp and woof" of human personality.

III. WHAT ARE NOT THE PROBLEMS TO BE OVERCOME BY RECONCILIATION?

A. IT IS NOT THE UNWILLINGNESS OF GOD THE FATHER TO FORGIVE SIN WITHOUT FULL VINDICTIVE SATISFACTION.

Strictly speaking, to require full vindictive satisfaction for a wrong committed is to be unwilling to forgive. The two concepts are opposites. To vindicate is to lay claim to, to assert a right to, to avenge, to recover by legal process.⁹ On the other hand, to forgive is to give up all claims against one on account of an injury, without any thought of compensation or retaliation. It is to remit or pardon freely all guilt charged against one for his conduct out of pure love to the one being pardoned.

A voluntary disposition of mercy and forgiveness prevails equally among all the Members of the Godhead. The Godhead are without personal vindictiveness. The problems of forgiveness are not personal but governmental. God does not require an exact payment for sin to satisfy retributive justice, but only requires that an atonement shall satisfy public justice and all the problems of a full and free reconciliation in His government of moral beings.¹⁰

1. Old Testament descriptions of the forgiveness of sins:
 - a. To pardon, conveying the idea of a readiness to forgive: Ps. 86:5; Is. 55:7.
 - b. To blot out, wipe off, erase or abolish: Is. 43:25; 44:22.
 - c. To clear (the guilty): Ex. 20:7.
 - d. To be pleased with, to accept, hence to pardon: Is. 40:2.
 - e. To bear, to bear anyone's sin in forgiveness, to expiate by atonement: Ps. 32:1 ("forgiven"), 5; Is. 53:12 ("bore").
 - f. To forgive through an atonement, with the idea of cleansing away: Le. 17:11 ("atonement"); Is. 6:7 ("forgiven" or atoned for).

⁹ See "Judicial justification," the Satisfaction theory of the Atonement.

¹⁰ See Governmental theory of the Atonement ("Historical Opinions-3," end of section).

- g. "Behind Thy back" (Is. 38:17); "will remember no more" (Jer. 31:34); "cast . . . into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19).
2. New Testament descriptions of the forgiveness of sins:
- a. Forgiveness or pardon, a sending sins away from one's self, or letting them go as if not committed: Lk. 24:47; Acts 26:18; Ep. 1:7; I Jn. 1:9.
 - b. Loosing or loosing from: Mt. 18:27 ("released"); Re. 1:5.
 - c. Joy and gladness or cheerfulness in the bestowal of special favors or mercy: Lk. 15:5, 32; Ep. 2:5 ("grace"); 4:32 ("forgiving" graciously); Ro. 6:23 ("free gift").
 - d. Passing over, or a letting pass beside: Ro. 3:25 ("passed over").
 - e. To blot, to obliterate or erase: Acts 3:19 ("wiped away"). There are no evidences from any of these blessed passages that anything is required to render the Godhead mercifully disposed to grant free pardon to repentant sinners, rather a "being rich in mercy" (Ep. 2:4).
3. Old Testament words setting forth God's willingness to forgive, by ascribing:
- a. Holiness of character for our veneration and imitation: Le. 11:44-45.
 - b. Love, which moves God to defer judgment and extend pardon: Jer. 31:3.
 - c. Goodness and kindness, an inner voluntary disposition: Ps. 86:5.
 - d. Graciousness, a stooping in kindness to an inferior: Neh. 9:17.
 - e. Tender compassion, a God motivated by delicacy and affection: Ps. 86:15.
 - f. Mercy, the outflow of the tender spirit of compassion: Lam. 3:22.
 - g. Long-suffering, a slowness to anger or patience under provocation: Nah. 1:3.
4. New Testament words setting forth God's willingness to forgive, by ascribing:
- a. Holiness of character, for our veneration and imitation so must be free from all vindictiveness and retaliation: I Jn. 1:5, 7; I Pe. 1:16; Re. 4:8.
 - b. Love, or impartial good-will, God's essential moral character: I Jn. 4:8.
 - c. Philanthropy, to love to mankind expressing God's fondness: Tit. 3:4.
 - d. Goodness, moving God to bestow many blessings: Mt. 7:11.
 - e. Good, in the sense of moral beauty: Jn. 10:11; He. 6:5.
 - f. Kindness, manifesting itself in kind actions: Lk. 6:35; Ro. 2:4.
 - g. Grace, involving joy and gladness in manifesting mercy: Ro. 3:24.
 - h. Cheerfulness or graciousness, in providing an atonement for sin: Lk. 18:13.
 - i. Compassion, an emotional yearning for man's salvation: Mt. 9:36; Jas. 5:11.
 - j. Pity, a mournful concern over man's tragic state: Ro. 12:1 (I Tim. 2:4).
 - k. Mercy, a fellow-feeling with the misery and woe of mankind: Ep. 2:4.

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- l. Sympathy, a sharing in our weakness: He. 4:15.
- m. Comfort, a calling to one's side to receive strength and blessing: II Co. 1:3 (the Father); I Jn. 2:1 (the Lord Jesus); Jn. 14:16 (the Holy Spirit).
- n. Patience, a toleration of injury and abuse that good may come: Ro. 15:5.
- o. Forbearance, a holding back or delaying of punishment: Ro. 2:4.
- p. Long-suffering, a slowness to anger in avenging wrongs or injuries: Ro. 2:4; II Pe. 3:9.

B. IT IS NOT THAT THE MERCIFUL DISPOSITION OF THE GODHEAD CANNOT OVERCOME THE EXTENT OF MAN'S SIN OR THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF MERIT.

If periods of selfish or sinful indulgence interrupted longer periods of love and virtue, or even if periods of love and virtue interrupted longer periods of selfishness and sin, then there would be less to deal with. There would be periods of moral attractiveness which would make it easier for God to deal with the disagreeable periods. There would be some assets which would help God to deal with the liabilities.

- 1. All sin can be resolved into a voluntary selfish purpose of heart: Jer. 17:9-10; Mk. 7:21; I Jn. 3:4.
- 2. All must choose one of two supreme purposes of life: Jn. 3:19-21; Ro. 8:6.
- 3. Opposite choices cannot exist at the same time: Mt. 6:22-24; Ro. 6:16-18.
- 4. All have persisted in a selfish purpose of life without interruptions or suspension, prior to repentance: Is. 64:6; Ro. 3:10-12, 23.
- 5. Yet God is commending "His own love toward us": Ro. 5:8, 10; I Jn. 4:10.

C. IT IS NOT THAT MAN REFUSES TO SEEK GOD IN HUMILITY FOR RECONCILIATION, nor his failure to respond in any sizeable numbers to the tender appeals of the Holy Spirit and the Gospel, that is an insurmountable barrier for the Godhead to overcome. If mankind had sought the face of God, or even responded in sizeable numbers, this would have made it easier for the Godhead to exercise Their great compassion in forgiveness and be induced to long-suffering.

- 1. Man was designed and created to be seeking God for the essence of his life; Is. 55:1-3, 6; Acts 17:27-28. Man never has and is not now seeking after God to be restored to Divine favor: Ge. 6:5; Ps. 53:2-4; Is. 64:7; Mt. 23:37; Ro. 3:11.
- 2. Comparatively few are responding to the great love and mercy which has been manifested: Is. 30:11; 53:1; Lk. 13:23-24.
- 3. Yet the kindness and mercy of God persists on with great long-suffering, gently rapping at man's heart door and seeking admission: De. 30:19-20; Is. 1:18; Re. 3:20. Our esteem. of the Divine love and mercy must climb still higher in view of these facts.

D. IT IS NOT THAT MAN IS UNABLE TO REPENT OR RESPOND TO GOD'S MERCY, and that such an inability would require some special means of reconciliation. Some have totally denied man's ability to repent or respond to the persuasive grace of God. Others have denied that man possesses any such ability but add that God graciously provides man with enabling power.

- 1. Scripture speaks of the will or heart as the source of all moral actions: I Chr. 28:9; Prov. 4:23; Mk. 7:18-23; Acts 8:21; He. 4:12-13.

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2. Scripture addresses man as possessing the ability and responsibility of self-decision: De. 11:26-28; 30:15-20; Ro. 6:16-18; Re. 22:17.
3. Scripture commands "that all men everywhere should repent" and nowhere states that man is unable to do so: Is. 55:7; Eze. 18:30-32; Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31; 20:21, 24; 26:20.
4. Therefore, although man's unwillingness to repent and be conquered by the loving mercy of God is a monumental problem that God has not been able to solve, man's natural ability is not for he painfully possesses this. We are happy, therefore, to be able to conclude, with the profoundest reverence and worship, that a voluntary disposition of mercy and forgiveness does prevail equally among all the Members of the Godhead. We must look elsewhere than the inner disposition of the Godhead in our search for the reasons why profound measures of atonement have had to be taken so that sinners might be moved to repentance, be forgiven, and be reconciled to the loving heart of God.

JUDICIAL JUSTIFICATION:

ADMINISTRATION OF ABSOLUTE JUSTICE RATHER THAN FORGIVENESS

Demands the execution of the full penalty of every transgression, the discharge of guilt only by the full punishment of a substitute in every detail. Provides no lessening of punishment in the moral world—the same sum total. Insists upon absolute retaliation or vindictive satisfaction through a literal transfer of every iota of guilt to a substitute. Demands that an absolutely virtuous standing be provided through a literal imputation of the moral character of the substitute, separate from state. All of which must have been done before the sinful acts were done, in those being saved since the Cross, thus introducing grave complications and requiring that such an atonement be made only for those who shall actually be saved in the course of time—a general atonement would save everyone.¹¹

TOTAL DEBT TO BE PAID FOR THOSE BEING SAVED:

Total quantity of guilt times eternal or infinite duration of time. Or, the sum total of all the sinful actions of all those involved in the payment times the eternal or infinite duration of punishment pronounced against sin. If A owes B \$100, and C pays B \$100 in behalf of A, then A owes B nothing.

DURATION OF SUFFERING IN THE ATONEMENT NOT INFINITE IN TIME:

Our blessed Lord took upon Himself a voluntary suffering by giving Himself, which cannot be thought of in terms of quantity: Jn. 6:51; 10:17-18; He. 7:26-27. While our blessed Lord bore "the sin of the world" during His lifetime (Jn. 1:29), the climax of suffering on the Cross crushed out His holy heart unto death, after a brief duration of time—the Savior did not die of the crucifixion. In no sense could this be the equivalent of an eternal duration of time. Some have said that there is an infinity in the equation of suffering because of Christ's Infinite Deity, or that Infinite Quantity times limited time equals specific quantity times Infinite duration. But our blessed Lord suffered and died in His humanity—not in His Deity: Ga. 4:4-6; He. 2:9; 10:5,10.

CHRIST'S DEATH WAS A SUBSTITUTED SUFFERING—NOT AN EXACT EQUIVALENT:

¹¹ See "Historical Opinions-211 (end of section) for diagram and further discussion.

The atonement of Christ was a profound measure that would solve all the problems of reconciliation, so that God "might be just (to all His obligations as a righteous Moral Governor) and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Ro. 3:26)

FORGIVENESS IS MOST COMMONLY REFERRED TO IN OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS: Ps. 32:1, 5; 86:5; Lk. 24:47; Acts 26:18; Ep. 1:7; I Jn. 1:9. The Lord Jesus used forgiveness (Mt. 9:2, 6; Lk. 7:47-50) and justification (Lk. 18:13-14) interchangeably, also Paul (Acts 13:38-39). Thus "justification" is an explanation of the Divine mode of forgiveness through the Atonement, "to demonstrate His righteousness" (Ro. 3:25)

IV. WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS TO BE OVERCOME BY RECONCILIATION?

They appear to be fourfold:

GOVERNMENTAL—The sin-prevention problem in the free exercise of mercy: Ro. 3:26; Ecc. 8:11.

PERSONAL—The God-ignorance and confidence problem: Jn. 17:3; Is. 30:11; Ro. 1:28; I Co. 2:8.

PREPARATORY—The hypocrisy-pride problem; how can man be awakened from the totally false opinion of his own importance: Ro. 12:3; Ep. 5:14; I Pe. 5:5.

TRANSFORMATIVE—The defilement and renewal problem: Tit. 1:15; 3:5.

The atonement of Christ was not made for God alone, nor was it made for man alone, but to answer the problems in restoring a ruptured God-man relationship in all that is involved. God and man must be viewed together in an intimate relationship if we are to comprehend the problems of reconciliation. The problem was not with God as an offended party requiring vindictive satisfaction, as we have seen, but with God as a loving Moral Governor who purposes to do justice to all His moral subjects.

God will treat all moral beings with perfect rightness (De. 32:4; Dan. 9:14; Jn. 17:25; Ro. 14:17). God is said to be "faithful and righteous" in the forgiveness of sins (I Jn. 1:9). In Romans 3:24-26 it is twice said that the atonement of Christ was necessary "to demonstrate His righteousness" in the free pardon of repentant sinners. The word "demonstration" signifies a manifestation, a public declaration, a showing forth or a proof of God's righteous method in the administration of forgiveness, "that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." Thus "justification" is an explanation of the Divine mode of forgiveness through the Atonement.

A. **GOD MUST BE JUST TO HIS MORAL GOVERNMENT**- In providing such an effective deterrent to sin, that the enforcement of moral government shall not in any way be weakened when free pardon is extended to the guilty under certain conditions.

1. Man was designed and created to regulate himself by free choice under a moral government: Ge. 1:26-27; 2:16-17; De. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; Is. 1:19-20; Jer. 21:8; Jn. 5:40; 7:17; Ro. 6:16-18; Re. 3:20. Man was endowed with the abilities of personality, has been exposed to moral enlightenment, and subject to endless persuasion. Man can be appealed to but not directly controlled in his moral choices.
2. The incentive to or enforcement of right choices is to be achieved by pronounced consequences, without any favoritism: De. 7:9-11; 11:26-28; 30:15-18; Is. 3:10-11; Jer. 18:8; Ro. 2:6-11; Ga. 6:7-8. The primary purpose of punishment is not to reform the offender, but the protection of society in the prevention of crime. Punishment is a public declaration of the fact that disobedience and rebellion against God will not be tolerated, and thus becomes a barrier to all who are considering the ways of lawlessness and non-compliance.
3. Whenever sin is forgiven, its consequences are eliminated, thus weakening the enforcement of moral government: Ecc. 8:11; Dan. 5:31-6:23. Every pardoned criminal goes forth to proclaim to the world that crime

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may be indulged in without suffering the penalty that has been pronounced. This possibility of escape lets down the barrier to others, who are thereby weakened in their moral stand. Daniel could not be pardoned because no substituted measure was found to uphold the public welfare if an exception were to be made in the enforcement of the law. The strength of their government was that laws were not compromised (Dan. 6:12).

4. If free pardon is to be extended to penitent sinners, some great measure must be substituted for the punishment of sinners that will uphold the moral government of God at least equally as well as the pronounced consequences would have done. God must be just to all His obligations as the responsible Moral Governor. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" (Ge. 18:25). God has declared: "Everyone shall be put to death for his own sin". (De. 24:16). "The person who sins will die" (Eze. 18:20). Can God now reverse His declaration to those who repent and say: "The person who sins will now live?" Without dire consequences to His government and misrepresentations of His own moral character? Some profound governmental measure is required.

B. GOD MUST BE JUST TO HIMSELF AS MORAL GOVERNOR—In revealing the unspeakable grief and extreme displeasure that the Godhead have experienced because of man's rebellion against a loving rulership and his energetic persistence in sin.

1. Salvation or reconciliation is to know God in reality by experience: Jn. 17:3; II Pe. 1:4. God and man must have a person-to-person knowledge of each other. Salvation apart from a realization of the true situation as it exists is an impossibility. To be saved is "to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4). Certainly the greatest truth is to understand the inner disposition and reactions of the Godhead towards man's rebellion.
2. God knows man with absolute penetration and needs no further enlightenment: Jn. 2:25; He. 4:13.
3. But man has a totally erroneous concept of God's inner being, as previously mentioned: Is. 30:11; Ro. 1:28; I Co. 2:8. Man thinks that because God has been so long-suffering and patient in judging sinners, that He does not hate sin very much and has not been very much disturbed by it. The Apostle Peter was inspired to write to such misinformed scoffers (II Pe. 3:3-9). This misunderstanding would be multiplied in the free pardon of sinners and be totally unacceptable.
4. Something must be done, therefore, to manifest the grief of the Godhead over sin, the unchangeable and unalterable intense hatred that God constantly experiences over sin, and the righteous wrath that arises in the Divine Being over man's continued rebellion, which must result in judgment and eternal punishment in the fulfillment of Divine responsibility.¹²

C. GOD MUST BE JUST TO MAN'S HYPOCRISY—In destroying all pride and bringing man to recognize the truth of his moral relations and the profound guilt of his sin as deserving of eternal punishment.

1. Man has utterly lost all true perspective of his life in its eternal relations to God and to his fellowmen: Mt. 6:2, 5, 16; 22:15-18; 23:13, 28, 33; Jn. 3:19-20; Acts 7:51; Ro. 1:18, 21-23, 25, 28-32; 2:5; I Co 6:9; Ep. 2:1-3; 4:17-19; 5:8; Tit. 3:3; Jas. 4:4; I Jn. 1:6; 2:11, 16; Re. 3:17.

In man's attempt to silence his conscience, he has tried to falsify his mind as to his own importance. He cannot choose to live supremely for himself with any kind of a true concept of the austere greatness of God and his own relative smallness. He must thrust out the evidence of the true God-man and man-man perspective, and thus everything he does is done in the darkness of supreme selfishness.

2. God can only reconcile and have fellowship with one who is in a state of truth, or with one who is willing to have an intelligent and submissive attitude of love toward God and towards his fellowmen: Ps. 138:6; Is. 66:2;

¹² See "Moral Influences of Old Testament Sacrifices," on page 88 for deep and solemn revelations of Divine reactions to man's sinful rebellion manifested.

Mt. 7:21-23; 23:12; Jn. 3:21; Ro. 2:4; II Th. 2:10; I Tim. 2:4; He. 12:9; Jas. 4:6; I Pe. 5:5; I Jn. 2:17. If God would increase the knowledge of an un-humbled intellect by revelation of Himself and His truth, He would be contributing toward a greater distortion of such a one's opinion of himself (I Co. 8:1). Or, God would be helping such a sinner to become a still greater sinner.

3. Some drastic measure is necessary to awaken man from the utter confusion of his voluntary moral darkness and tear down the false structure of pride or self-importance: Ep. 5:14. Truth rejected can never be recovered by self-effort; hypocrisy and pride can never be self-deflated. Humility is not something we claim to have attained; it is something we seek more of when we have it.

D. GOD MUST BE JUST TO MAN'S MORAL FREEDOM—In providing a means to be used by the Holy Spirit in purifying the innermost being of the repentant sinner and in inducing him to live a new spiritual life through faith. Man is a unified personality, created in "the image of God." Man has not lost any of his faculties through his rebellion, but has completely distorted and defiled them and needs a complete rejuvenation. Man cannot be regenerated or controlled by sheer force or by Divine omnipotence, nor by some implanted instinct, but only by the application of appropriate means.

1. In the present age of God's special blessings, the Triune Godhead propose to transform completely the inner personality of the repentant sinner: Jn. 1:13; 3:3-8; II Co. 5:17; Ep. 2:10; 3:3-6; 4:24; Tit. 3:5; He. 12:10; II Pe. 1:4.
2. This great change is a moral change, or a complete transformation of man's whole created being, in which the subject himself has an active part: Eze. 18:31; Acts 15:8-9; Jas. 1:18; I Pe. 1:22-23.
3. Some means must be brought into existence, therefore, that both the Holy Spirit and the repentant sinner can use in this complete inner renovation of personality which has become so distorted: Tit. 1:15.
4. This transformed life must be sustained and thus there must be a new living spiritual force for daily living: Ro. 5:9-10; 7:4; 8:3-4; Col. 1:27.

V. WHAT MUST BE THE NATURE OF THE MEANS OF RECONCILIATION

God the Father desires man to receive the greatest possible manifestation of His love (Ro. 8:32). There appears to be certain requirements that have to be met if these glorious mercies and privileges were to be bestowed upon man:

1. The means of reconciliation must consist in a series of unlovely events, filled with the awe of great grief. They must have the same sobering effect upon the subjects partaking and upon the moral universe as the literal execution of the pronounced penalty. Like must be substituted for like.
2. This series of unlovely events must be of great dignity and distinction. They represent the dealings of God with man and thus must have Divine dignity. The position and prominence of the sufferer determines the extent of its influence.
3. Must be within the area of man's direct consciousness and understanding. It is man who must be everlastingly impressed. The series of substituted events must be as well and as universally understood as the consequences that they are to replace.
4. Must be of universal application, since "there is no partiality with God." God can have no selected favorites as long as He is love and universally benevolent (Acts 10:34; Ro. 2:11; I Tim. 2:4; II Pe. 3:9). Thus whatever God makes possible, He will make equally possible for all men.
5. Must be marked by simplicity of application. Men of all states of intellectual attainment must be able to comprehend

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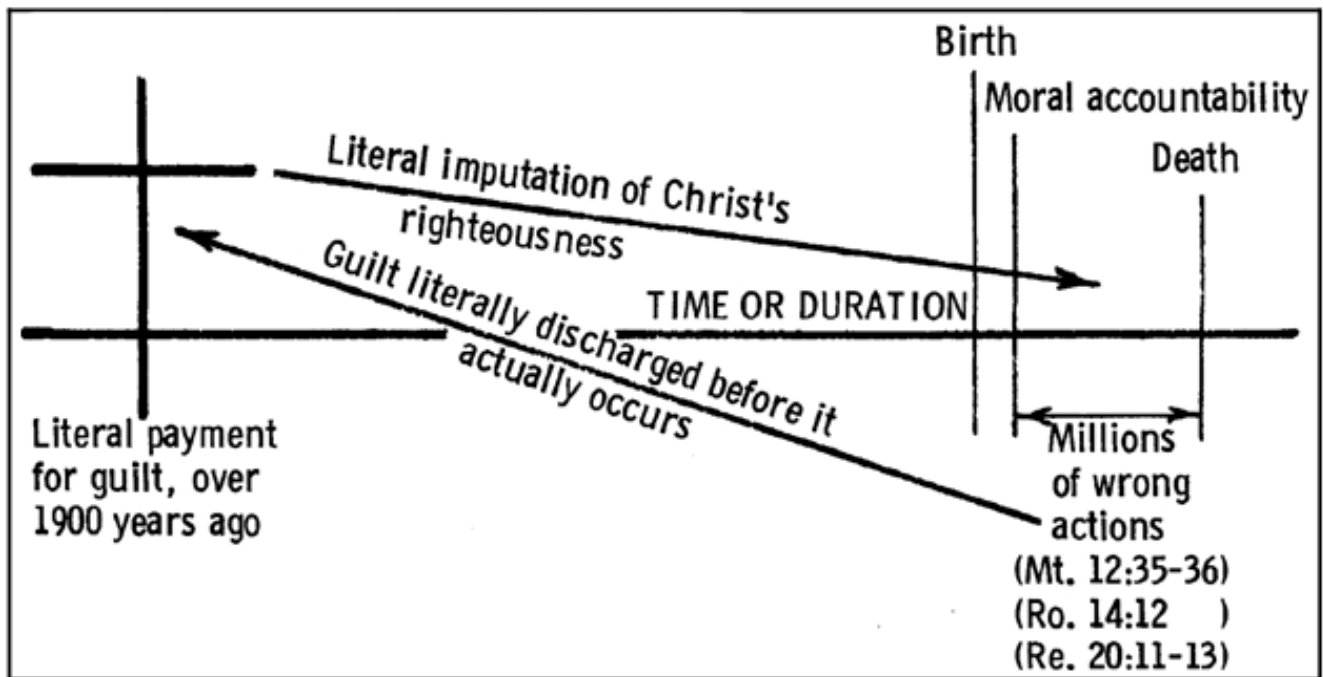
enough of the substituted measures to appropriate them.

HISTORICAL OPINIONS AS TO THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S ATONING DEATH

The Apostles and early Church Fathers presented in simplicity the life and atoning death of Christ as the only way of salvation through repentance and faith, and did not concentrate on developing scientific statements on how this takes place. It appears that we can group the theories of the centuries under four main headings:

1. **SATISFACTION THEORY:**— Strictly vicarious and exactly equivalent to man's guilt.
 - A. Satisfaction to Satan, to whom man had chosen to give allegiance and must be liberated by Christ paying to him the ransom price (common from 3rd to 11th centuries): Irenaeus (130?-202?); Origen (185?-254?); Gregory of Nyssa (335-399; Augustine (354-430); Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153).
 - B. Satisfaction to God the Father universally for all mankind, through a sacrificial death of the Divine Logos who had become one with lost humanity: Athanasius (296-373), the great defender of the Deity of Christ. In salvation the goodness of God must act consistent with His truthfulness and honor, which involves the principle of justice. "Christ as man endured death for us, inasmuch as He offered Himself for that purpose to the Father." Man must be freed not only from the penalty of sin, but from sin itself and be quickened into life.
 - C. Satisfaction to the ethical nature or justice of God, which demands absolute legal vindication: Anselm (1033-1109), said to have written the first scientific treatise on the Atonement, 1098. God rightfully demands honor and supremacy which man has refused to give, and thus has incurred a debt to God which can only be paid by punishment or by some substituted satisfaction. The God-man, Jesus Christ, with austere dignity came into our world and by His immaculate conduct and by His obedience to a gruesome suffering of death acquired merit before God which may be imputed to the believer as a perfect judicial standing.
 - D. Satisfaction through a mystical union or a sacrificial bearing of the penalty of sin, providing a "relative satisfaction" as distinguished from an absolute strictly legal satisfaction in the full discharge of guilt, as advocated by Anselm: Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153), a pious and influential monk, typical of the majority of theological leaders from Apostolic times up to Anselm and the Reformation, who followed the descriptive statements of the New Testament without pursuing them to ultimate speculative conclusions.
 - E. Satisfaction to the offended holiness and justice of God through Christ's bearing the full penalty of man's sin in His vicarious death: Luther (1483-1546); Calvin (1509-1564); and early Reformation leaders, who adopted Anselm's principle of strict judicial satisfaction. The entire guilt and punishment that sinners deserve was transferred to Christ, who by His obedience in life and sufferings endured their total penalty so that sin may no longer be imputed or penalty demanded from those for whom He died, or from those who had been elected to be saved from all eternity. "Our sins were transferred to Him by imputation."
 - F. Satisfaction as above, with greater emphasis in early post-Reformation times upon the active righteousness of Christ being imputed to the believer as a perfect positive standing: Lutheran and Reformed (or Calvinistic) Confessions, and the Federal Headship theory developed by Cocceius (1603-1669) and more fully elaborated by Turretin (1623-1687). Under the Covenant of Works, Adam was the federal head of all mankind so his sin and its consequences is legally imputed to all. This somewhat replaced the organic or natural relationship theory of guilt for Adam's sin advanced by Augustine (354-430). Through the Covenant of Grace, the Lord Jesus is the federal Head of those who are to experience salvation, being appointed to bear the full guilt of their sins (Adamic and personal) in an atoning death viewed as His passive obedience. By His active obedience to the full demands of Divine law, He is said to have fulfilled perfectly man's requirements and imputes His righteousness to believers so that it is legally considered to be theirs

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Since in the full development of the satisfaction theory, whatever has been accomplished in the Atonement is an exact equivalent of guilt so that salvation proceeds upon the basis of strict judicial justice, in no understandable way can it be general or made for everyone in the same sense, or all will be saved since God will not demand a double payment for guilt—Christ's and the sinner's. But the sacred Atonement was made for all, with no theological reservations: Jn. 3:16-17; Mk. 16:15-16; II Co. 5:14-15; I Tim. 2:3-6; He. 2:9; I Jn. 2:1-2. The Lord Jesus as the Son of Man was under obligation to obey for Himself, since He was "born under the law" (Ga. 4:4-5). His obedience could not, therefore, be imputed to anyone, but He was free to give His life in atonement since He "committed no sin."

2. **GOVERNMENTAL THEORY:**— The Atonement was necessary to solve the problems of God as a Moral Governor, who lovingly desires to reconcile mankind.
 - A. The sufferings of Christ were necessary to the Divine government, rather than to the Divine nature: Gregory of Nazianzus (330-390). "Is it not plain that the Father received the ransom, not because He Himself required or needed it, but for the sake of the Divine government of the universe, and because man must be sanctified through the incarnation of the Son of God?" He strongly opposed the idea of a ransom paid to Satan, and could not understand why a ransom should be paid to the Father. He could only fall back on the "economy" of God and put forth no theory of satisfaction. Other early writers, like Athanasius, also mentioned God's governmental problems.
 - B. Christ suffered unto death in His human nature, not in His Divine nature, and thus the Atonement was not an infinite value to pay fully for the eternal punishment of sinners, but was graciously accepted by God the Father as sufficient to satisfy Divine justice: Duns Scotus (1265-1308).

In line with the majority of Christian thinkers of the centuries, he held the principle that the Atonement provided a "relative satisfaction" to the justice of God and proposed his theory in opposition to Anselm, who had insisted upon absolute total equivalent satisfaction through an infinite sacrifice. He came to view the Divine will as not

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bound by anything fixed in the Divine nature, but free to decide upon what basis sins could be forgiven.

- C. Christ, the Savior of the world, died for all men and for every man, and His grace is extended to all. His atoning sacrifice is in and of itself sufficient for the redemption of the whole world, and is intended for all by God the Father. The sacrifice of Christ is not the payment of a debt, nor is it a complete satisfaction of justice for sin. It is a Divinely-appointed condition which precedes the forgiveness of sin, just as the death of a lamb or a goat in the Mosaic economy. Christ's sufferings took the place of a penalty, so that His sufferings have the same effect in reconciling God to man, and procuring the forgiveness of sin, that the sinner's endurance of the punishment due to his sins would have had. The sufferings of Christ were not a substituted penalty, but a substitute for a penalty: Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609); Episcopius (1583-1643); Curcellaeus (1586-1659); Limborch (1633-1712); known as Arminianism. Outside Holland, Arminianism exerted considerable influence in France, Switzerland, Germany, England, and America, and hence throughout the world through various denominations, especially Methodism.
- D. God came to be viewed as a benevolent Ruler exercising control over moral beings by good and wise laws designed for mutual happiness of Himself and them. Regulation in a moral government is by means of promised blessings for conformity and penalties of suffering for disobedience. While God in compassionate mercy is willing to forgive or relax His just claims against rebellious moral beings upon evidence of a willingness to cease from rebellion and return to happy submission, He cannot wisely do so without some terrible measure of enlightenment and suffering by a Being of profound dignity. This must demonstrate before all the dreadful nature and consequences of sin and provide an eternal moral force against further indulgence and heart-break to Himself as well as to them: Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), a prominent Dutch jurist and Arminian theologian, who wrote an important book against Socinianism, 1617.
- E. The sufferings and especially the death of Christ were sacrificial, were not the punishment of the law but were equivalent in meaning to it, were representative of it and substituted for it. The demands of the law were not satisfied by it, but the honor of the law was promoted by it as much as this honor would have been promoted by inflicting the legal penalty upon all sinners. The distributive (or vindictive) justice of God was not satisfied by it, but His general (or justice for the public good) as a responsible Moral Governor was perfectly satisfied. The active obedience or holiness of Christ made possible His virtuous death in man's behalf, but is not legally imputed to the believer. Christ's atonement was made for all men in the same sense. It was necessary on God's account to enable Him as a consistent Ruler to fulfill His moral obligations to His subjects, when repentant sinners are pardoned through a commitment of faith (E.A. Park, 1883); New England Theology; Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758); his son (1745-1801); Nathaniel Emmons (1745-1840); Caleb Burge (1782-1838); N.W. Taylor (1786-1858); C. G. Finney (1792-1875); Congregationalists (very extensively); "New School" Presbyterians; several groups of Baptists; other groups and leaders in America and England (called "American Theology"). In the governmental theory, the Atonement is not required by the subjective nature or vindictive justice of God before mercy is extended. It is not God in isolation as the injured party, but rather God as a benevolent Ruler in relationship to His moral creatures, with great problems of reconciliation that require solution. These problems involve man's relation to God in intelligent moral government, as well as some means to convey God's very deep reactions toward sin and His abounding mercy toward man in spite of man's desperate rebellion. Man must be broken down before God in deep respect and penitence in a return to a right attitude towards God's loving regulation before forgiveness can take place. The sacred advent and atonement of Christ, therefore, is not merely a measure to discharge guilt by some calculated equivalent. It is the most profound measure conceivable, with an objective to restore a ruptured God-man relationship in all that is involved. The Atonement was, therefore, general in the absolute sense and legally discharged the guilt of no one.

3. **MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY:**— A manifestation of suffering Divine love was necessary to subdue man's

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rebellion so reconciliation could take place. The life and sufferings of Christ were conceived to be an exhibition of Divine love to reconcile man back to God by breaking down his resistance and drawing him back into a life of fellowship with God. There is no specific necessity of satisfying the Divine nature or the problems of God's moral government. The life and sufferings of the God-Man were intended to exert a moral impression upon a hard and impenitent heart, which is thereby melted into contrition, and then received into favor by the boundless compassion of God (Abelard): Clement (185?-254?) of Alexandria; Peter Abelard (1079-1142) of France, who opposed Anselm; Horace Bushnell (1802-1876), a lawyer and New England pastor. Many liberals in theology of succeeding generations accepted his general opinions without sharing his deep sincerity.

4. **ETHICAL EXAMPLE THEORY:**— Sinful man has been misguided and needed a noble virtuous example to challenge him to a new way of living. If man is going to realize his potential and be reconciled to God, he must repent and reform his ways. For this purpose Jesus Christ was miraculously brought into our world and thus was more than a mere man (Socinianism, 1600's), or was natural born and as a religious genius identified himself with God in special devotion to achieve a unique ministry to mankind (Unitarianism, 1700's). His virtuous and loving conduct in life and in death as a noble martyr showed us how we ought to love God and each other, or become converted and reconciled to God: Laelius Socinus (1525-1562) and his nephew Faustus Socinus (1539-1604), in Poland; Unitarians, who trace their views back through Arius (256-336); and others of humanistic opinion (Christ a mere man).

THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

Case 1:

- The Atonement was a literal or an exact payment for sin.
- All are not being saved through it.
- Therefore, It could not have been made for all.

Case 2:

- The Atonement was a literal or an exact payment for sin.
- It was made for all.
- Therefore, all will be saved through it.

Case 3:

- The Atonement was made for all: Is. 53:6; Lk. 2:10-11; Jn. 1:29; 3:16-17; 6:51; II Co. 5:14-15; I Tim. 2:3-6; Tit. 2:11; He. 2:9; I Jn. 2:2; also Is. 1:18; 45:22; 55:1; Eze. 18:30-32; Mt. 23:37; Mk. 16:15-16; Ro. 2:11; Re. 3:20.
- Only a minority are being saved through it: Ge. 6:5-8; Is. 53:1; Mt. 21:10; Lk. 13:23-24; 23:21; Jn. 5:40; 6:60, 67; 7:7; 16:33; Acts 8:1; 14:22; I Co. 4:13.
- Therefore, it was not a literal or an exact payment for sin.

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CHAPTER 8

The truth about
THE LIFE AND ATONING DEATH OF CHRIST

"We do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone" (He. 2:9).

"Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God" (I Pe. 3:18).

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ep. 1:7).

The problems of reconciliation were temporarily overcome under the Old Covenant in Old Testament times through a sacrificial offering system which God had progressively revealed. Sacrificial offerings had been practiced since the days of Adam and Eve. The full development of the sacrificial system of mercy and worship, along with the Tabernacle and later the Temple with their sacred arrangements, were given through Moses. The prescribed offerings may be classified in a twofold way: First, those offerings which were propitiatory, or for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness of sin and restoration to God. The most solemn great Day of Atonement was to be observed once each year by the whole nation of Israel (Le. 16:1-34). It was to be a time of great mourning for sin (31), with repentance, confession, forgiveness and cleansing. Trespass offerings were for specific guilt or blame which any one incurs (as Le. 5:5-6, 7, 15-16). Secondly, those offerings which expressed communion and fellowship with God: Burnt offerings (Le. 1:3, 10, 14), peace offerings (Le. 7:11-15, 16-17), and grain offerings (Le. 2:1-16).

These sacrificial offerings were designed to make a profound impression upon each individual participating and upon the whole nation Israel. They demonstrated that:

- 1) sin is a dreadfully serious matter against God;
- 2) sin is an offence to God's sense of values with unchanging hatred;
- 3) the realization of guilt and true humiliation was necessary;
- 4) man needed something tangible to bring realization and be an object for faith;
- 5) God has a right to full supremacy and devotion;
- 6) God delights in peaceful fellowship and communion; and
- 7) tithes and offerings to God are a privileged obligation.

See following page for more detailed remarks. It appears from Romans 3:25 that there was an incompleteness of salvation in Old Testament times so that God passed over sins as far as public satisfaction was concerned, looking forward to the full solution of the problems of reconciliation by the advent and atonement of Christ (Le. 17:11; He. 7:19; 10:1, 4, 9, 12). When the Gospel is presented in simplicity in the dynamic of the Holy Spirit, the moral impact of the fulfillment cannot, certainly, be less than the type (I Co. 2:1-5; I Pe. 1:12).

MORAL INFLUENCES OF OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICES

1. **SIN IS A DREADFULLY SERIOUS MATTER AGAINST GOD:** Sin can be forgiven and its penalty waived only through a costly and awe inspiring act of suffering of a substitute, which was only a type of the great coming suffering of the loving Savior (Le. 17:11; He. 9:22; 10:4).
2. **SIN IS AN OFFENSE TO GOD'S SENSE OF VALUES WITH UNCHANGING HATRED:** The dreadful measures that have had to be taken in reconciliation show that God must have an unchanging hatred of all sin and a strong sense of righteousness. All rebellion must be terminated if favor and friendship is to be restored through forgiveness and transformation (Is. 55:6-7; Eze. 18:30-32; Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30).
3. **REALIZATION OF GUILT AND TRUE HUMILIATION WAS NECESSARY:** God insists not only upon repentance from all sin, but also upon realization and true humiliation for sin. The repentant sinner needs to be exposed to strong moral forces to bring about this experience of guilt. To say he repents is not enough. He must be brought to the climax of repentance through the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the broken-hearted love of God manifested in the prescribed sacrifices (Le. 23:26-32), a type of the prophesied sufferings of the coming Savior (I Pe. 1:10-12).
4. **SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS WERE A TANGIBLE OBJECT FOR EXERCISING FAITH:** It was continually stressed that only by bringing the prescribed sacrifices, or a partaking of in a committal of faith with appropriate solemnness, could past sins be forgiven, cleansed away, and its guilt and devastation healed (Le. 16:29-30; He. 9:22).
5. **GOD HAS A RIGHT TO FULL SUPREMACY AND DEVOTION:** This obvious right of our great Creator and Benefactor was stressed in burnt offerings, where the entire sacrifice was to be consumed upon the altar signifying total surrender or consecration to God (Le. 1:17b; I Sam. 7:8-10; Ps. 51:17-19).
6. **GOD DELIGHTS IN PEACEFUL FELLOWSHIP AND COMMUNION:** In the peace offerings, the offerer and his family were permitted to feast on most of the flesh of the offering (Le. 7:15-17), in fellowship and communion with God and with each other (Le. 22:29-33). Peace offerings always followed the other offerings and were used on special occasions of thanksgiving, as in the giving of the Law (Ex. 24:5), the Feast of Pentecost (Le. 23:19), and on special occasions (Nu. 10:10).
7. **TITHES AND OFFERINGS TO GOD ARE A PRIVILEGED OBLIGATION:** Meat or meal and drink offerings, a bloodless offering of fine flour with oil and frankincense, and the drink offering of wine, ordinarily accompanied the animal sacrifices. They suggested the idea of tithes for the bounties of God: "Flour, as the main support of life; oil, the symbol of riches; wine, as the symbol of vigor and refreshment." Great joy can come only through personal sacrifice of our lives to God and to our fellowmen (I Chr. 29:9-22).

I. HOW DID THE ADVENT AND LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS MANIFEST THE GODHEAD AND HOW WAS THE ATONEMENT ACCOMPLISHED?

1. **NO MEDIOCRE OPINION IS POSSIBLE TOWARD JESUS CHRIST:** Jn. 8:23, 24, 58; 1:1.
2. **HIS ADVENT AND SUFFERINGS WERE DETERMINED UPON FROM THE FALL OF MAN AND LONG PROPHESED:** Re. 13:8 (A.V.); Is. 7:14; 52:13 to 53:12; 53:6.
3. **HE WAS BORN WITHOUT A HUMAN FATHER AND WAS DIVINELY ANNOUNCED:** Lk. 1:35; Mt. 1:18-21; 3:2-3, 6, 11, 16-17.

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4. **HIS TEACHING WAS ENDUED WITH DIVINE WISDOM AND POWER, BACKED UP BY MIRACLES:** Lk. 2:47; 4:31-32; Mt. 5:20; 7:28-29; Jn. 6:68;7:46; Mt. 8:16-17, 26-27; 9:33; 14:16-21; Acts 10:38.
5. **HE MADE CONTINUOUS MORAL CHOICE OF OBEDIENCE TO HIS MISSION:** He. 10:5-7; Lk. 2:49; Mt. 20:28; Jn. 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; 10:17-18; 12:23, 27-28; He. 5:8-9.
6. **HIS TEMPTATION AND STRUGGLES PREPARED HIM FOR SAVIORHOOD AND PRIESTHOOD:** Ga. 4:4-5; Ep. 6:11-19; Mt. 4:1, 4; Jn. 8:46; II Co. 5:21; He. 7:26-27; I Pe. 2:22; I Jn. 3:5; Jn. 16:33; Re. 3:21; Phil. 2:5-8; He. 2:17-18;
7. **PROPHECIES OF HIS COMING AS A SAVIOR INCLUDED HIS REJECTION AND BRUTAL TREATMENT:** Ge. 3:15; Ps. 118:22 (Lk. 20:17-18); Is. 8:14-15; 50:5-7 (Mt. 26:67; 27:30); Is. 53:2-3, 7-8, 12 (Lk. 22:37); Jn. 8:12;7:7.
8. **HE WAS KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD DURING HIS LIFETIME:** Jas. 4:4; Lk. 4:28-30; Jn. 7:30, 44-46; 8:20, 59; 18:6
9. **OUR LORD PROPHESED HIS REJECTION AND CRUCIFIXION:** Mt. 16:21-23; Lk. 9:44; 22:53.
10. **OUR LORD FERVENTLY PRAYED THAT MEN'S VIOLENCE AGAINST HIM WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO PUT HIM TO DEATH INSTANTLY,** and thus frustrate the accomplishment of the Atonement: Mk. 14:34-36; Lk. 22:44; Mk. 14:41; He. 5:7. He had previously said that He was drinking of this "cup," which was now threatening His life (Mk. 10:38-40). Also see Jn. 18:11. His settled purpose of life to accomplish the Atonement was expressed: Is. 50:7; Lk. 2:49; Mt. 16:21-23; 20:28; Jn. 18:37.
11. **GOD THE FATHER EXERTED A MENTAL PREFERENCE IN THE MINDS OF THE REBELLIOUS MULTITUDE** so that their hatred was manifested by crucifixion (the Roman method of capital punishment) instead of by stoning (the Jewish method): Jn. 18:31-32; 19:6; Acts 3:18; 4:27-28; 5:30; 10:39. This made possible a death from spiritual causes as the Savior took the sins of the world into His heart.
12. **CHRIST SUFFERED UNTO DEATH ALONE FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD:** Is. 53:6; Jn. 1:29; 6:51; 10:15, 17-18, 38; Lk. 22:19-20; Ga. 1:3-4; 2:20; Tit. 2:14; I Pe. 2:24; He. 7:26-27; 9:14; Is. 53:12; Mt. 27:46; II Co. 5:21; Lk. 23:46; Mk. 15:39.
13. **THE LORD JESUS DIED FROM A BROKEN HEART OVER THE WORLD'S SIN AND NOT FROM THE CRUCIFIXION:** Jn. 19:30, 32-35; Mk. 15:43-45; Jn. 10:18; 15:13; Lk. 22:19-20; He. 2:9; I Pe. 2:24. God the Father was loving and not vindictive: Ps. 86:5; Mt.18:27; Jn. 3:16; 12:28; Ro. 5:8; Ep. 5:2; Phil. 2:8-11; I Jn. 4:9-10.
14. **CHRIST WAS GLORIOUSLY RAISED FROM THE DEAD,** evermore to live as High Priest to those who have submitted to Him: Ro. 4:25; Mt. 28:6; I Co. 15:6; Phil. 2:9-11; He. 4:14-16; 7:24-27.
15. **THE RISEN AND GLORIFIED CHRIST SHALL BE THE JUDGE OF ALL MEN:** Mt. 25:32; Jn. 5:22-23, 27, 30; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Ro. 2:16; 14:10; I Co. 4:5; II Co. 5:10; II Tim. 4:1; I Pe. 4:5; Re. 19:11.

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II. DID THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST FULFILL THE NECESSARY MEANS OF RECONCILIATION?

The majestic life and glorious atonement of the Lord Jesus more than fulfilled all the necessary characteristics that were required to solve the great problems in man's full reconciliation.

A. CHRIST'S DEATH WAS AN EXCEEDINGLY UNLOVELY AND AWESOME EVENT:

1. The Old Testament sacrificial system prefigured and prepared men's minds for this increased manifestation of tragedy: Le. 17:11; He. 9:18-22; 10:3-4; 9:11-14.
2. The whole spectacle was overwhelming with emotional impressions: Lk. 23:1-2, 5, 9, 10, 11, 18, 21, 23, 27, 36, 48, 53.
3. Men's vicious reactions indicated a very special hatred: Lk. 4:28-29; Jn. 7:7; 11:53; 15:18, 23-25; 19:12.
4. The darkness for three hours added gloom to the awful scene: Lk. 23:44-45.
5. There was a strange inward agony of suffering manifested that astonished many: Mk. 15:39 (Lk. 23:47); Jn. 19:31-34; Mk. 15:43-45.
6. Even hardened soldiers were moved to great concern: Mt. 27:54 (Lk. 23:47).
7. A thief was subdued in repentance and kindled to a living faith: Lk. 23:39-43.
8. The veil of the Temple separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was rent in twain: Lk. 23:45.
9. Earthquakes and resurrection of recently died saints added astonishment: Mt. 27:51-54.

B. CHRIST'S INCARNATION AND PERSON MANIFESTED UNSPEAKABLE DIGNITY AND GREATNESS: (Phil. 2:5-8):

1. Christ claimed to have come down to earth supernaturally, as was indicated: Jn. 6:38; 8:23; Lk. 1:35; Mt. 1:20, 23.
2. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit for His life's work: Lk. 3:22; 4:18-19; Acts 10:38.
3. The Father's approving voice was heard: Lk. 3:22.
4. He manifested the Godhead in all His actions: Jn. 1:18; 8:46; 14:9-11; He. 7:26-27.
5. He imparted Divine instructions as no one before had done: Lk. 4:32; Jn. 7:46.
6. His Divine mission was attested to and recognized by miracles: Jn. 3:2; 5:36-37; Mt. 8:27 (over nature); 9:33 (over demons); Jn. 6:10-14 (over men's needs); 6:15 (a desirable king); 20:28 (over death).
7. His Divine mission was declared so in the presence of all: Jn. 19:14, 19-20.

C. CHRIST'S LIFE AND ATONING DEATH TOOK PLACE WITH THE GREATEST POSSIBLE PUBLICITY, and was declared in every direction to all the known world: Mt. 4:24-25; Lk. 4:14, 37; 5:15; Jn. 12:19; Mt. 24:14; Lk. 24:17-21; Mk. 16:15, 20; Acts 1:8; 8:4; 10:39; 26:26; 28:30-31.

D. CHRIST'S MINISTRY AND ATONING DEATH TOOK PLACE EQUALLY FOR ALL MEN WHO WOULD EVER BE BORN, without any favoritism whatever: Is. 53:6; Jn. 1:29; 3:16-17; 5:24; 6:51; 7:17; Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:46-47; Acts 1:8; 10:34-35, 43; 22:21; Ro. 2:11; II Co. 5:14-15; I Tim. 2:3-6; Tit. 2:11; He. 2:9; I Jn. 2:2; Re. 3:20.

E. THE SIMPLE AND UNDERSTANDABLE CONDITIONS OF SALVATION (REPENTANCE, FAITH, AND

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CONTINUATION IN THE FAITH) ARE WITHIN THE REACH OF ALL: Lk. 10:21; Jn. 1:12-13; 5:40; 7:17; I Co. 2:4-5 (simplicity); Mk. 1:14-15; Lk. 13:3, 5; 24:47; Jn. 5:24; Acts 17:30; 20:21, 24-25; Ep. 2:8 (repentance and faith); Ro. 11:22; I Co. 15:1-2; Col. 1:21-23; He. 3:12-15; Re.2:10-11; 3:3-5 (continuation).

III. DID THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST SATISFY THE PROBLEMS OF RECONCILIATION?

The Lord Jesus by His life and sufferings for the sins "of the whole world" accomplished the following:

- A. **RENDERED SATISFACTION TO PUBLIC JUSTICE** (a demonstration before all that rebellion against authority will be punished), as distinguished from retributive or vindictive justice, thus removing the governmental barrier to the free pardon of repentant sinners—the **GOVERNMENTAL** or the sin-prevention problem. The advent and sufferings of Christ has provided a moral force of far greater proportions to confront the minds of moral beings as they contemplate sin, than the threatened eternal punishment of sinners had provided:
1. The great mass of unrepentant sinners have a public testimony of the awfulness of the Moral Governor's hatred of sin and the dreadful certainty that no sin will go unpunished. If such an ordeal of suffering was endured by the Godhead to make the forgiveness of sin possible, sinful rebellion must be viewed as a colossal tragedy in the moral government of God, to be feared by all: Acts 17:30-31; II Co. 5:11.
 2. The cross of Christ becomes a "road-block" in the life of the pardoned, repentant sinner, which makes sinful detours difficult: Ro. 6:1-2; Ga. 5:17; I Jn. 3:6, 9. To them, "the cross . . . is the power of God" (I Co. 1:18). It is a "sword" in the "hands" of the Holy Spirit to ward off sin (as in the story of Balaam, Nu. 22:22-35).
- B. **REVEALED THE MORAL CHARACTER OF THE GODHEAD**, and thus opened the door to full restoration and fellowship (Jn. 17:3; Phil. 3:10)—the **PERSONAL** or God ignorance and confidence problem.

True friendship must be based upon a mutual intimate knowledge. Christ by His life and sufferings put the Godhead on exhibition (Jn. 1:18; 14:9, 11), unfolding before man the following realities:

1. God is love and is mercifully disposed toward sinners, willing to forgive freely upon evidence of repentance: Mt. 5:43-48; 9:36; 15:32; Jn. 3:16-17; Acts 10:38; Ro. 5:8; I Jn. 4:9-10, 14, 16.
2. God is also righteous in all His dealings and will not tolerate the least hypocrisy and insubordination. Man must come to love truth and submit to it as God does: Mt. 5:20; Mt. 5 to 7; Lk. 6:17-49; Mt. 22:34-40 (Mk. 12:28-34); Lk. 10:25-28; Jn. 7:16-17; 17:25; II Th. 2:10.
3. God has been unspeakably grieved and filled with indignation over man's persistent sin, and His continued rejection of the Divine measures of love: Mt. 15:7-9; 22:18-22; 23:13-36, 37; Mk. 3:5-6; Jn. 1:11; 5:40; 7:17.
4. All the Members of the Godhead shared in the sufferings of redemption, particularly when the Divine circle of fellowship was of necessity broken during the climax of the Cross (Mt. 27:46):
 - a. The Father sent the Son and fellowshiped with Him in all: Jn. 5:20; 6:57; 8:29; 16:32; 17:4, 21; II Co. 5:19, 21.
 - b. The Lord Jesus came to bear our burdens, suffer and die: Mt. 20:28; Jn. 6:51; He. 2:9.
 - c. The Holy Spirit filled and endured the incarnated Christ for His life work: Lk. 4:1 16-19; Acts 10:38; He. 9:14.
5. The "fear of God," or loving reverential confidence, is a must in man's relation to God and can only result from receiving these manifestations, as is commanded: Mt. 10:28 (Lk. 12:5); II Co. 7:1; Ep. 5:21; 6:5; Phil. 2:12; Col. 3:22; He. 4:1; I Pe. 1:17; 2:17.

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- C. **PROVIDED AN IRRESISTIBLE FORCE OF HUMILIATION** to repentant sinners who allow themselves to be exposed to the dynamic illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the life and sufferings of Christ (Lk. 24:32; I Pe. 5:5)-the **PREPARATORY** or the hypocrisy-pride problem.
1. Humility is more than voluntary will power. The will must be subdued by moral force or discipline: He. 12:9.
 2. All must bow in absolute submission, in this life or in the next: Phil. 2:10.
 3. We must realize and be awed by the judgment which our sins deserve before God can allow us to escape their judgment by forgiveness: Jn. 5:24; He. 9:27; Re. 20:11-13.
- D. **PROVIDED THE MEANS FOR MAN'S COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION**, and through Christ's resurrection for man's strong motivation and energetic enduement-the **TRANSFORMATIVE** or the defilement and renewal problem.

Man cannot be regenerated or motivated by force or by an implanted instinct, but only by profound moral forces reaching into his innermost personality:

1. Through which the Holy Spirit can cleanse and purify our whole inner personality as we respond in faith to His enlightenment: Acts 15:8-9; Ep. 2:4-6; Tit. 3:4-7; I Pe. 1:22-23; I Jn. 1:7, 9.
2. Through which the Holy Spirit can achieve our voluntary happy continuance in a life of submission and obedience to God: Ro. 5:9-10; I Co. 15:1-2; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 1:21-23; I Tim. 4:16; He. 10:38-39; Jas. 5:19-20; Re. 3:3-5. "The joy set before" the Lord that moved Him to endure "the cross, despising the shame," (He. 12:2), was that He might bring "many sons to glory" (2:10).

SUMMARY

The simple statement of the Bible seems to be, that sin is such a dreadful tragedy in the kingdom of God that it cannot be disposed of in any simple manner. Some equivalently, terrible event must be brought to pass to deal honorably with the matter. God may be ever so ready to forgive freely man's sin out of His great bounty of love, but cannot do so simply because there are other conditions and problems involved. The judgment of eternal punishment has been pronounced upon sinners for their sins. This woe was pronounced out of God's love for righteousness and because it is man's true desert. God has said: "The person who sins will die" (Eze. 18:20). Sin has been committed and continued in with persistence. Can God now reverse Himself and say, "The person who sins will live," without some great substituted procedure being brought to pass to justify the change?

Of course, the subjects of mercy must absolutely repent of their sinful ways or no mercy at all could be extended. What! Pardon a criminal behind bars who vows by his brazen heart to continue the ways of crime when he is released? Would one respectable judge in the land be found to do such a thing? Certainly God is not less judicious. Therefore, sincere and honest and humbling repentance there must be, or no forgiveness is possible (Ps. 51:17; Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30, for example).

But God has declared it as a fact emanating from His authority, that even if He is loving and kind and ever so willing to forgive, and if man's heart is ever so broken up in penitence and willing to forsake all sin, still salvation is impossible, for "without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (He. 9:22). The unloveliness of animal sacrifices were instituted in Old Testament times as a temporary measure to enable God to forgive penitent sinners. That this was temporary is evident from He. 10:4. The great fact of the atonement of Christ is stated in He. 9:13-14 and I Pe. 3:18, for example. Now the Godhead are exceedingly happy in the possibility of the free exercise of mercy on the basis of repentance and faith.

The Bible does not systematize all the reasons for the necessity of the awful event of the sufferings of Christ. The Bible does state, however, that in some vital sense the sufferings of Christ from a broken heart over the world's sin,

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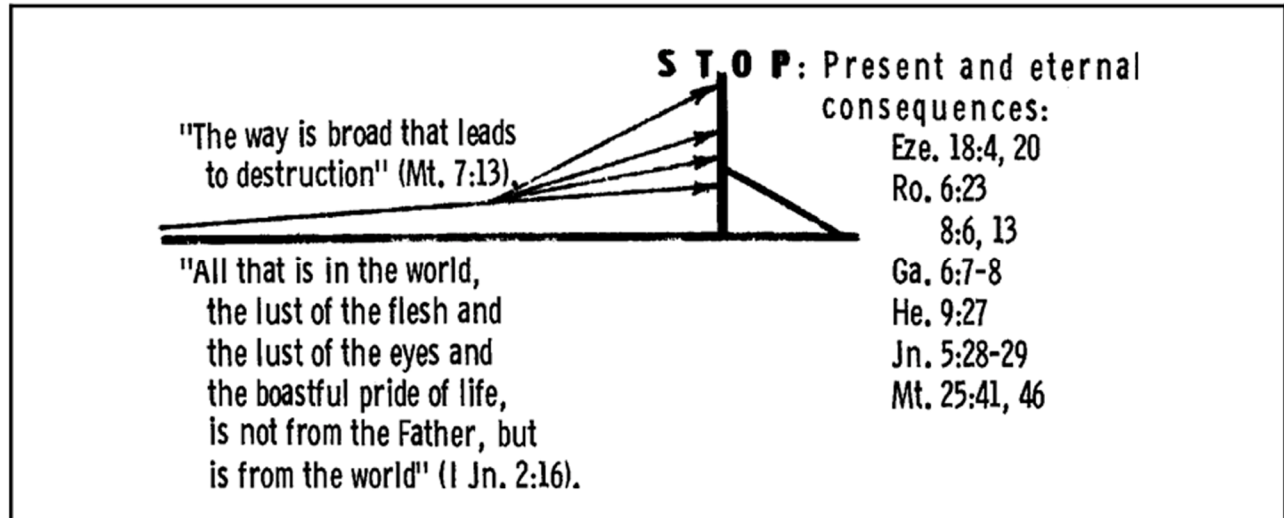
during a brief duration of time unto death, were substituted for the endless punishment of sinners as a measure of righteous forgiveness of sins, when the conditions of sincere repentance and the committal of faith are exercised. Beyond this we do not need to go, nor to attempt to exhibit brilliance in any new discovery. When the words reconciliation, propitiation, ransom, redemption, and the like, are used in connection with the sufferings of Christ, we are to understand them as modified by Bible usage and not seek to inject various shades of meanings that have been developed in the secular world. The blessed Word of God will balance itself out and convey to us the thoughts that God deemed it necessary that we know, if we accept it at face value in all sincerity.

Let it always be remembered that no one is saved because he professes belief in a particular theory of the Atonement, or because he has made a mental deduction that he is saved because he believes in a particular theory. We are saved when we have allowed ourselves to be exposed (in the illumination of the Holy Spirit) to the gruesome fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has come into our world and has suffered the agony of death because of our sins, have thus been humbled under the guilt of our sins in repentance, and have committed ourselves wholly in faith to the Savior's sufferings as the only means of forgiveness. "As many as received Him (all that Christ is and did for us), to them He gave the right to become children of God" (Jn. 1:12). When this is done in all intelligence and sincerity, we will receive assurance by the witness of the Holy Spirit that all our past sins have been forgiven (Ro. 8:16) and will experience transformation of heart and life (II Co. 5:17). The Thessalonian Christians experienced "full conviction" in their salvation (I Th. 1:5), which might be rendered "much full assurance" to convey the import of the words. Peter wrote that we will "greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" (I Pe. 1:8).

In Old Testament times, when a repentant sinner brought his sacrifice and with hands solemnly laid upon its head, saw it slain, confessing his guilt, he was humbled and experienced painful reactions. In a much greater measure, when we come to the cross of the Savior with our sins in our hands, we will be humbled and be brought into an experience of true virtuous love for the first time in our lives. The Father has been looking for us "a long way off" and will welcome us into His loving and forgiving heart and say, "we had to be merry and rejoice" (Lk. 15:20,32). "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." said the Savior (Lk. 15:10). Men are saved by a humbled confrontation with the blessed Atonement, then, and not by theorizing about it. This allows its unparalleled manifestation of love to conquer us completely (II Co. 5:14-15).

SUBSTITUTED CONSEQUENCES IN MORAL GOVERNMENT

(Jer. 9:23-24; Ro. 3:24-26)

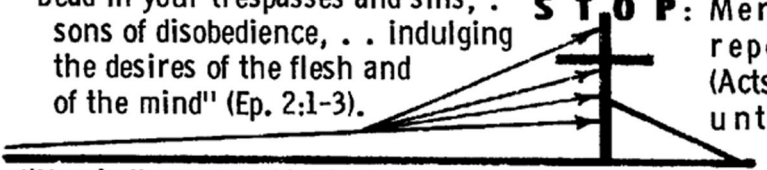


"Sinful passions . . . bear fruit for death" (Ro. 7:5).

"Fleshly lusts . . . wage war against the soul" (1 Pe. 2:11).

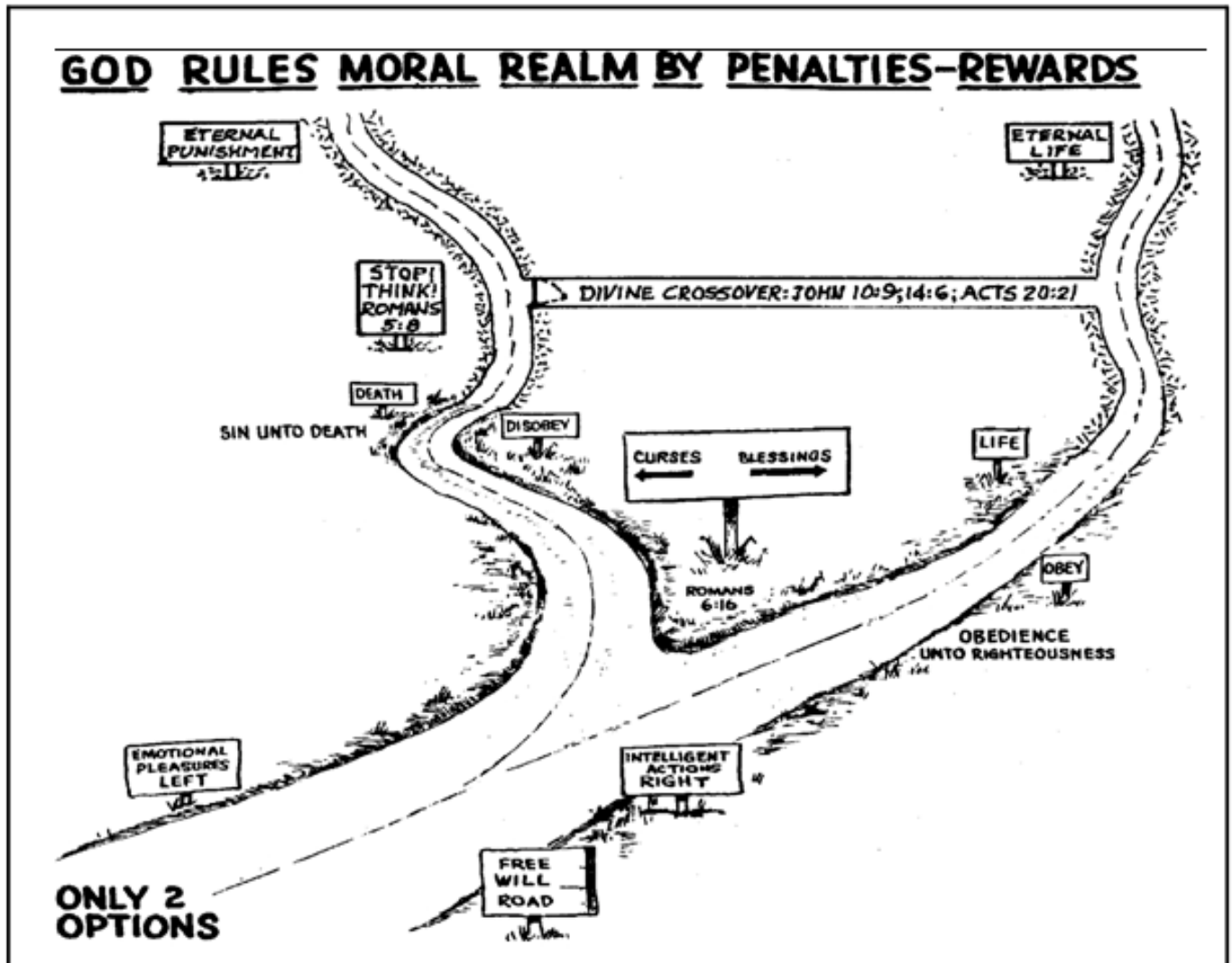
"Tempted . . . carried away and enticed by his own lust. Lust . . . conceived . . . gives birth to sin; . . . sin accomplished . . . brings forth death" (Jas. 1:14-15).

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<p>"Dead in your trespasses and sins, . . . sons of disobedience, . . . indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Ep. 2:1-3).</p>	<p>S T O P</p> 	<p>STOP: Mercy offered to repentant believers (Acts 20:21) at an unthinkable price:</p>
<p>"Now is the acceptable time, . . . now is the day of salvation" (II Co. 6:2), as the Holy Spirit "enlightens every man" (Jn. 1:9), convicts "the world concerning sin" (16:8), and reminds "all men" of the possibility of mercy (12:32). All who do not respond in repentance are under "the wrath of God" (3:36), with the guarantee of the "great white throne" judgment (Re. 20:11-15), since the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead to be their Judge (Acts 17:30-31; Jn. 5:22, 26-27).</p>		<p>He. 9:22 10:4 Ro. 8:32 II Co. 8:9 He. 2:9 7:26-27 9:14, 26 I Pe. 1:18-19 2:24 II Co. 5:21 Ro. 6:1-2</p>

PENALTIES AND REWARDS

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"Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness... For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro. 6:16-18, 23).

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CHAPTER 9

The truth about
THE PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

"That every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God" (Ro. 3:19).

"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees Thee; therefore I retract (or abhor myself), and I repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6).

"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed (or contrite) in spirit" (Ps. 34:18).

"Return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, weeping, and mourning; and rend your heart and not your garments. . . For He is gracious . . ." (Joel 2:12-13).

"But when he came to his senses (or to himself), he said,. . ." (Lk. 15:17, the prodigal).

"The tax-gatherer . . . was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful (or propitious) to me, the sinner!'" (Lk. 18:13).

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation . . ." (II Co. 7:7-10, ASV).

"God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (Jas. 4:6; I Pe. 5:5).

Salvation is not to be brought into subjection to God contrary to our understanding, but it is to be so satisfied concerning the main elements of truth about God and ourselves that we accept it in our intelligence, agree happily to live by it, and repent with great sorrow for every day lived in disobedience and moral darkness. Repentance is to admit to ourselves that God has been wholly right and that we have been wholly wrong, and to have a climax of self-renunciation, soon to be followed by the committal of saving faith. But before this climax can take place there must be processes of thought where we in all honesty face ourselves and all the evidence that our minds have been exposed to concerning our relationship to God and to our fellowmen. Man must not only recognize himself as a subject of God's moral government and acknowledge full responsibility for his own sin, but must give such consideration to the realities of his life and the revealed truths of the Bible and the Gospel as to be thoroughly humbled by them, if he is to be saved.

I. A REVOLUTIONARY MORAL CHANGE IS NECESSARY

A revolutionary moral change must take place in the process of coming to the climax of saving faith.

There must take place a revolutionary change from this self-centered life to a God-centered life, or from selfishness to love, if man is to be reconciled to God and be happy in fellowship with God and man. This instantaneous change is the climax of repentance, when the will yields itself up to God, which is quickly followed and associated with the climax of saving faith.

A. **THOSE RECONCILED TO GOD ARE SAID TO BE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND AT PEACE WITH THEIR FELLOWMEN**—a happy voluntary state of intelligent love: Jn. 17:3; Ro. 5:5; Ep. 5:1-2; I Jn. 4:7-8, 9-10, 19; Jude 20-21.

B. **MAN HAS CHOSEN VOLUNTARILY THE PATHWAY OF SUPREME SELFISHNESS**, and has

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continually persisted in this selfish indulgence without virtuous interruptions, using various means or areas of gratification, until his depravity and moral bondage has had a monstrous development. In this state man has utterly lost all virtuous perspective of life as it ought to be lived in its eternal relations to God and to his fellowmen. He loves moral darkness and turns away from light in an endeavor to deceive himself: Is. 53:6; 57:20-21; 64:6-7; Mt. 7:21-23; Jn. 3:19-20; Ro. 3:10-12, 23; 7:5; 8:6; Ep. 2:1-3; I Tim. 5:6; Tit. 3:3.

- C. **MAN IS AWAKENED TO GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS AS TO THE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF HIS SINFUL CONDITION** while in this state of selfish concern for his own welfare. He has so accustomed himself to think only of his own happiness and unhappiness, that he is at first motivated to repent only because of what sin has done to himself and the possibility that he might have to spend eternity in hell for his indulgences. He at first cannot be appealed to intelligently and objectively as to what sin has done to God and to his fellowmen. He asks only the questions: "How does sin affect me? What will it cost me? If I have to suffer eternal punishment for my sin, is it worth it?" See Mk. 10:17, 22-27; Lk. 9:23-25; 14:26, 33; Jn. 4:15; 6:15; 24-26; 12:20-25; Ro. 2:4; Phil. 3:7-11; Jas. 4:3. The Holy Spirit has difficulty keeping those reconciled to God in a happy state of submission: Mk. 8:17-18; 10:35-41 (Mt. 20:20-21); Acts 8:18-23; Phil. 2:21, 12-13; He. 3:7-8; 12:9-10; I Pe. 4:17-18.
- D. **GOD CAN ONLY RECONCILE AND HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE WHO IS IN A STATE OF TRUTH**, or with one who is willing to have an intelligent and submissive attitude of love toward God and toward his fellowmen: Ex. 20:3; De. 6:4-5; Lk. 10:25-28; Mt. 7:21; Jn. 3:21; 4:23-24; Ep. 5:24 (the true "church is subject to Christ"); II Th. 2:10; I Tim. 2:3-4; Jas. 4:6-7; I Jn. 2:17.
- E. **SIN MUST BE VIEWED INTELLIGENTLY AND HATED INTELLIGENTLY**. We must forsake sin because we are fully convinced that it is absolutely wrong and that a state of holiness, or conformity to God's reasonable requirements, is absolutely right. We must lose sight of what sin has done to us and look beyond ourselves to view what our sin has done to God and to our fellowmen. We simply must take time to reason together with God until we are fully satisfied as to what is true in our moral relations and how we have totally failed to fulfill them: Is. 1:18-20; 41:21; 55:1-3, 8-9; Mic. 6:1-3; Mt. 4:23; 5:1-2, 20; 7:28-29; 11:28-30; Lk. 14:28-32; 16:29-31; Acts 6:9-10; 7:51; 17:2-4, 17; 18:4, 11; 19:8-10, 20, 26; 24:24-25; 28:23-24; Ro. 6:16-18; I Co. 4:15-16; 15:1-4; I Th. 2:8-13; I Tim. 4:16; I Tim. 2:2, 7, 15; Tit. 2:11-15; Phile. 10-12.
- F. **MAN MUST GO THROUGH A PAINFUL PROCESS OF SELF-DISCOVERY, LEADING HIM TO REPENTANCE**. As we allow ourselves to be intimately exposed to the sufferings of Christ because of our sins, through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn through the painful process of self-discovery toward the gateway of repentance or total self-renunciation and emerge into a new happy spiritual life of forgiveness through the commitment of faith. It is a passing "out of the death into the life" (Jn. 5:24). It is God's way of delivering us "out of the authority of the darkness" and transferring us "into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. 1:13). See cloud illustration and follow path of emergence.

1. The guiding beam of love beckons us to move upward out of the abyss of selfishness: Ro. 2:4; 5:8; Jn. 6:44; II Co. 4:6 (God the Father); Jn. 12:32; II Co. 5:14 (the Lord Jesus); Jn. 16:13; 6:63; Tit. 3:5 (the Holy Spirit).

Instead of "me first," it is going to be "me third." God must be first in supremacy, others are an opportunity of service. As we imitate Jesus in love and devotion (Mk. 10:42-45), we arise with Him in true greatness.

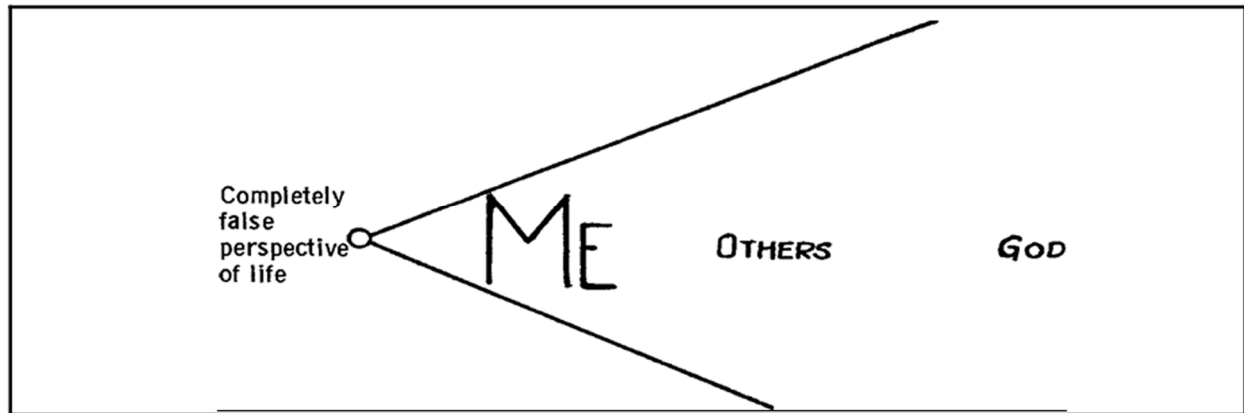
2. It is a moral awakening and transformation by truth, not some kind of entity or fixed thing added to our personalities: Jn. 8:32; 14:6; I Tim. 2:3-4; I Pe. 1:22-23.
3. It is a thorough humbling before God: Ps. 138:6; Is. 66:2; Jas. 4:6-10; I Pe. 5:5-6

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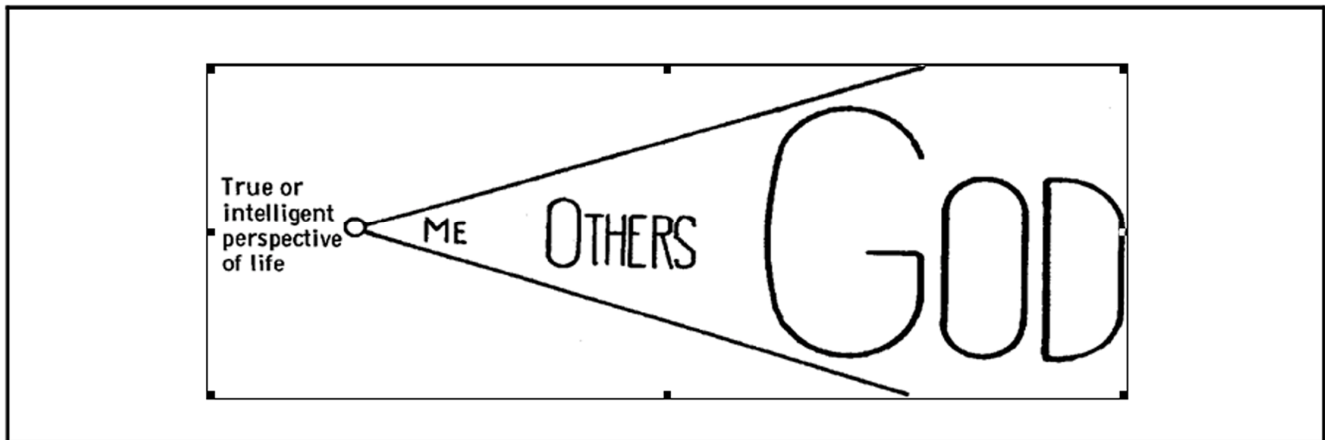
4. It is an evaluation of the things of God and truth, in contrast to the fleeting experiences of selfishness: Mt. 16:26; II Co. 4:18; Jas. 4:14; I Jn. 2:16-17.
5. The process is so painful to pride and the artificial self-esteem, which we had so long forged for ourselves, that it is described as a self-crucifixion together with a loving Saviour:
 - a. To the world-system of selfishness: Ga. 6:14.
 - b. To wrong emotional attachments and passions: Ga. 5:24.
 - c. To our whole "old man" or self-centered manner of living, from which we must emerge by putting on a "new man" which is God-centered: Ro. 6:6-8; Ep. 4:22-24.
 - d. A total collapse of internal self-supremacy in the deep recesses of our wills, the "heart" of our personalities: Ga. 2:20; Phil. 3:7-8; Mt. 16:25.
 - e. An emergence from our "cocoons" of selfish bondage, bidding the old life a remorseful farewell in repentance: Col. 3:3; I Pe. 2:24; Jn. 12:24-25.
 - f. Into the new life of spiritual resurrection with the living Christ in merciful forgiveness, with a clean "slate" before us awaiting entries of value to the glory of the Godhead: Col. 3:1; Re. 1:5; Ro. 4:25; 6:4; 7:5-6; Jn. 8:36.
 - g. A new happy bondage of love has been entered into, which makes a return to the old miserable life of selfishness difficult since we are now "temples" of the Holy Spirit: Ro. 6:22, 2, 14; I Co. 3:16; 6:19-20; Ga. 5:16-18; I Jn. 3:9.

MAN'S BASIC PROBLEM — VOLUNTARY NEAR-SIGHTEDNESS

"Each of us has turned to his own way "(Is. 53:6)



"Indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Ep. 2:3), a life of selfish subordinate choices according to one's constitution, environment, and exposure to truth, excesses disciplined only because of consequences or fear of retribution.



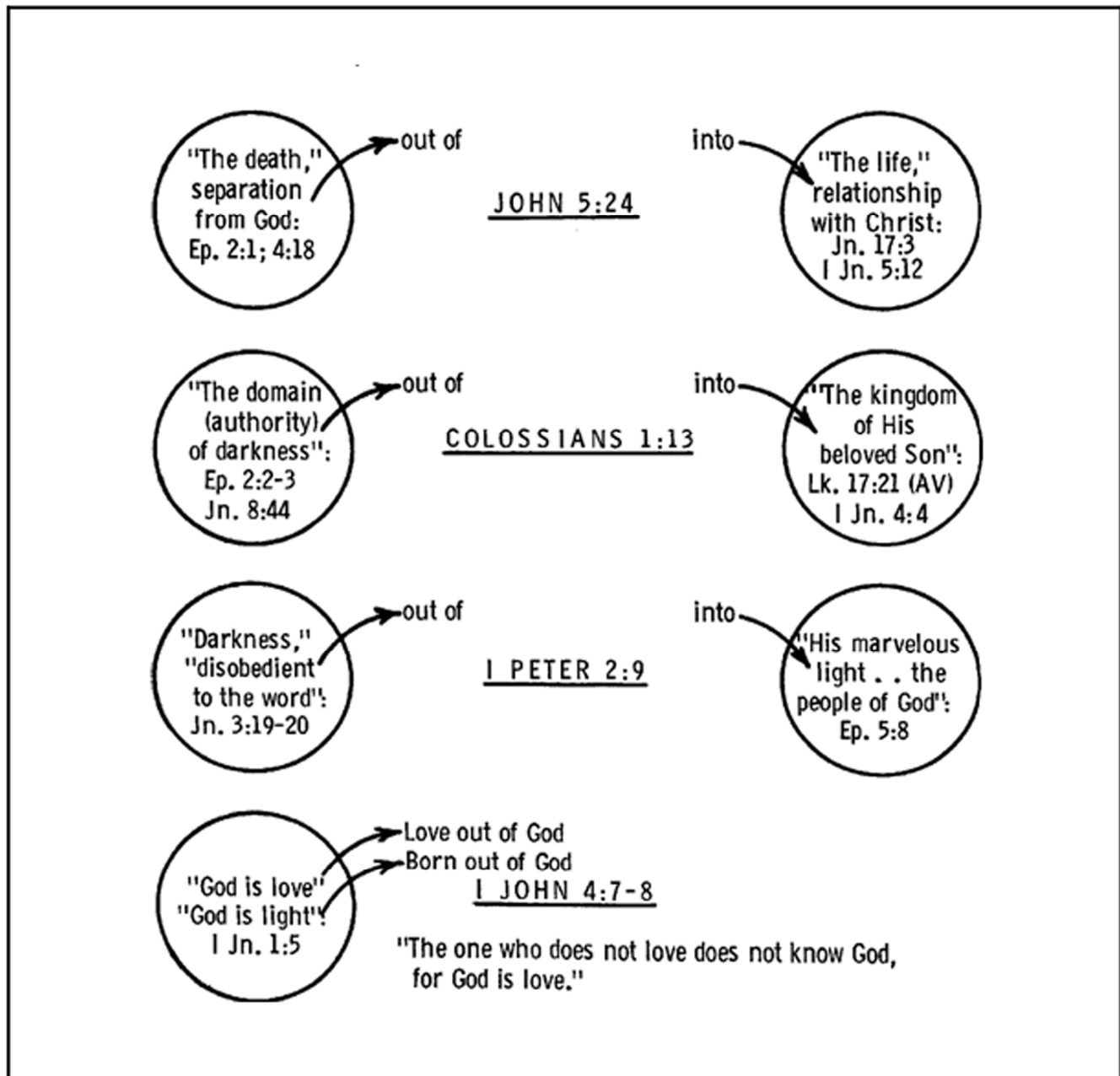
"The truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. . . Do this, and you will live" (Lk. 10:27-28).

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THE LOVING PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL - A CHANGED LIFE

"Our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus . . . gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" (Titus 2:13-14).

Two interesting prepositions in the Greek text describe this change—one basically meaning "out of, from within," and the other "into", (from without). They would be charted as shown in the following illustrations:

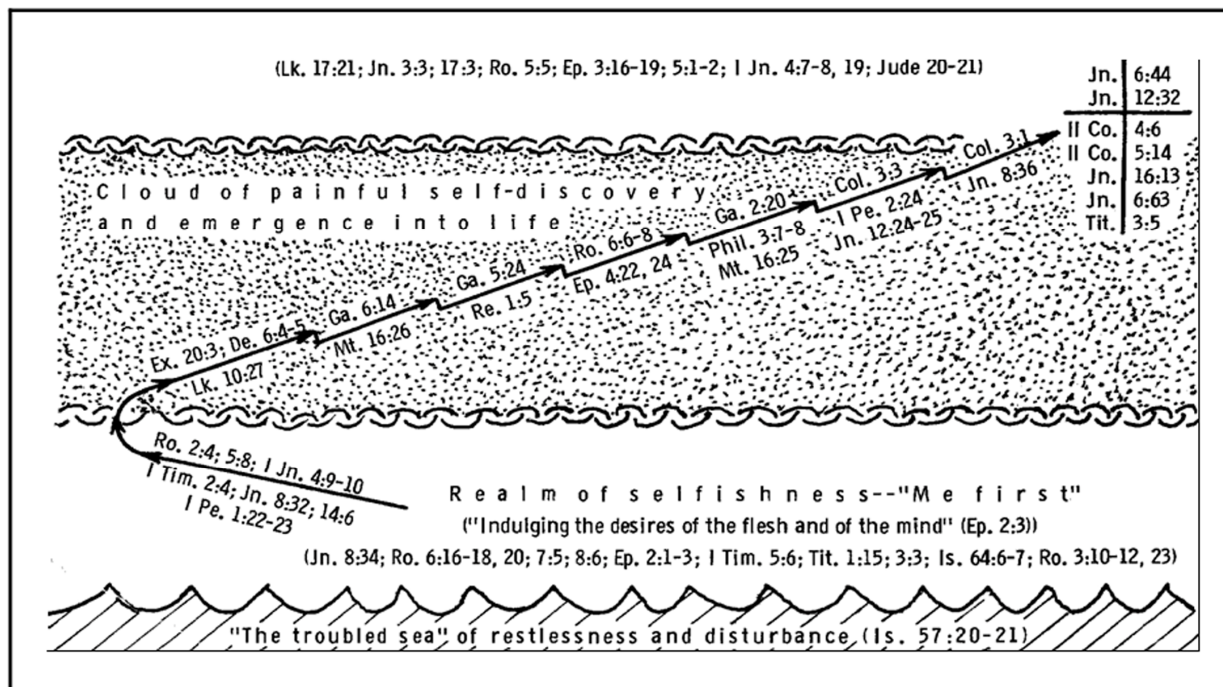


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PASSING "OUT OF THE DEATH INTO THE LIFE"

(Jn. 5:24; Acts 20:21, 24, 25; 26:18, 20; Col. 1:13)

Pure realm of love in fellowship with God and with one another in the kingdom of God ("The way of truth," "the way of righteousness" — II Pe. 2:2, 21) (Lk. 17:21; J n. 3:3; 17:3; Ro. 5:5; Ep. 3:16-19; 5:1-2; 1 J n. 4:7-8, 19; Jude 20-21)



II. MORAL RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES MUST BE RECOGNIZED

In the process of salvation there must, then, be a recognition of our moral relationships and responsibilities (De. 6:4-5; Le. 19:18; Lk. 10:27).

It is absolutely necessary that we cease to suppress any moral enlightenment that dawns upon our minds from any source, if we are going to be saved. It is not that we need a great deal of understanding of our moral obligations to God and man, but that we fully recognize and submit to the understanding that we do have, with an attitude of sincerity to comprehend all that we can.

A. MAN MUST CEASE TO REJECT THE MORAL FORCE OF HIS NATURAL DISCOVERIES AND BE WILLING TO CONFORM HIS LIFE TO THEM.

The Bible very plainly teaches, and always implies, that moral beings in the right exercise of their minds are in possession of great moral enlightenment which portrays to them their essential moral obligations to God and man. These natural observations are the basis of guilt and condemnation (as discussed in chapter one and four). Those who have never heard the Gospel, nor of the Bible, are still **"WITHOUT EXCUSE"** (Ro. 1:20). Unrepentant man is having great difficulty attempting to "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro. 1:18). He is trying to reason away

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his moral obligations to God and man, which arises spontaneously in his mind because of his observations, and becomes a captive of his own philosophies (Col, 2:8). The knowledge of the Gospel greatly adds to the guilt of those rejecting it but is not the basis of condemnation.

- B. **MAN MUST RECEIVE AND ADMIT TO TRUTH.** He must submit to all the truth that he understands the Bible to reveal concerning God, concerning his guilty and hopeless state, and concerning the advent and sufferings of Christ. We instinctively believe that God possesses knowledge that would vindicate the Divine Being from all responsibility for the existence of evil and that God is able to communicate this knowledge to us. From the deep recesses of our souls comes the cry of the Psalmist: "Give me understanding that I may live" (119:144). The Bible, therefore, is what we would expect a God of love and intelligence to bestow upon mankind.

We must receive the Bible as a revelation from God and be willing to learn from its pages, if we are going to be saved. We must not only "come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), but must reach out in love toward the truth in all honesty (II Th. 2:10). Salvation in a state of unbelief, or a refusal to believe what is known to be revealed, is impossible (Mk. 16:16; Tit. 1:15; He. 3:12; Re. 21:8). "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 8:32).

III. TOTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR SINS MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED

(I Jn. 3:4 (ASV & ASB); Ro. 1:20; 3:19; 14:12).

To come to this conclusion is a very painful one and requires an honest approach to our situation. If we can blame our sin and guilt upon our constitutional nature or weakness, upon our circumstances or environment, upon injustices in God's moral government, or upon the secret permissive will of God that sin should come into the world, if not God's direct will, then we have found a legitimate excuse for our sin and can escape from an acknowledgement of total personal guilt. In this state of mind, the self-condemnation which must precede repentance and the total commitment of faith is impossible.

- A. **ALL SELF-EXCUSES FOR OUR SIN MUST BE ELIMINATED** before we can possibly acknowledge ourselves as totally morally bankrupt before the great God.
1. We cannot blame our sin upon any constitutional nature or weakness which we may have inherited. We cannot say that we were unable to fulfill God's reasonable and loving requirements. As discussed under Consequences of Man's Rebellion (Chapter 6, Section VII), depravity of constitution and our own developed moral depravity strongly influences toward a life of self-indulgence, but it is not the cause of sinful actions.
 2. We cannot blame our sin upon our circumstances or environment. Man is a psycho-physical personality having both spiritual and physical elements. Man contacts his surroundings through five senses: Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Our relation to the earth and its sustaining forces imposes burdens and bodily limitations. Our relationship to our fellowmen make possible defilement and degradation. While our environment greatly affects the development of our depravity or the increase of our moral bondage, it is we ourselves who choose these various avenues of wrongful gratifications. Our environment becomes the occasion of sinful actions, but we ourselves are the cause of their furtherance.
 3. We cannot find complacency by saying that sinful guilt has been unjustly charged against us in God's moral government. If the Bible affirmed that we are held accountable for other's sins, and particularly for Adam's sin, this would become such a gross injustice in the economy of God as to erect a barrier to intelligent thought and the meaning of guilt. Under Consequences (Chapter 6, Section VIII), it was established that God in perfect righteousness shall judge every man for his own sin according to the spiritual enlightenment that each one was favored with, no Biblical proof being found of the imputation of any one else's guilt. No one can object to God's

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dispensations of justice.

4. We cannot find comfort in our guilt by the thought that God may have been in some sense at least partially to blame for the entrance of sin into the world. Under Man's Rebellion (Chapter 5, Section VI) we concluded that man was fully to blame for the entrance of sin into the world and for its persistent perpetuation. Man having been endowed with the moral image of God was given the responsibility of creating his own moral character, which he chose to abuse by violating his understanding. Sin did not enter the world because man was created deficient, nor because it was God's will, nor because of any failure on God's part to exert every influence to the contrary. The agonizing grief and disappointment of the Godhead over man's sinful rebellion proves that God had no part in it.

B. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT SIN IS ALWAYS A WRONG VOLUNTARY ATTITUDE OR PURPOSE OF LIFE, which we alone can change by a revolutionary choice of will. Sin is not an abstract thing which invades and lodges somewhere in our personalities, but is rather an orderly sequence of wrong conduct involving our whole personalities which we have individually chosen and energetically pursue (Chapter 5, Section II).

1. Old Testament words describe man as a rebel against a loving God, not as a subject of pity who has lost his ability of will and thus could not help sinning. Man's life of sin is voluntary and therefore inexcusable (Chapter 5, Section III).
2. New Testament words likewise stress the idea of the wickedness and inexcusableness of sin. We look in vain for any proof that sin is anything else than a wrong action, a voluntary activity involving locomotion or dynamic (chapter 5, Section IV).
3. All sin can be resolved into a wrong ultimate choice to seek our own happiness supremely, which we persist in with our whole personality, and choose various areas of gratification which we think will further our own happiness the most. A change in the means of self-gratification will not change our moral character. Only a dethronement of self and making Jesus Lord of our lives will avail anything. We have no excuse to hide behind, only our own stubborn wills choosing to perpetuate our own supreme happiness (Chapter 5, Section V).

IV. THE AWFULNESS OF OUR SELF-CENTERED LIVES MUST BE REALIZED

A realization of the awfulness of our self-centered lives must precede the climaxes of repentance and saving faith (Job 42:5-6; Lk. 18:13).

- A. **ENDLESS PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND OBSERVATIONS** of the external universe awakens our minds to the greatness and goodness of our great Benefactor, and begins the process of humiliation and self-abasement. As we face limitations and calamities along with the intricate wonders of nature, our consciences rise up to assert our own guilt as the reason for all these irregularities and disturbances.
- B. **FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO THE REALITIES AND TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL** furthers the process of self-examination and conviction. Most everyone who becomes a Christian has seen one in operation at some time or other, and has, therefore, come face to face with Divine realities of mercy. Somewhere there has been a personal contact with one who lived the words: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).
- C. **THE BIBLE**, as a revelation from God to man through "men moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pe. 1:21), becomes the instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit and faithful Christians through which "all the world may become accountable to God" (Ro. 3:19). The fact that God has sought the recovery of man's lost estate through the progressive revelations of the Bible lays before man a great force of love to subdue his heart.

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- D. **GOD'S REASONABLE APPROACH TOWARD MAN IN THE BIBLE** inspires the mind to think through every problem of doubt, which is the only way that the heart of man can be thoroughly humbled. All professed humility which is not based upon a satisfying understanding of the problems of life is superficial. When we understand God's point of view and intelligently acknowledge our true rebellion and false accusations against God, then deep emotions of soul are unloosed and with openness and honesty we can seek God for forgiveness of our sins.
- E. **THE COMPASSIONATE EARTHLY LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE LORD JESUS** is God's final approach to the mind of man to demonstrate what true holiness is like and to convince man of the emptiness and stupidity of every other form of life. Holiness is nothing else than an application of true intelligence as to what is right conduct in all our moral relations. If man takes time to ponder in all honesty what these relations and obligations are, he will forge within his mind the true concept of duty. Truth will purge the mind from every error. If it is submitted to and not resisted, it will lead to the application of God's great rejuvenating forces of mercy and a glorious eternal life with God and our fellowmen.
- F. **THE SUFFERINGS AND GRIEF OF THE GODHEAD OVER MAN'S REBELLION**, and persistence in sin, as revealed from beginning to end in the Bible, should reinforce the reasonable approach of God with such moral force as to break down our hearts in abhorrence for every hour we have contributed to the unhappiness of the great Divine Personalities, who only desire to love and bless man with Their presence (chapter 6, Section I).
- G. **THE BLESSED ATONEMENT OF CHRIST, AS MADE LIVING AND REAL** by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:14-15), leads us into an experience of "togetherness" that enslaves the humbled soul to the great love of God. Humility is more than voluntary will power. True humility can only be achieved through the use of a moral force of humility. When viewed in all its significance, the atonement of Christ becomes the greatest moral force that has ever been devised, in that it involves the greatest humiliation and manifestation of love that could ever be thought of in the Divine mind. Only the Cross can awaken us from our voluntary sleep of self-ignorance and lead us to the discovery of our total moral bankruptcy.

CHAPTER 10

The truth about **REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD**

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him." (Is. 55:7).

"Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you. Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!" (Eze. 18:30-32).

"Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish," said the Lord Jesus (Lk. 13:3, 5).

"Repentance for forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all the nations" (Lk. 24:47).

"God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent" (Acts 17:30).

"Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21, AV).

Salvation or reconciliation is a voluntary agreement on the part of both God and man to have a changed relationship. The word "salvation" embodies the idea of rescuing one from danger and destruction. When used in a spiritual sense, it is to rescue or deliver a sinner from the consequences of his sin. Salvation implies the idea of helplessness, for if one can save himself from a given situation, he has no need to depend upon another. We are absolutely dependent upon the mercy of God, but we must be willing to allow God to save us along with everything that is involved. It is absolutely imperative that man repents of all known sin as the first condition of salvation. Man must renounce his wrong actions in all appropriate solemnity before Divine actions can be taken to heal the wounds of sin in God and man. If only one of the parties is willing, there will be no reconciliation.

A "condition" is defined to be something established or agreed upon as a requisite to the doing or taking effect of something else. Something is promised or offered on the basis that certain things shall be done or certain actions taken. Apart from the fulfillment of these definite requirements as specified, the promise is withheld. A condition of something is not that for the sake of which something is done, but rather that without which something cannot be done. It is, therefore, not a cause that merits salvation, but an attitude that must prevail if salvation is to take place. The blessed gospel of Christ is an offer of mercy and reconciliation to God, with untold joy. God has wisely determined upon what terms it is to be offered, or what man must do to partake of Gospel benefits. It is clear everywhere in the Bible that man must take certain definite action if he is to be reconciled to God. Man must abandon all conscious rebellion and self-ownership and allow God to have His rightful place.

I. FROM WHAT VOLUNTARY STATE OF BEING DOES MAN HAVE TO REPENT

What voluntary attitude or state of being does man have to repent from if he is to partake of God's wonderful salvation?

We have seen that sin is a refusal to live intelligently, or to conform our lives to truth or to the true state of things. It is a refusal to fulfill our obligations to God and to our fellowmen. It is not a weakness but a rebellion. It is not a

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lack of understanding but a violation of understanding. God by virtue of His greatness and importance is to have man's supreme allegiance. Men by virtue of their equal status are to have equal consideration with ourselves. No other state of balance can be affirmed by the intelligence, and yet man attempts to justify himself in a supremely selfish manner of life, which is the essence of sin. God's loving and reasonable requirements for man were given in the Ten Commandments. "Sin is lawlessness" (I Jn. 3:4), or a refusal to conform. Man's defiant attitude must be terminated in repentance before salvation can take place.

1. Man has lost all true perspective of life in its eternal relations to God and to his fellowmen. The New Testament describes man as:

Hateful (Tit. 3:3)	Depraved mind (Ro.1:28)
Alienated from God (Ep. 4:18)	Refusing belief (Jn. 3:36)
Hypocritical (Mt. 6:2, 5, 16)	Disobedient (Tit. 3:3)
Arrogant, boastful (Ro. 1:30)	Rejecting truth (II Tim. 4:4)
Impenitent (Ro. 2:5)	Enemy of God (Jas. 4:4)
Blind (II Co. 4:4)	Resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51)
Indulging the desires (Ep. 2:3)	Evil (Mt. 12:33-35)
Corrupt (Mt. 7:17-18)	Self-satisfied (Re. 3:17)
Inventors of evil (Ro. 1:30)	Fleshly minded (Ro. 8:6)
Darkened (Ro. 1:21)	Slave of sin (Jn. 8:34)
Lovers of pleasure (II Tim. 3:4)	Foolish (Mt. 7:26)
Dead in sins (Ep. 2:1)	Subordinating God (Ro. 1:25)
Lovers of self (II Tim. 3:2)	Going astray (I Pe. 2:25)
Deceived (Tit. 3:3)	Unconscious of bondage (Jn. 8:33)
Malicious and envious (Tit. 3:3)	Guided by Satan (Jn. 8:44)
Defiled and unbelieving (Tit. 1:15)	Unrighteous (I Co. 6:9)
Natural or soulish (I Co. 2:14)	Hardness of heart (Ep.4:18)

These descriptions, among many others, leave no question that man needs a colossal awakening and a complete re-evaluation of his entire life.

2. Man's free will, and the voluntary nature of sin is overwhelmingly described by the words used in the Old Testament to describe sin. (See Chapter 5, Section V).
3. The wickedness and inexcusableness of sin is described by the New Testament in its words used to describe sin. (Chapter 5 Section V and VI).
4. All sin can be resolved into a wrong ultimate choice to seek our own happiness supremely. Sin is a wrong motive of heart. Sin is always a voluntary state or attitude of will. The will determines the nature or character, rather than the nature the will. The unrepentant sinner is determined to make himself happy at the expense of God and man, and chooses means to further this end according to his tendencies and environment. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts . . ." (Mk. 7:21). (Chapter 5, section 6)
5. Man's being is entirely involved in the pursuit of sin. It is impossible to have a divided personality, and therefore the supreme choice of self-gratification permeates the whole being and leaves no room for isolated virtuous actions: Mt. 6:22-24; Jn. 3:19-21; Ro. 6:16; II Co. 5:17.
6. This supreme selfish choice is persisted in without virtuous interruptions from the dawn of moral accountability until the awakening of genuine repentance. Sinful indulgence in one form or another is continuous: Is. 64:6; Mt. 6:5; Ro. 3:10-12. (Chapter 5, section 7)

Notes:

7. The terms "our old self" or "our old man" describes man's sinful state. They are used by the Apostle Paul to sum up all that unrepentant sinners are. (Ro. 6:6; Ep. 4:22; Col. 3:9). It is our whole personality in action, a manner of life "which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit" and must be terminated.

II. THE NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE TO SALVATION AND RECONCILIATION WITH GOD?

1. Man must be willing to have a revolutionary change of purpose of life. This must take place before man can enter into a state of blessed fellowship with God (the very state for which he was created). A God of love can only purpose to reconcile man back into blessed fellowship.
2. A false reconciliation under the penetrating all-knowing eye of God is impossible. Therefore we must "come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), or make such a change in our whole attitude that we have nothing that we are attempting to hide. The Father dwells in truth (Jn. 17:17), also the Lord Jesus (14:6), and the Holy Spirit (14:17).
3. Man must voluntarily agree to end the separation. Reconciliation between two moral beings, who have been separated over some issue that involves moral action, is only possible by a voluntary agreement on both sides to end the separation. God longs to do so, and so must man.
4. The attitudes of man that have caused the separation must cease. By the very nature of reconciliation it is assumed that the attitudes that have caused the estrangement shall be terminated. All sin separates. God "has indignation every day" (Ps. 7:11), and rightly so. Humanly speaking, no one would think of seeking reconciliation between two individuals unless the cause of the problem is remedied and terminated. It is man's voluntary actions of rebellion that aggravates God. Man must renounce his wrong action in repentance if the aggravation is to cease and peace be restored. How can God reconcile those who refuse to throw down their weapons of rebellion?
5. The Gospel is a remedy designed to remove the consequences of sin in our lives by cleansing and purifying our entire inner beings. How can God remove the consequences of sin if we will not let go of the very thing that caused these consequences? If God would momentarily cleanse us, our continuance in sin would make this of no avail since we would immediately defile ourselves again by wrong thoughts and actions. God cannot cleanse what we are continually adding to, thus there must be repentance or the termination of the flow of evil in our hearts.
6. Forgiveness cannot be extended for sin that is on-going. Unless God can find a way to forgive sin while it is going on, or forgive what has yet to occur, (which can have no present guilt in the Divine government), man must repent and stop the flow of sin in order to be brought to the point where he is not under condemnation. What good would it do to forgive some sins of a chain if the links of sin are still being forged? If God forgave sin apart from repentance, man would be in the predicament of continuing "in sin that grace might increase" (Ro. 6:1). The Apostle Paul answers: "How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (6:2). The Bible says nothing about the forgiveness of present or future sins, and everywhere implies, what our common sense affirms, that all sin brings condemnation and must be repented of and confessed before forgiveness can take place through faith in the atonement of Christ. We must repent, then, to be free from guilt and condemnation.

The Lord Jesus spoke of "an honest and good heart" which bears "fruit with perseverance" (Lk. 8:15). The Christian is expected to do what he knows to be right (Jas. 4:17), to have "a blameless conscience" (Acts 24:16), and "a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (He. 10:22) which does not condemn so he can "have confidence before God" (I Jn. 3:21). "Everyone who in Him is abiding is not sinning" (I Jn. 3:6). Some have interpreted I John 1:8 as teaching that no one ever stops sinning, that indulgences of sin may be reduced but are

never eliminated in any human existence for even brief durations of time. This would contradict the thrust of the whole First Epistle of John, which was written "that you may not sin" (2:1). The verse continues: "And if anyone sins (or should sin):" not when anyone sins, as though God expected sin to continue.

That sin is not continuous nor the common experience in the lives of those reconciled to God is obvious from the following passages in this epistle: I John 1:7, 9; 2:10, 17, 29; 3:4, 6, 7-8, 9, 10; 5:4, 18; also III Jn. 11. Verse 1:8 must have been inserted as a caution that we are never to get to the point of pride and claim that we never have any departures into selfish or sinful thoughts, or brief lapses into wrong outward actions. We are rather to maintain a humble spirit of self-analysis and confess anything that we suspicion may not be pleasing to God. It cannot mean that the flow of selfishness or sin is never interrupted, as this would contradict these many other passages in this epistle and throughout the New Testament. The termination of sin was the expressed purpose of the Atonement (I Pe. 2:24). See chart and Scriptures on opposite page.

7. Sin and happiness are totally incompatible. Therefore, sin must be eliminated if the eternal happiness of heaven is to become a reality. We have seen that sin is a wrong purpose of heart, man's innermost being, and thus will not be eliminated in the process of physical death. Only a sincere repentance in this present life of probation will bring about a change in man's moral character.
8. The "old self" must die. "The old self with its evil practices" must be "laid aside" in a climax of repentance "that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (Col. 3:9; Ro. 6:6). Just as a caterpillar must emerge from its cocoon to become a butterfly so it can live a new kind of life, so we must emerge from "the old self" and "put on the new self" as the only gateway to unlimited God-consciousness in this present life and forever (Ep. 4:22, 24).

III. HAS REPENTANCE ALWAYS BEEN REQUIRED AND IS IT NOW REQUIRED AS THE FIRST CONDITION OF SALVATION AND RECONCILIATION?

Repentance from all known sin always has been and always will be the first condition of salvation and reconciliation to God. Salvation without repentance is totally impossible for the reasons mentioned. God is dealing with free and responsible moral agents in salvation—not with machines or creatures who are moved by instinct. God can save no one against his will. God can save no one without transforming the entire personality of the one being saved. The sinner must be willing to be transformed by the grace of God. He must be willing to give up his sinful ways and be separated from his sins. "You shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins," said the angel to Joseph (Mt. 1:21). No one is to be saved in his sins. Just as sin is a turn to our own supreme selfish gratification (Is. 53:6), so repentance is a turn away from this rebellious and unintelligent state of mind to conform our lives to truth and to the will of God (I Jn. 2:17).

1. Passages showing that men must turn from all sinful ways, or repent toward God from the very bottom of their hearts, before God can extend His merciful forgiveness. This is directly asserted in both the Old and New Testaments. Some examples are:

De.30:19-20	Ezek. 14:6	Lk. <u>24:45-47</u>	Eph. 5:14
Josh24:14-15	Ezek. <u>18:30-32</u>	Acts 1:18	I Th. 1:9-10
II ki. 17:12-14	Ezek. 33:11	Acts 2:37-38	Titus <u>2:11-14</u>
Prov. 28:13	Zech. 1:3-4	Acts 3:19, 26	Jas. 1:21
Is. 1:16-18	Mk. 1:14-15	Acts <u>17:30:31</u>	I Pe. 3:12
Is. <u>55:6-7</u>	Lk. 5:312-32	Acts <u>20:20-21</u>	II Pe. 3:9
Jer. 4:14	Lk. 3:3, 5	Acts <u>26:18-20</u>	
Jer. 36:3	Lk. 5:7, 10	Ro. 2:4	

Notes:

2. Passages showing that men must fear God or have a reverential attitude toward God, with proper respect to the austere dignity of the Godhead, if they are going to be saved. Thus there must be repentance. Some passages declaring this are:

Ps. 103:13	Mt. 10:28	Phil. 2:12-13	I Pe. <u>5:5-6</u>
Ps. <u>138:6</u>	Lk. 1:50	He. 12:28-29	I Jn. 4:16-18
Is. 57:15	Acts 10:34-35	Jas. 4:6, 10	(Reverential)
Is. <u>66:2</u>	II Co. 7:1	I Pe. <u>1:17</u>	(confidence)

3. Passages showing that men must turn from a state of disobedience to a state of obedience, and continue therein, if they are going to be saved. Men must repent in such a way that they remain in a state of repentance, because it is founded in true intelligence.

De. 13:17-18	Mt. 3:8-10	Acts 26:20	He. <u>5:9</u>
II Chr. 30:8-9	<u>7:21-23</u>	Ro. 2:6-11	I Jn. <u>2:4, 17</u>
Ps. 84:10-11	Lk. 11:28	<u>6:16-18</u>	I Jn. 3:10
Micah <u>6:8</u>	Acts 5:32	Titus 2:11-14	

4. Passages showing that men must turn to love god and man if they are to partake of the only salvation that God offers, thus there must be a repentant renunciation of the life of selfishness if God's mercy is to be exercised:

Ex. 20:6	De. 11:1	Lk. 10:25-28	Jas. 2:5 Le. 19:18, 34
De. 30:15-20	Jn. 15:6, 9-10, 12	I Jn. 3:14De. <u>6:4-6</u>	Josh. 22:5-6
Ro. 5:5	I Jn. <u>4:7-8, 20</u> De. 7:9-11	Neh. 1:4-51	Co. <u>16:22</u>
I Jn. 5:2-3 De. <u>10:12-13</u>	Ps. 145:20	Ga. 5:22	Jude <u>21</u>

5. Passages showing that men must turn to a benevolent forgiving state of mind if God is to exercise mercy in the forgiveness of sin, and must remain in this state as a condition of continued mercy. Thus repentance or a revolution of mind is imperative:

Mt. 5:7	Mt. 18:32-35	Lk. 6:36, 37	Col. <u>3:12-13</u>
Mt. <u>6:12, 14-15</u>	Mk. 11:24-25	Ep. <u>4:32</u>	

It would be completely wrong for God to forgive an unforgiving spirit, and thus such a state prevents God from extending mercy. Repentance sees the immensity of our debt toward God as compared to any man's debt to us and freely forgives (Mt. 18:24, 28). Notice that no former state will void the consequences of Mt. 18:35.

Notes:

6. Passages showing that God is no respecter of persons, and therefore it is man's reactions to God's pleadings in mercy that enables God to make a difference between men in forgiving one and not another. Man's reaction determines God's reaction:

De. 11:26-28
Josh. 24:15
Ps. 62:12
Prov. 24:12

Jer. 32:17-19
Eze. 18:30
33:17-20
Mt. 16:26-27

Mt. 22:16
Acts 10:34-35
Ro. 2:6, 11
Ga. 2:6

Ep. 6:9
Col. 3:25
I Pe. 1:17

7. Passages showing that men must repent with such sincerity and earnestness that they will seek God with all their heart in a humble attitude of prayer if the barrier to the exercise of God's loving mercy is to be removed. God does not need to be persuaded by prayer to be merciful, for He is merciful already, but God must be persuaded that we really purpose to forsake our sins before He can see it wise and safe to open to us His "flood-gates" of mercy. In this process of humiliation and prayer, man comes to that full willingness to confess and forsake all his sins. This climax is the moment of repentance for which God is looking, and causes joy to spring up in heaven "over one sinner who repents" (Lk. 15:7). The following Scriptures indicate how all men must seek the Lord in penitence before pardon of all past sins can be granted:

De. 4:29-31
II Chr. 7:13-18
Ps. 25:6-7, 11
Ps. 32:3-5
Ps. 34:18
Ps. 41:4
Ps. 51:1-4, 17

Ps. 145:18-19
Is. 45:21-23
Is. 55:6
Jer. 29:12-13
Hos. 10:12
Joel 2:12-14
Jonah 3:5-10

Mt. 7:7-8
Lk. 13:23-25
Lk. 18:13-14
Acts 2:21
Acts 17:24-27, 30
Ro. 10:13
I Co. 14:24-25

II Co. 6:2
II Co. 7:9-10
He. 11:6
Jas. 4:8-10
I Jn. 1:9

IV. WHAT IS NOT REPENTANCE?

1. Not remorse, regret, sorrow, or penance, although these elements of experience will always precede repentance. Repentance is more than this (II Co. 7:9).
2. Not a change in subordinate choices or the means of self-gratification, but only a renunciation of the supreme choice of selfishness.
3. Not a partial change in ultimate supreme intention or purpose in life. We cannot partly repent and partly not repent, or be partly selfish and partly not selfish at the same time.
4. Not a professed reversal of life under emotional pressure or fear of the consequences of our sins. While these elements are always present in the process of moral awakening, we are intelligent beings and must decide to forsake sin because it is wrong and love God supremely and our fellowmen equally because it is right. We must not only submit to truth but must "receive the love of the truth so as to be saved" (II Th. 2:10).
5. Not an endeavor partially to merit salvation by turning to live in such a way as to commend ourselves to God and make it easier for God to forgive us. This is a natural tendency for an awakened sinner before he realizes how selfishly corrupt his life has really been. He thinks that by doing a little extra for God or giving a sum of money his situation with God will be eased.

Notes:

V. SCRIPTURE WORDS THAT DESCRIBE REPENTANCE

A. OLD TESTAMENT WORDS COMMONLY USED:

1. **TO REPENT** (naw-kham', S-5162¹³)—The word basically implies difficulty in breathing and properly means to sigh, to Pant, to groan, to breathe strongly or draw the breath forcibly. The word came to signify to be sorry, to grieve, to lament, to regret, to suffer remorse or to repent because of one's actions; also to grieve on account of the misery of anyone, hence to pity, console, or comfort. It is translated repent about 40 times,¹⁴ of which about 33 times refers to the actions of God in an aroused state of emotion (as Ge. 6:6-7; Ex. 32:12, 14; I Sam. 15:11, 35; Jer. 18:8, 10; Jonah 3:9-10; 4:2). Some of the instances where it is used in this sense of man are: Ex. 13:17; Jud. 21:6; Job 42:6; Jer. 8:6; 31:19.
2. **TO TURN** (shoob, S-7725)—To turn about, to return, to turn back, thus metaphorically to beconverted, as a sinner; to turn one's self to a person or thing, to have a radical change in one's attitude toward sin and God, with a complete turn to righteousness. The verb is very extensively used in various structures and renderings. It is used many times concerning God's actions (as Ps. 90:13). Examples concerning man turning from sin are: De. 4:30-31; I Sam. 7:3; II Chr. 6:24-25, 37-39; Neh. 1:9; Is. 55:7; Jer. 3:12-14; 18:8; Hos. 14:1-2; Jonah 3:8, 10; Zech. 1:3-4; Mal. 3:7. In Eze. 14:6 and 18:30-32 we have a double use of the same verb: "Return ye and turn yourselves" (ASV), giving idea of grief and altered relation.

B. NEW TESTAMENT WORDS COMMONLY USED:

1. **TO REPENT** (metanoe'o, S-3340)—To change one's mind or purpose, to undergo a change in frame of mind and feeling, to make a change in principle and practice, to reform, equivalent to the Old Testament word "turn;" derived from "meta", expressing the idea of change, and "noeo," to think, understand, conceive, apprehend. Some usages are: Mk. 1:15; 6:12; Lk. 13:3, 5; 15:7, 10; Acts 2:3 3:19; 17:30; 26:20; Re. 2:5, 16, 22; 3:3, 19.
2. **REPENTANCE** (me anoya, S-3341)—A change of mind or mode of thought and feeling, thenoun form from above verb: from "meta" and "noya, which is from "nous," the intellect, mind, or understanding in thought, feeling, and will. Some usages are: Lk. 3:3, 8; 5:32; 24:47; Acts 5:31; 11:18; 20:21; 26:20; Ro. 2:4; II Co. 7:9, 10; II Pe. 3:9.
3. **TO TURN ABOUT** (epistre'pho, S-1994)—To turn back, around, or towards, to return, toconvert, to turn one's self about or around; from "epi, upon, also used for emphasis, and "strepheo," to turn or change (used in Mt. 18:3). See the following usages: Mt. 13:15; Lk. 22:32; Acts 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20; I Th. 1:9; Jas. 5:19-20; I Pe. 2:25. The noun form appears only in Acts 15:3. A kindred verb, "apostre'pho" (S-654), to turn away, appears in Acts 3:26.

VI. WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

1. Repentance is an intelligent evaluation of one's past life of self-centered gratification, with a firm resolve to abandon all sinful indulgences in a return to discipleship and the Lordship of Christ as Savior.
2. Repentance is, negatively, an intelligent climactic renunciation of the whole principle of supreme selfishness as an end of life, with proper evaluation of the awfulness of sin and its consequences to God and man, and a firm determination to be through with it forever because of its intrinsic hatefulness; and, Positively, a presentation of ourselves to God as ruined moral beings for full divine ownership for whatever the grace of God can make out of us.

¹³ Transliterations of the various Hebrew and Greek words into English letter equivalents are given along with the number references from the Hebrew and Greek Dictionary portions of Strong's Concordance, for identification.

¹⁴ Authorized Version (AV) and American Standard Version (ASV), 1901.

3. Repentance is a revolutionary change in the ultimate intention in life, with a vow to be diligent in the choice of subordinate actions to the glory of God: "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (I Co. 10:31). It is to "lay aside the old self... and put on the "new self" and "be renewed (continually) in the spirit of your mind" (Ep. 4:22-24).
4. Repentance is to turn away from our sinful purpose of life, and turn toward god. It is to "turn about (instantly) toward (or facing, denoting direction) God, and away from (implying separation) the idols (phantoms or fantasies of the mind, false gods) to yield obedience (continually) (to be a slave or servant) to God living and true, and to wait for His Son out of from the heavens" (I Th. 1:9-10).
5. Repentance is to begin a completely new life of worth-while purpose and directive, instead of carelessly meandering about: "For ye were as sheep (continually) going astray (wandering or roaming about), but ye did turn yourselves about (or turn around, instantly) now to the Shepherd and bishop of your souls" (I Pe. 2:25).

VII. IS MAN ABLE TO REPENT?

In our discussion of the nature of sin we saw that sin is always a voluntary state or attitude of will in supremely preferring our own happiness rather than God's and our fellowmen's. While depravity strongly influences the will and has been developed to its present strength by our own actions, nevertheless we are the author of our own actions. So-called inability is a question of "will not" rather than "cannot" obey God's reasonable requirements. It should be enough to review the Biblical descriptions of sin and the plain commands of God for man to repent, which establishes beyond doubt man's present ability (Is. 1:16-18; 55:6-7; Hosea 10:12; Mt. 3:2; Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31). Would a God of love command man to do what he is unable to do and then threaten eternal punishment because man does not do what he is unable to do? This needs no answer.

NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26).

IS SIN MORE OR LESS CONTINUOUS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

Is there always a mixture of selfishness in every virtuous act, as I John 1:8 is claimed to teach? See illustration on page 70 for mixed moral character theory.

If this be true, there is no forgiven and transformed state or condition that is acceptable to God, which resultant blessed state is so often described, such as: I Co. 6:11; 15:10; Ep. 5:25-27; I Tim. 1:5; Titus 1:15; 3:5; Acts 24:16; I Jn. 3:21.

OR — IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD THE RULE OF DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING?

Are not brief sinful departures in thought and deed the exceptions to be continually guarded against, as a multitude of passages teach, such as: II Co. 7:1; Ga. 6:1; Jas. 1:12-16; 5:19-20; I Jn. 1:8; 2:1; 5:16-17; Re. 3:19?

Habitual obedience to God is described throughout the New Testament as the keystone of Christianity, such as: Mt. 7:21-23; Jn. 5:28-29; Ro. 6:1-2, 16-18; I Co. 6:9-10; II Co. 6:14-18; Tit. 2:11-14; He. 5:9; I Jn. 1:5, 7; 2:17; 3:6, 7-10; 5:18.

Brief departures in thought, word, and deed are to become less frequent as we "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pe. 3:18), as will be extensively discussed in Sections XIII and XIV.

SIN AND MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

(As developed in the great revivals of Northeastern United States, 1820-1850)

ALL SIN CONSISTS IN SINNING — There can be no moral character but in moral acts.

THE POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE IS ESSENTIAL TO FREE AGENCY — A free moral agent may always act contrary to any influence, not destructive to his freedom, that may be brought to bear upon him.

ABILITY LIMITS RESPONSIBILITY — Men are responsible only so far as they have adequate power to do what is required of them, or that they are responsible for nothing not under the control of the will.

Notes:

CHAPTER 11

The truth about **FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**

"He who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (He. 11:6).

"Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21, AV).

"No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day" (Jn. 6:44).

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast" (Ep. 2:8-9).

"That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses unto salvation" (Ro. 10:9-10).

In the section on repentance, it was said that salvation or reconciliation is a voluntary agreement on the part of both God and man to have a changed relationship. A "condition" is something established or agreed upon as a requirement to the fulfillment of something else. It is not something for the sake of which something else is done, but rather that without which something else cannot be done. A condition is thus to be distinguished from a cause. We have seen that repentance, or a total abandonment of supreme selfish interest, is the first condition of salvation or reconciliation to God. We now observe that saving faith is the second condition of salvation or reconciliation to God.

I. WHAT DOES SAVING FAITH INVOLVE?

What objects or areas of truth must saving faith consider and take action towards? Saving faith is a sincere facing of the full truth of reality and an elimination of every internal tension caused by our having rejected the truth of God in any area. Saving faith must involve all that the mind perceives to be true concerning the Godhead and man's relations. It is not that profound enlightenment must precede saving faith, but rather that nothing we do understand shall be resisted. An open-hearted attitude must prevail toward every aspect of truth that we do perceive.

Our life before coming to Christ in salvation consisted in a concentrated effort to "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro. 1:18). We sought to thrust out of our minds everything that disturbed us in our selfish manner of life. This attitude must be terminated before saving faith can possibly become a reality. We cannot keep on trying to flee from Divine evidences and truth, but must face it and allow it to affect us. Saving faith cannot cover up any negatives, for it is a facing of the great reality of what God has done to redeem us.

A. IN SAVING FAITH THERE MUST BE AN ACCEPTANCE OF EVERY REVEALED TRUTH THAT THE BIBLE AS THE WORD OF GOD IMPARTS TO US.

What we do not know of its wonders does not become an issue for action, but what we have learned and been persuaded of from its pages can not be rejected if saving faith is to arise within us. What the Bible tells us about the Godhead, and particularly about the true Deity and miraculous incarnation of the Lord Jesus and His atoning work,

Notes:

cannot be doubted or rejected. What the Bible tells us about our own persistent sinfulness and moral responsibilities must be received with appropriate realization of guilt. When the Bible affirms that we are dreadfully responsible for our own guilt, we cannot go into self-pity and blame Adam or our circumstances, but only ourselves. The Bible is the only source-book we have on the very facts that saving faith must embrace. If we doubt any part of its revelations, how can we truly believe any part of it?

All who are to be saved must receive the Bible, "not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe" (I Th. 2:13). If we have honest doubts over some things that we have been told that the Bible teaches, we must seek out the truth of the Bible for ourselves in a humble spirit of prayer to see if our objections are really taught in the Bible. We may be assured of Divine help in any such humble and honest endeavor. Just as surely as "God is love" and "God is light," there can never be any defensible objections against anything that is true concerning God. "While you have light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 12:36). "I have come as light into the world, that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness" (Jn. 12:46). Men are to be saved "through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth" (II Th. 2:13).

- B. SAVING FAITH MUST BE DIRECTED TO GOD THE FATHER**, as a God of love and kindness who is willing to extend mercy and forgiveness when this can be done consistent with all His moral obligations as a righteous Moral Governor.
1. God the Father must be recognized as supreme, to whom man must be reconciled: Jn. 14:6; Ep. 2:18; He. 4:13; 11:6; I Pe. 1:21; I Jn. 5:11.
 2. The intimacy and involvement of the Divine Personalities requires saving faith to be a combined commitment: Jn. 12:44-45; 14:1; 10-11; I Jn. 4:14-16.
 3. God the Father is directly affirmed to be an object of saving faith: Jn. 5:24; Ro. 4:24; I Tim. 4:10; Tit. 3:4-7; He. 6:1; I Pe. 1:17; I Jn. 5:10.
- C. SAVING FAITH MUST BE DIRECTED TOWARD THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**, the Second Person of the blessed Trinity, as true Deity who became incarnate in great humility by means of the Virgin Birth for the purpose of revealing the Godhead and suffering unto death as "the Savior of the world." Many New Testament passages make it clear that we must receive the Lord Jesus for all that He is said to be or we do not receive Him at all. We may group passages directing faith toward Christ as follows:
1. Those passages stressing the whole advent and saviorhood of Christ: Jn. 7:37-39; 11:25-26; Acts 11:17; Ro. 3:22; Ga. 2:19-20; 3:22, 26; I Tim. 1:16; I Jn. 5:13.
 2. Those passages stressing the Deity and Lordship of Christ: Jn. 1:1; 3:15, 16, 18, 36; 6:40, 46-47; 6:69; 8:23-24; 11:27; 20:31; Acts 8:37; 16:31; 20:21; Ro. 10:9; Tit. 2:13; I Jn. 3:23; 5:1, 5, 10.
 3. Those passages emphasizing Christ as Savior: Jn. 1:12,14; 4:42; 14:1; Ro. 3:26; Tit. 3:6.
- D. MORE SPECIFICALLY, SAVING FAITH MUST BE DIRECTED TO "THE GOSPEL" OR THE ATONING DEATH OF CHRIST:** Mk. 1:14-15; Jn. 6:50-58; Acts 15:7; Ro. 1:16; 3:24-25; I Co. 1:23-24; 15:1-4; Phil. 1:27.
- E. THE RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, AND PRESENT GLORY OF THE INCARNATE CHRIST ARE SET FORTH AS NECESSARY OBJECTS OF SAVING FAITH:** Lk. 24:39-41; Jn. 20:26-29; Acts 5:31; Ro. 4:24-25; 10:9; I Co. 15:4, 12, 14, 17; Phil. 2:9-11; I Th. 4:14; I Pe. 1:21.

II. WHY IS A CLIMAX OF FAITH NECESSARY TO SALVATION?

Notes:

The New Testament sets forth salvation as the outstanding climactic experience of our entire lives. The strongest contrasts from our daily observations are used to set forth this instantaneous transformation. Man is to pass from spiritual death to spiritual life, from alienation from God to fellowship with God, from darkness to light, from disobedience to obedience, from supreme self love to virtuous love, from loving the world to loving God, from a corrupt tree to a good tree, from a state of lawlessness to loving conformity to God's reasonable requirements. Nothing except a profound climax could introduce such a revolutionary change.

1. Every benefactor offering special privileges or blessings requires ratification from the recipient, indicating that the offer has been accepted. God in this dispensation of special grace has issued "glad tidings" to whom so ever will come. This calls for a formal acceptance on the basis of God's conditions.
2. God is no respecter of persons and therefore there must be an opportunity given for man's response or reaction, which God can point to as the reason why special favors and blessings are granted to some and not to others.
3. The forgiveness of sins and the inner transformation of the repentant sinner is a climax and requires a climax to initiate it. "You have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren . . . (I Pe. 1:22).
4. Man needs an opportunity that would require him to take climactic action to terminate the life of selfishness or "the old self" and emerge into "the new self" of virtuous love. Much persuasion and consideration enters into man's capitulation to Christ, but when man finally yields it is a sudden experience.
5. In the present age of "the grace of God," God is proposing to institute a new method of control in the lives of those who submit to His mercy. God proposes to bring redeemed men into such an intimate relationship to the resurrected Christ in their inner lives that they will no longer need to be controlled or constrained by law or rules of action. A regulation of life is to be substituted for a regulation of law. Such a new and vital relationship requires a means of union. "The righteous man shall live by faith" (Ro. 1:17). The beginning of this life of faith involves a climax when man swings open the door of his inner- most being to the heavenly Guest who has been seeking admission. Whereupon the Savior says: "I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Re. 3:20).

III. HAS OF FAITH ALWAYS BEEN REQUIRED AND IS IT NOW REQUIRED AS A CONDITION OF SALVATION AND RECONCILIATION TO GOD?

There has been a great enlargement in the scope of faith as God's revelations to man have increased, but there has been no change in the requirement of faith as a condition of salvation. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah are said to have "died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance" (He. 11:13). "Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad" (Jn. 8:56). "If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me." said the Savior (Jn. 5:46). "As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry" (I Pe. 1:10-12). Faith always has been and always will be the meeting place between a loving and forgiving God and repentant sinners, as testified to in the following representative passages:

- A. **OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES SET FORTH THE REQUIREMENT OF FAITH UNDER THE OLD COVENANT.**
 1. With their system of animal sacrifices, faith was more external in its manifestations and therefore is often implied in the command to bring certain sacrifices at certain times it was not enough to believe in animal sacrifices; they had to be actually brought in the prescribed way as a fulfillment of faith: Ge. 4:4; 8:20; 12:7-8; Le. 4:1-6, 35; 6:6-7; 16:6, 15-16.
 2. Words used to describe the climax of saving faith and continued trust in God:
 - a. To believe or to trust—Properly to stay, to sustain, to build up or support; thus to lean upon, to build upon,

Notes:

to trust, to confide in, to believe upon, to become sure or certain: Ge. 15:6; Ex. 14:31; Nu. 14:11; II Chr. 20:20; Ps. 19:7; Is. 28:16; 43:10; Jonah 3:5.

- b. To trust or to confide—To confide in anyone, to set one's hope and confidence upon anyone; to be secure, to fear nothing for one's self: Ps. 9:10; 13:5; 33:21; 37:3, 5; Prov. 3:5; Is. 12:2; 26:3-4; 50:10; Jer. 17:7-8.
- c. To trust or to take refuge—Properly to flee for protection, to take refuge; hence to trust in someone: Ps. 2:12; 18:2; 31:1; 57:1-2; 71:1; Is. 57:13; Nahum 1:7.
- d. To rest or to stay upon—To prop, to lean upon; to place or lay something upon anything, so that it may rest upon and be supported by it; to lay the hand upon anything so as to lean upon the hand; to uphold, to sustain, to aid: Le. 1:2-5; 4:4, 15; II Chr. 32:8; Ps. 51:12; 119:116; Is. 26:3; 48:2.

B. NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES SET FORTH THE REQUIREMENT OF FAITH WITH GREATER DEFINITENESS AND FREQUENCY.

1. To believe—To believe a person, or a statement made by a person, to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit or place confidence in, to rely upon, to cast one's self upon something or someone as stable and trustworthy, to trust in or commit one's life to: Mk. 1:15; Jn. 3:15, 16, 36; 7:38-39; Acts 10:43; I Pe. 1:8; I Jn. 5:10.

The passive voice is used in the following, where faithful men have been entrusted by God with the Scriptures and the Gospel: Ro. 3:2; Ga. 2:7; I Th. 2:4; I Tim. 1:11; Tit. 1:3.

2. Faith—Belief, firm persuasion or conviction of the truth of anything, generally of the leaning of the entire personality upon God or Christ in absolute trust and confidence: Acts 15:9; Ro. 3:25; 5:1; Phil. 3:9; He. 11:1.
3. To receive—To take, take with the hand, lay hold of any person or thing in order to use, to admit, receive a person, give him access to one's self: Jn. 1:12. See Re. 3:20 for what is meant by receiving Christ.
4. To receive to one's self—To take or join to one's self, admit, acknowledge, receive something transmitted, to receive with the mind; properly, to take to one's side: Jn. 1:11; I Co. 15:1; Col. 2:6; I Th. 2:13; Jn. 14:3 (of Christ).
5. To trust or be persuaded—To persuade or urge, apply persuasion, seek to persuade, to be persuaded, to trust, have confidence, be confident: Lk. 16:31; Acts 17:4; 18:4; 19:8, 26; 26:28; 28:23-24; II Co. 1:9; He. 2:13.
6. To obey—To hearken to a command, be obedient unto, submit to, give ear to, listen to, render submissive acceptance; from a preposition, under, and a verb, to hear: Acts 6:7; Ro. 6:17; 10:16; II Th. 1:8; He. 5:9.
7. Obedience—As above: Ro. 1:5; 6:16 (compare with 10:10); 16:26; I Pe. 1:22.
8. To trust or hope—To direct hope towards something or someone, hopefully to trust in, to repose hope and confidence in: Mt. 12:21; Ro. 15:12; I Tim. 4:10; 5:5; 6:17; I Pe. 3:5.
9. Trust or hope—Expectation of good, trust, confidence: Ro. 8:24; 12:12; I Pe. 1:21.
10. To eat and drink—In a spiritual sense of partaking intimately of the atoning sufferings of the Lord Jesus and the quickening life of the Godhead: Mt. 5:6; Jn. 4:10, 13-14; 6:33, 35, 41, 48, 50-51, 53-58, 63; 7:37-39; Re. 2:7; 22:17.

IV. WHAT IS NOT SAVING FAITH?

1. Saving faith is not merely an intellectual state which professes belief in the facts of the Gospel and the Bible.
2. It is not to believe that one is saved, usually based upon accepting a concept of the Atonement that claims that in some mysterious way the guilt of our past, present, and future sins are all literally paid for, so that a humbling

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repentance, pleading for the mercy of God in forgiveness of past sins, is not necessary.

3. It is not a self-energized and laborious effort to reach out into the unknown and "dare to believe." As we shall see, saving faith is a total committal of will to the sufferings of Christ as made real by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It is a taking action upon what we clearly perceive in our minds.
4. It is not a partial commitment of some sort that does not involve the whole life.
5. It is not a so-called receiving Jesus as Savior and not as Lord to reign in absolute supremacy over our lives, making discipleship optional as some kind of second commitment. We either receive the Lord Jesus in all His august majesty as both Lord and Savior or we do not receive Him at all (Jn. 1:11-12; Ro. 10:9; I Co. 6:19-20). A partial reception is unreasonable and impossible.
6. It is not merely an emotional climax brought about by fear of punishment and hell. This state is only the beginning of the process of spiritual awakening.

V. WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

1. Saving faith is an intelligent committal of ourselves to the atoning death of Christ, in the illumination of the Holy Spirit, as the only means of forgiveness of past sins.
2. Saving faith is an act of will in total commitment, based upon an enlightened intelligence of all that is involved, with a deep realization of our guilt and our absolute dependence upon the mercy of God through the sufferings of Christ, which we are permitted to have a personal interest in. It is a believing with the whole heart, the very center of our personalities (Ro. 6:17; 10:9-10), a partaking of Christ in the very depth of our consciousness (Jn. 6:53-58). No deeper commitment or action of personality is possible. The Christian life is a continuation of this total commitment under the tender guidance of the Holy Spirit (Ro. 8:14; I Co. 3:16; Ga. 5:18), with a continual growth in knowledge and improvement in conduct (I Pe. 2:2; II Pe. 3:18; II Co. 7:1).
3. Saving faith involves an understanding or realization of the main problems that God faced in His loving desire to reconcile repentant sinners back into His glorious presence. Some great drastic measure was necessary, "that He might be just" to all His moral responsibilities and the dreadful situation into which man has involved himself and be enabled to be "the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Ro. 3:26). "Without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (He. 9:22). Saving faith is an acceptance of all the historical facts that are revealed in the New Testament concerning the advent, teachings, and suffering of the Lord Jesus, "that He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (He. 9:26).
4. Saving faith must also include a firm belief in the testimony of the Word of God and in the impartial love of God, that God has no elected favorites in choosing one above another to be saved (Is. 1:18; 45:22; 55:1; Eze. 18:30-32; Mt. 23:37; Mk. 16:15; Acts 10:34-35; Ro. 2:11; Re. 3:20), and, therefore, that the atoning death of Christ was made equally for all men, with no qualifications whatever, and thus for each one of us as individuals (Is. 53:6; Jn. 1:29; 3:17; II Co. 5:14-15; I Tim. 2:3-6; He. 2:9; I Jn. 2:1-2).
5. Repentant sinners, therefore, are saved by a full committal of will, or by faith in the fact that the Lord Jesus has died and sacrificed His holy and sinless life that they might be forgiven of the sins upon their darkened consciences. The repentant sinner accepts this terrifying necessity, with a broken and contrite heart, and experiences in actuality the power of the Cross through personal identification with Christ in absolute surrender. "To us who are being saved it is the power of God," wrote the Apostle Paul (I Co. 1:18).

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VI. HOW AND WHEN DOES THE CLIMAX OF SAVING FAITH ACTUALLY OCCUR?

Saving faith will become a glorious vital experience in our innermost consciousness when God the Father is so convinced of the sincerity of our repentance that He gives us over to be intimately exposed to the atoning death of His blessed Son by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out" (Jn. 6:37). See drawing power of the cross on cloud illustration on page 101.

1. Saving faith is always our own act, a total committal or trust in the sufferings of Christ as our only hope of obtaining the forgiveness of the dreadful guilt of our sin: Mk. 1:15; 16:16; Jn. 1:12; 3:18, 36; Acts 10:43.
2. Saving faith cannot act without a full persuasion of the reality of its object. Saving faith and the resulting new spiritual birth is a supernatural activity. It is not self-generated. It is to be "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn. 1:13). It is to be "born again" or from above, so one can "see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:3). Saving faith must take place "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men but on the power of God" (I Co. 2:4-5). It must not come "in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction" (I Th. 1:5). The Holy Spirit "shall glorify Me," the Lord Jesus said, "for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (Jn. 16:14). "No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Co. 12:3). This obviously refers to a full realization in our minds of the reality and majestic greatness of the Lord Jesus in His life and sufferings, and not to a mere repetition of words. The Lord Jesus said that God could only be worshipped "in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:24). This "truth" must include the rightful concept of greatness and smallness. God must be realized in His true greatness and we in our true smallness. This is only possible as the Holy Spirit makes real the life of the Godhead before our minds. When Isaiah "saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted," he assumed his proper place of prostration and said: "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips." He saw submission to so great a Being as a privilege, and said: "Here am I, Send me!" (Is. 6:1, 5, 8).
3. God the Father is active in the crisis of saving faith and draws us into a consciousness of the sufferings of the Son, through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus said: "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets 'And they shall all be taught of God.' Every one who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me" (Jn. 6:44-45). "No one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father" (Jn. 6:65). These passages indicate that it is God the Father who appoints or calls the repentant sinner into the intimacies of salvation and saving faith, in which the Holy Spirit is the Divine Activator (I Th. 1:4-5; II Th. 2:13). "The Gentiles were glad and were glorifying the word of the Lord, and did believe, as many as were being appointed unto life eternal" (Acts 13:48).
4. Saving faith is induced or springs up overwhelmingly from within our willing hearts, as a result of these intimate Divine manifestations, and the climactic meeting-place of God and man takes place. "For by grace ye are, having come to be saved through faith; and this not out of from yourselves, of God the gift; not out of from works, so that not anyone should glory" (Ep. 2:8-9). Saving faith is the gift of God in the sense that our minds must have vividly portrayed before them an object for faith to commit itself to before it can act (II Co. 3:18; 4:6). Saving faith is induced by a Divine drawing power of love and becomes a spontaneous response of our whole being in its greatest commitment. When we allow the Holy Spirit to relive the cross of Christ before our minds until our own sin breaks down our hearts completely as it did the Savior's, then the look of faith will be inspired within us out of desperation, even as many of the dying Israelites looked to the serpent of brass which God directed Moses to make and place upon a standard as a remedy (Nu. 21:7-9; Jn. 3:14-15; 12:32).

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SUMMARY

The forgiveness of sins and the inner transformation of the repentant sinner is the greatest climax in the experiences of life and requires the climax of saving faith to initiate it. At this moment the will yields itself up completely to the atoning love of Christ and gladly terminates the ugly life of selfishness, or "the old self," to enter the challenging and beautiful life of love, "the new self." It is humanly impossible to abandon completely our whole former basis of life unless we are fully persuaded that it has been wholly wrong and that a wholly new manner of life is possible. We will never generate within ourselves by a process of logic this revolutionary conclusion, because we have so perverted our thinking in self-defense and have become so depraved in our experiences. It is only a Divine visitation to each one personally that will arouse us to action and lovingly persuade us. The somewhat realized but unseen world must be seen clearly with the mind's eye. The compassions of the Godhead in accomplishing a righteous method of reconciliation must be felt in the depth of our innermost being. A measure of the Savior's suffering and grief must be experienced to overcome the last resistance of our wills.

Saving faith must always be a human climax, a voluntary death to self and pride. Man is able to renounce himself and submit to the loving and intelligent will of God, as God has commanded, but refuses to do so. God never commands impossibilities or He would be unjust. But man has so entrenched himself in his selfish ways of life that he never will break away from it apart from a manifestation of the love of God that is almost compelling. Thus it is that every act of faith is a reaction to a Divine beckoning, a Divine illumination of the Being and heart of God, which is so persuasive in the inner depths of the mind that no physical manifestation could increase its effectiveness. Saving faith is never self-generated. If God is not persuaded that we are sincerely reacting in repentance to His overtures of mercy and goodness, the Divine illumination of the nature of the sufferings of Christ and the consciousness of the majestic greatness of God will never be granted. Thus the climax of faith, the personal meeting-place of God and man, will never occur.

The Lord Jesus portrayed His kingdom as being protected against proud intruders. If God could not see it wise to condescend personally to an individual, that person never could enter the exclusive kingdom of the humble. It is God alone who decides who is submitting to increased light or understanding and who is not. God in great compassion longs for the reconciliation of all men (I Tim. 2:3-4; II Pe. 3:9). The Savior pictured Himself as going after one lost sheep (Lk. 15:4-7). However, God is absolutely sovereign in this reconciliation. Many passages express this unhappy limitation that God must place over His channels of mercy, such as: Jn. 1:13; Ro. 9:15-16, 18. Saving faith, therefore, involves a direct Divine agency in granting spiritual illumination to the mind of the repentant sinner in such a sense that it can be said that faith "is the gift of God." But the climax of saving faith is always man's voluntary capitulation to this condescending Divine influence of love.

A MISSING LINK TO MENTAL HEALTH¹⁵

By: O. Hobart Mowrer

Mr. Mowrer is a University of Illinois research psychologist who has written extensively on the failure of religion and psychiatry to deal with mental and emotional disturbances.

Today it is widely recognized that in former times the problems of psychiatry [which literally means the care or cure of souls] were handled largely within the sphere of religion. And the indications are that during the first few centuries of the Christian era the church was extraordinarily competent in this regard. Religious "congregations" then weren't the large and relatively impersonal masses of people which today make up the membership of so many of our churches.

Instead, they were little bands or groups [sometimes known as "house churches"] whose members knew each other intimately and who deeply shared their life experiences.

Today we are finding that the essence of psychopathology lies in the fact that the afflicted person is socially alienated, out of community, estranged. Characteristically, and quite understandably, he is uncomfortable with and afraid of people, and the tendency to withdraw from human contact is an almost universal "symptom."

In early Christian times, such wayward or "lost" souls were encouraged to join a little community or group of persons who called themselves not Christians but simply "People of the Way." And this "way" was specifically to lead the lost and estranged back into authentic, fulfilling human existence. This was the essence of "salvation," healing.

First, Exomologesis

The early Christians understood this well. And the first step in the restoration of the wayward was a procedure known as exomologesis, namely, a deep thoroughgoing, unreserved form of self-disclosure, perhaps first to one or two individuals and then to a small group. After this, the individual placed himself "under the judgement" of the group. The group responded to his confession of past wrongdoing with love and compassion, rejoicing at his newfound honesty and courage.

But "forgiveness" was not automatic. The individual, depending upon the nature and extent of his misdeeds, was expected to make restitution, do penance. And when this was accomplished the person's self-respect returned, his apprehension and fear vanished, and he was restored to community, healed.

But this powerful and effective form of "psychiatry" was to undergo a strange fate. In 325 the Roman Emperor Constantine called the Council of Nicaea and there made the Christians a remarkable offer. If they would give him a consistent, monolithic description of their faith and functions, he would not only end the persecution in which he and his predecessors had engaged; he would make Christianity the state religion [and thus, hopefully, stop the impending disintegration of the Roman Empire].

Understandably, the church fathers who assembled at Nicaea accepted this proposal. But this action was disastrous. The church now had to be popular; had to have a universal appeal, with the result that "salvation" progressively easier—and less and less genuinely effective.

¹⁵ The above article from The Chicago Tribune, 12-27-71, is a very valuable summary of a relatively recent development in the realm of research psychology, called REALITY THERAPY. It appears that this remarkable research trend has been awakened by observing the failure of the cover-up type of psychology that has been practiced during this century and the beneficial results that have followed when persons were dealt with as morally responsible beings. The psychological success of the Early Church is recorded in history and this appears to have led inquiry as to the secret of this achievement. This section of our studies has insisted that reconciliation to God must involve a total return to truth and a humble confession of guilt, with no reservations whatever. It is most refreshing to observe this secular confirmation.

Lead to Revolution

By the 16th century, the church had, in this way, so far lost its original power and purpose that a revolution took place—the so-called Protestant Reformation.

The result was that the church now became even less effective in dealing with sick souls than it had previously been. The "insane" were said to be possessed of the devil, and were not uncommonly beaten, thrown into prison, and otherwise abused.

What is sometimes called the First Psychiatric Revolution involved a reclassification of the psychically disabled. They no longer were regarded as evil but as ill. Their abode changed from dens to hospitals; and instead of being punished they were to be helped, treated. Despite good intentions, this movement was also unsuccessful.

The Second Psychiatric Revolution was introduced, around the turn of the present century, by Sigmund Freud. He at long last gave psychiatry a theory, and the attendant method of treatment he called psychoanalysis.

The "sick" person, he thought, had repressed some of his "instincts," notably those of sex and aggression. And the cure consisted of helping him undo these repressions and learn to be freer, more expressive. But now, after half a century of energetic application of this approach, the situation is still critical; and many believe that we are today caught up in a third revolution.

This is variously called social psychiatry, community mental health, or group therapy. But in any case, the underlying assumption is that people get into emotional difficulties because they have been deviant and dishonest, i.e, out of community.

The language which is thus being used is obviously different from that of the early Christians [who spoke of having been lost and then found, dead and brought to life, etc.], but the underlying principles and operation are strikingly similar. And if the church, by proceeding along these lines, was once effective, there is reason to believe that modern psychology and psychiatry can also be. Here, interestingly, science and religion seem to be coalescing.

And when conceived in this way the objectives of religion become virtually and identical with those of social psychiatry and group therapy. Seen in historical perspective, the problem of personality disorder, which for a long time has been dogged by confusion and failure, is once again being approached in a way which justifies at least guarded optimism and hope.

CHAPTER 12

The truth about **TRANSFORMATION OF HEART AND LIFE**

"Unless one is born again (or from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:3).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:9).

"God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit . . . cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9).

"The washing of regeneration, and renewing by the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:5).

"When we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ" (Ep. 2:5).

"The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Ro. 5:5).

God endowed man's constitution with profound abilities and reactions to enable him to achieve great heights of comprehension and moral character in the imitation of his Creator. Just as virtuous actions would deposit uplifting characteristics in the inner personality, so sinful indulgences would degrade our inner beings and bring about disturbing agitations. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts... and defile the man," declared the Savior (Mk. 7:21-23). A "stubbornness and unrepentant heart" (Ro. 2:5) becomes entrenched with each persistent action. A mighty tyrant is developed in the emotional life. "Fleshly lusts (or desires) . . . wage war against the soul" (1 Pe. 2:11). "The sinful passions . . . work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death" (Ro. 7:5).

Men are "enslaved to various lusts (or desires) and pleasures" (Tit. 3:3), "Indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Ep. 2:3). They have become "unholy and profane" (1 Tim. 1:9). There is a "defilement of flesh and spirit" (II Co. 7:1). God has had to give man up to "impurity" (Ro. 1:24). "Their mind and their conscience are defiled" so that "nothing is pure" (Tit. 1:15). They are "seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron" (1 Tim. 4:2). Man's heart condemns him so that he cannot have "confidence before God" (1 Jn. 3:20-21). Man is in a state of "darkness" (Ep. 5:8), is "dead in . . . transgressions" (Col. 2:13), "being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God" (Ep. 4:18). "The wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet . . . There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked" (Is. 57:20-21).

God in great mercy has made plans to bring about a full reconciliation or restoration of repentant sinners by transforming their whole inner personalities from the devastations of sin so that they can be admitted back into the circle of loving fellowship that the Godhead experience together (Jn. 17:21-23). Man does not need any new faculties or abilities to prepare him for such profound relationships, but needs a supernatural transformation from the moral chaos into which he has brought himself and an admittance back into a consciousness of the Divine life.

In describing this wonderful transformation, the Bible uses various analogies or comparisons with things that we have some knowledge of in its endeavor to enlighten our understanding. It is essential in understanding analogies that we do not press their interpretation too far, otherwise we are apt to miss the central point that is being stressed and go off into erroneous details. There is generally one feature of a particular truth that is being elucidated by an analogy. We must seek this out for our own enlightenment and then return to the main channel of truth with this added concept.

Notes:

I. GOD'S PLANS FOR PROFOUND CHRISTIAN BLESSING IN THIS AGE OF GRACE

The Godhead made long-range plans to bring about the profound blessings that we are privileged to partake of in this dispensation of "the grace of God" (Ep. 3:2).¹⁶

1. Man cannot be regenerated or controlled by sheer force or by Divine omnipotence, but only by the application of appropriate means. Regeneration is a moral change in which the subject himself also has an active part.
 - a. The mind or intellect, with imagination, conscience, and memory, must be purified, delivered from guilt and inspired.
 - b. The emotions must be quieted from sinful agitation in order to experience a new area of response in virtuous love.
 - c. The will must be quickened or reactivated from a state of defeat to a place of delightful authority. The life of the Godhead must become a joyful reality to give dimension and worthwhile directive to life. Therefore, some means must be brought into existence that both God and man can use in this complete inner renovation of personality and also in sustaining spiritual life: Jas. 1:18; I Pe. 1:22-23.
2. The blessed atonement of Christ has become the means used by the Holy Spirit, in response to our faith, to purify our innermost being as we repent, and to induce us to live a new spiritual life of victory over sin. The advent and sufferings of Christ now accomplish what the prefigured types could not: He. 9:24-26; 10:1-4, 9-14.
3. A chain of blessed prophecies were given to portray the exceedingly great blessings of Divine relationships that have now come to be bestowed through the agency of the Holy Spirit:

I Pe. <u>1:10-12</u>	Jn. <u>1:33</u>	Jn. <u>14:15-17</u>	Mk. 16:14-18
Nu. 11:29 (24-29)	Lk. 4:18-19	Jn. 14:25-26; 15:26	Lk. 24:44-49
Joel <u>2:28-29</u>	Jn. <u>4:13-14</u>	Jn. 16:7-15	Lk. 3:21-22; <u>11:13</u>
Mt. <u>3:11-12</u>	Jn. <u>7:37-39</u>	Jn. <u>20:19-22</u>	Acts <u>1:3-8</u>

4. These blessed prophecies were fulfilled:
 - a. To Christ's disciples who were either Jews or Jewish proselytes on that first Day of Pentecost after His ascension: Acts 2:1-18, 33, 37-39.
 - b. Upon Gentiles seeking the face of God in repentance apart from Judaism, some ten years later: Acts 10:1 to 11:18. This was a true turning point in God's dealing with repentant sinners, Acts 11:18 indicating this change.
 - c. Upon the Samaritans who turned to God at the preaching of Philip a few years before, a less important fulfillment: Acts 8:5-17. This may have been a merciful bestowal upon a people of mixed Jewish and Gentile origin, where Acts 2:38-39 was not being fulfilled. They were separately classified (Mt. 10:5-6; Acts 1:8) and no objection of association was made, as later with Gentiles (Acts 10:28; 11:1-3, 12, 17-18, 19; 15:7).
5. These profound promises involved the formation of a new organism called "the Church" (or called-out ones from the world), in which the life of the risen Christ was to become a living reality through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit: Mt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Ep. 1:22-23; 5:25.
 - a. This intimate Divine relationship with repentant sinners is called a "mystery" (a secret or hidden thing) and was revealed particularly through the Apostle Paul: Ro. 16:25-27; Ep. 3:35; Col. 1:25-27; 2:1-3.

¹⁶ See charts showing God's great problem in increasing blessings in the new Covenant.

- b. The unity of the members of our physical body as related to our mind is used to illustrate the oneness of spiritual life which Christ purposes to live within us through the Holy Spirit, believers being called "the body of Christ": Ro. 12:4-5; I Co. 10:17; 12:12-13, 27; Ep. 1: 22-23; 3:6; 4:4; 5:23, 29-30; Col. 1:18; 3:15; also see I Co. 6:15, 17.
- c. This intimate relation with Christ through the gift of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit is said to be the blessed fulfillment of "the promise": Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:4; Ga. 3:13-14, 22; Ep. 1:13; 3:6; He. 8:6; II Pe. 1:4.
- d. The Godhead is said to live or dwell within the very beings of believers through the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:17; Ro. 8:9; Col. 1:27; I Jn. 4:4), who have replaced the Old Testament Temple as God's dwelling place (Lk. 23:45; I Co. 3:16-17; 6:19-20; Ep. 2:22) and the priesthood (I Pe. 2:5, 9; Re. 1:6).
- e. Believers as indwelt by the Holy Spirit are in happy submission to and are owned by God: Lk. 17:21; I Co. 6:19-20; Ga. 5:24; Ep. 1:14; 5:24-27; Col. 1:13; Tit. 2:14; I Pe. 2:9.
- f. The frequent use of the word "grace" as characterizing "the stewardship of God's grace," as revealed particularly to the Apostle Paul, is to be viewed as the greatest condescension of the Godhead to bless totally-undeserving mankind since the fall. It is not in any sense to be thought of as a leniency or as a compromise with the unchanging demands of repentance and submission as the first condition of salvation: Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30; 20:21, 24; 26:15-20; Ro. 6:14; Ep. 2:5, 8; I Pe. 5:5.

"THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND THE GLORIES TO FOLLOW"

"As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow" (I Pe. 1:10-11).

OLD COVENANT NEW COVENANT

(Acts 3:25) (He. 8:6)

OLD COVENANT

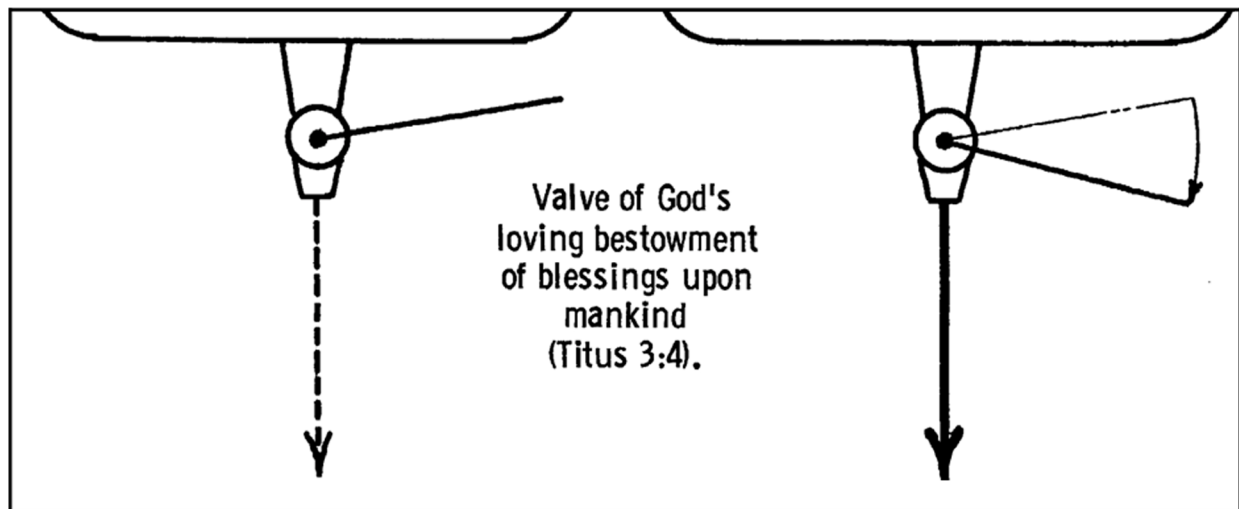
(Acts 3:25)

"I will make you a great nation . . . In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Ge. 12:2, 3). The Law was "a shadow of the good things to come" (He. 10:1).

NEW COVENANT

(He. 8:6)

"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro. 5:8). "The breadth and length and height and depth . . . the love of Christ" (Ep. 3:18-19).



"Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them" (Nu. 11:29). "I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind" (Joel 2:28). "The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn. 7:39). The Holy Spirit acted in free sovereignty, coming upon chosen leaders, bestowing gifts of office and leadership. The spiritual person of common rank did not appear to possess this fullness of blessing and power personally.

The Lord Jesus "is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33). Jesus "having been exalted to the right hand of God, . . . has poured forth this (the gift of the Holy Spirit) which you both see and hear" (Acts 2:33). "God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them (Gentiles apart from Judaism), giving them the Holy Spirit. . . cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). "The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Ro. 5:5).

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II. NEW TESTAMENT DESCRIPTIONS OF TRANSFORMATION AND DELIVERANCE FROM SIN

This blessed transformation of heart and life from the defilements of sin (Tit. 1:15) to the glorious deliverance from sin (Jn. 8:36; Ga. 5:1) is described in the New Testament by many profound words and analogies:

1. The contrasting words of physical death and life are applied to the revolutionary moral change in passing from a self-centered existence, with all its emotional chaos and frustrations, called death, to a completely new satisfying state of love in a partaking of the life of the Godhead, called life:
 - a. Living a life that is real and genuine, an emergence from "death": Ro. 8:6; Ga. 2:20; Ep. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13; 3:3-4; I Jn. 5:11-12.
 - b. Pass or go over from one state to another: Jn. 5:24 (out of from); I Jn. 3:14
 - c. Make alive, give life, cause to live: Jn. 6:63; II Co. 3:6.
 - d. Make alive together with: Ep. 2:5; Col. 2:13.
 - e. Raise up together: Ep. 2:6; Col. 2:12; 3:1.
 - f. Transformed or changed into another form: Ro. 12:2; II Co. 3:18; Mt. 17:2 ("transfigured," the same word used of Christ).
 - g. Partaker, sharer or partner: II Pe. 1:4; Lk. 5:10 (of James and John).
2. Words used of parenthood and the bringing of new life into existence, applied to the radical newness of spiritual transformation and the beginning of a new life in relation to God:
 - a. Beget or be born, to be begotten, to bear, bring forth, or give birth to, to be a parent to anyone, to impart or induce spiritual life: Jn. 1:13; 3:3, 5, 6, 7, 8; I Co. 4:15; Phile. 10; I Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.
 - b. The preposition rendered "out of from" occurs without the above verb, but with the same meaning: I Jn. 3:10; 4:6, 13; 5:19.
 - c. Bring forth, give birth to, or generate by spiritual birth: Jas. 1:18.
 - d. Regeneration, a new birth or a re-birth, a re-creation or a moral renovation, a restoration or a bringing back again of a former state or condition: Tit. 3:5.
 - e. Beget again or be born again, a preposition back or again prefixed to the above verb to beget: I Pe. 1:3, 23.
 - f. Newborn or just born, a prefix "just now": I Pe. 2:2.
 - g. Create, transform or completely change, properly to make habitable or reduce from a state of disorder and wildness, thus to create, call into being (as Col. 1:16; Re. 4:11; 10:6), frame, form or shape: Ep. 2:10; 4:24.
 - h. Creation or creature (the noun from above), a new spiritual creation, a renovated creature, a creature new in kind, character or mode, used for creation (Ro. 1:20; 8:22, 39; Re. 3:14); II Co. 5:17; Ga. 6:15.
 - i. Workmanship or work, that which has been made: Ep. 2:10.
3. Words for physical eating and drinking to sustain and energize physical life applied to spiritual partaking of the atonement of Christ and the life-giving energy of God: Jn. 6:50-53; 54-58 (eating and drinking, present tenses); Jn. 4:13-14; 7:37-39 (of living water); I Co. 10:4.
4. The putting off and putting on of a garment is likened to a termination of a self-centered manner of life and the

Notes:

beginning of an entirely different life of devotion to God and to our fellowmen: Ep. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10; Ro. 13:14.

5. Words for darkness and light applied to the contrasting moral character of a life lived for one's self with a life lived for God and our fellowmen: Mt. 6:22-23; Jn. 3:19-21; 8:12; II Co. 6:14; Ep. 5:8; I Pe. 2:9; I Jn. 1:5-7.
6. Words for love, a deliverance from a state of self-centeredness into a state of good-will or devotion, a voluntary purpose of mind:
 - a. To love: I Pe. 1:8, 22; I Jn. 3:14; 4:7-8, 19; 5:1.
 - b. Love: Ro. 5:5; Ga. 5:22; Col. 1:8; I Jn. 2:15; 4:16; 5:3; Re. 2:4.
7. Word to become, used of marriage, applied spiritually: Ro. 7:4-6 (Ep. 5:23-32).

III. NEW TESTAMENT DESCRIPTIONS OF THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF TRANSFORMATION AND DELIVERANCE FROM SIN

Words and descriptions that stress the NEGATIVE ASPECTS of this glorious transformation, indicating a miraculous removal of and deliverance from the seemingly indelible defilements of sin in our innermost being and a restoration of proper moral balance:

1. Words indicating our condition as we present ourselves for the transforming operations of the grace of God:
 - a. Defilement (several different words): Mk. 7:23; I Co. 8:7; II Co. 7:1; Tit. 1:15; Re. 3:4.
 - b. Filthy (properly of filthy or dirty clothing): Re. 22:11.
 - c. Unrighteous, not only in conduct but in character: I Co. 6:9; II Tim. 2:19; Re. 22:11.
 - d. Uncleaness, unchastity, lewdness, impurity: Ro. 1:24; Ga. 5:19; Ep. 4:19; 5:3, 5; Col. 3:5; II Pe. 2:10, 20.
 - e. Nature, our inner personality, modes of feeling and acting which by long habit has become a part of us: Ep. 2:3. It is not something we are born with but "disobedience" or sinful living that is the reason for God's "wrath." See Ep. 2:2; 5:3-6; Col. 3:5-7.
2. Words associated with water and the idea of removing physical dirt from our bodies or clothing, applied figuratively to the inner removal of the stains of personality through the application of the atonement of Christ:
 - a. Water used in washing or bathing, symbolizing the idea of spiritual cleansing or purification: Mt. 3:11; Jn. 3:5; Ep. 5:26 (Jas. 1:18); He. 10:22.
 - b. Wash or washing (several words): Jn. 13:10; Acts 22:16; I Co. 6:11; Ep. 5:26; Tit. 3:5; He. 10:22; II Pe. 2:22; Re. 7:14; 22:14.
 - c. Idea of white garments associated with washing: Mt. 17:2 (of Christ); Re. 3:4-5, 18; 7:13-14; 16:15; 19:8 (righteous acts of the saints).
3. A family of words meaning clean, to cleanse or make clean, applied in a spiritual sense: Mt. 5:8; Jn. 15:2-3; Acts 15:9; II Co. 7:1; II Tim. 2:21; Tit. 1:15; He. 9:13-14; Jas. 1:27; I Jn. 1:7, 9.
4. Associated words meaning pure, to make pure or cleanse: I Pe. 1:22; I Jn. 3:3.
5. The word fire, as having special significance of God's presence in Old Testament times, is associated with cleansing and purifying: Mt. 3:11; I Pe. 1:7; Re. 3:18.
6. A family of words meaning holy, holiness, or to make holy: Ro. 12:1; I Co. 1:30; 3:17; 6:11; Ep. 4:24; I Th. 3:13; II Th. 2:13; II Tim. 2:21; He. 12:10, 14; I Pe. 1:2, 15; Re. 22:11.

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7. Words to render fit and render excellent:
 - a. To render fit, qualify, make sufficient, adequate, or competent: II Co. 3:5-6; Col. 1:12.
 - b. To render excellent or make glorious, adorn with lustre, clothed with splendor: Ro. 8:30; I Pe. 1:8. Compare Ro. 12:2; II Co. 3:18; Mt. 17:2.
8. A family of words meaning righteous, righteousness, or to make righteous, also to declare righteous: Mt. 5:45; Ro. 6:18-19; 8:4; 14:17; I Co. 6:11; II Co. 6:14; Tit. 2:12; 3:7; I Pe. 2:24; I Jn. 3:7, 10; Re. 22:11.
9. Words for death, indicating a separation and deliverance from our old manner of life and its disturbing forces: Ro. 6:6-8; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Col. 3:3; I Pe. 2:24.
10. The word heal, to cure or make whole, applied spiritually: I Pe. 2:24.
11. Words to loose or make free from what is binding one: Jn. 8:36; Ro. 6:18, 22; Ga. 5:1; Tit. 2:14; I Jn. 3:8; Re. 1:5.
12. Words that describe vividly the net result of the cleansing and purifying operations of the Holy Spirit: II Co. 3:18; Ep. 5:27; Col. 1:22; II Tim. 1:3; II Pe. 3:14; I Jn. 3:21.

IV. NEW TESTAMENT DESCRIPTIONS OF THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF TRANSFORMATION AND DELIVERANCE FROM SIN

Words and descriptions that stress the POSITIVE ASPECTS of this glorious transformation, portraying the invasion of the manifested life of the Godhead to fill our cleansed and purified personalities with invigorating spiritual life and refreshing God-consciousness:

1. Words indicating that the Holy Spirit is a special gift from the Father and the risen Lord Jesus, which repentant believers receive or partake of: Lk. 11:13; Jn. 7:39; 14:16; Acts 2:38; 5:32; 10:45; 15:8; Ro. 8:9; I Co. 6:19; Ga. 4:6; He. 6:4.
2. Words indicating that the Holy Spirit is not to be a mere addition to our personality but is to permeate our entire being and enter into all our living: Jn. 14:17; Ro. 5:5; 8:9, 11, 15; 14:17; Ga. 5:16-18; Ep. 5:18-21; I Jn. 2:27.
3. Analogies that illustrate the intimate relationship of the Holy Spirit:
 - a. Vine and branches, a partaking of the risen Christ's life: Jn. 15:5.
 - b. Seal, to mark distinctively or confirm: II Co. 1:22; Ep. 1:13; 4:30.
 - c. Anoint or anointing, a raising to privilege: II Co. 1:21; I Jn. 2:20, 27.
 - d. Earnest, down payment or pledge of future blessings: II Co. 1:22; 5:5; Ep. 1:14.
 - e. Marriage relation in all sacredness: I Co. 6:15-17.
4. The words baptize and baptism appear to represent a twofold symbolism in the New Testament. The words basically mean to dip, immerse, submerge, to cleanse or purify by dipping or submerging, to wash or make clean with water.
 - a. Baptism in water, to which Christ submitted (Mt. 3:16) and instituted as a symbol of Christianity (Mt. 28:19-20), also by the Holy Spirit through the apostles (Acts 2:38), was given to symbolize profound spiritual transactions that were taking place or had taken place (Ro. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12).
 - b. Baptism in a spiritual sense refers to a most sacred and holy experience in being overwhelmed in God-consciousness: Mt. 3:11-12 (Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16-17); Jn. 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:15-17; I Co. 12:12-13. The word conveyed the idea of being completely permeated and overwhelmed in our innermost consciousness by a strong

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manifestation of the presence of God, or that the Holy Spirit would be liberally bestowed or poured out upon repentant believers. The Lord Jesus spoke of being baptized or overwhelmed with sorrow and grief because of His rejection and expected brutal treatment (Lk. 12:49-50; Mk. 10:38-39). The baptism in the Holy Spirit also involves the idea of "fire" and burning up the "chaff" (Mt. 3:11-12). In the Old Testament, fire was associated with the idea of cleansing and purifying from sin and spiritual defilement (Is. 6:4-7; Mal. 3:2-3). By using the two common illustrations of water and fire in connection with the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it appears that we have symbolized the twofold idea of a complete exposure and cleansing from all sin (Acts 15:8-9) and an overwhelming manifestation of God's presence and power to deliver from the power of sin and energize for Christian service (Ro. 5:5; Acts 1:8).

5. Various words are used to describe the wonderful blessings of this intimate relationship of the Holy Spirit with the Christian:
 - a. Fellowship with and direct access to the presence of the Godhead: II Co. 3:18; 4:6; 5:14; Ep. 2:18-22; I Jn. 1:3; Re. 3:20.
 - b. Know or knowledge, to become acquainted with or come to know by direct personal experience in our consciousness, which does not depend upon mental observation or deductions as do three other Greek words for know: Jn. 7:17; 17:3; Ro. 15:14; II Co. 4:6; Phil. 3:8, 10; II Pe. 3:18; I Jn. 3:24; 4:6, 7-8, 13, 16; 5:20.
 - c. Know thoroughly or have a precise and correct knowledge grounded in personal experience or acquaintance (the above words with a preposition "upon" prefixed for emphasis): Ro. 1:28; Ep. 1:17; 4:13; Col. 1:6; 3:10; I Tim. 2:4; He. 10:26; II Pe. 1:2-3, 8; 2:20, 21.
 - d. Renew or renewing, to renovate, restore, transform, refresh, invigorate, make new, cause to grow up anew: Ro. 12:2; II Co. 4:16; Ep. 4:23; Tit. 3:5; He. 6:6. This renewing takes place in the mind and must be a continuous action. It is a "newness of life" (Ro. 6:4) and a "newness of spirit" (7:6).
 - e. Water represented as bestowed freely and in abundance typifies the rich availability of refreshing experiences through the indwelling Holy Spirit: Jn. 4:10, 14; 7:37-39; Re. 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 17. The idea is also expressed in I Co. 12:13 ("all made to drink of one Spirit").
 - f. Full or filled with the Holy Spirit is to be the constant experience of the Christian, a continuous succession of climaxes as we look in faith to the Holy Spirit for delivering and transforming power: Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:3, 5, 8; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:9, 52; Ep. 3:19; 5:18; I Jn. 1:4.
 - g. Power, strength, might, energy, ability or efficacy is to characterize the Christian in his personal life and service for Christ: Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8; 6:8; Ro. 15:13; I Co. 2:4; I Th. 1:5. Also see Ro. 1:16; I Co. 1:18, 24; Ep. 1:18-19; and Ro. 6:4; 8:4; Ga. 5:16 for the victorious spiritual walk.
 - h. Fruit, that which originates or comes from something, an effect or result, used concerning the graces of character in the life of the Christian which are continually generated by the Holy Spirit if allowed to do so: Ga. 5:22-23. They are in sweet contrast to the crude "deeds of the flesh" (5:19-21).
 - i. Comfort or inner re-enforcement of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter or Helper. Jn. 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 9:31; II Co. 1:3-6; 7:4.
 - j. Grieve and quench represent actions which the Christian may take in opposition to the Holy Spirit only because of His intimacy and involvement in our lives: Ep. 4:30; I Th. 5:19. To grieve is to affect with sadness or sorrow, to offend. To quench is to suppress, extinguish, hinder, thwart or dampen, properly of fire or things on fire, to stifle or smother.

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V. THE NEW TESTAMENT DESCRIBES TRANSFORMATION AS A SUDDEN CLIMACTIC CHANGE

The words and analogies used, and verb tenses, overwhelmingly indicate that this grand transformation of heart and life is of a climactic or sudden nature. It is the most vital and consuming experience of our lives. Most of the verbs used are in tenses that indicate a climax, in addition to the very nature of the words.

The verb in the Greek language has tense, mode, and voice. The main idea of tense is to define the kind of action represented. The Greek aorist tense represents always a distinct, sudden, or climactic action. The following aorist tenses, therefore, demonstrate beyond all doubt the glorious climactic nature of the transforming grace of God, which the blessed Gospel promises to repentant sinners as a vital experience in their innermost consciousness. Some Greek perfect tenses are also included, which are marked by an (*). These also represent climactic action, including previous progress and the existence of the completed action.

1. Those verbs that describe the **WHOLE** climactic experience of transformation:
 - a. Saved, through washing and renewing: Tit. 3:5.
 - b. Born (spiritually): Jn. 1:13; 3:3, 5,7; I Co. 4:15; Phile. 10; I Jn. 5:18 (2nd). Also see the following perfect tenses*: Jn. 3:6, 8; I Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1; 5:18 (1st).
 - c. Born again (above with a prefix "again"): I Pe. 1:3, 23.
 - d. Bring forth, give birth to: Jas. 1:18.
 - e. Make alive together with: Ep. 2:5; Col. 2:13.
 - f. Created (transformed or completely changed): Ep. 2:10.
 - g. Put off (the old manner of life) and put on the new: Ep. 4:22-24.
 - h. Know thoroughly by experience: Col. 1:6; II Pe. 2:21*.
 - i. Open the ("heart") door, whereupon Christ spiritually manifests Himself: Re. 3:20.
 - j. Passed out of from death into life: Jn. 5:24*.
2. Those verbs that stress the **NEGATIVE ASPECTS** of the climactic experience of transformation:
 - a. Died (to sin with Christ): Ro. 6:7, 8; Col. 3:3.
 - b. Crucified (in a spiritual resemblance): Ro. 6:6 ("our old self" or way of living); Ga. 5:24 ("the flesh"); 6:14*("the world"); 2:20*("I" together with).
 - c. Set you free (by Christ, "free indeed"): Jn. 8:36.
 - d. Released us ("from our sins by His blood"): Re. 1:5.
 - e. Washed ("In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God"): I Co. 6:11.
 - f. Cleansed: Acts 15:9 ("their hearts by faith"); Ep. 5:26 ("by the washing of water with the word"). Also see kindred word "purified": I Pe. 1:22*.
 - g. To render fit or qualify: Col. 1:12.
 - h. To render excellent or make glorious: Ro. 8:30; I Pe. 1:8*.
 - i. Healed (spiritually): I Pe. 2:24 ("to sins having died, to righteousness we might live," aorist tenses, climactic).

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3. Those verbs that stress the POSITIVE ASPECTS of the climactic experience of transformation. These verbs all relate to the blessed bestowal of the promised Holy Spirit as the inner abiding Comforter, who is the special Agent of the Godhead to manifest the Divine life and power in this dispensation of "the grace of God." After cleansing or purifying, He takes up His abode in a climactic manner:
 - a. Become "partakers (companions, partners, or sharers) of the Divine nature": II Pe. 1:4.
 - b. Becoming "partakers (sharers or participators) of the Holy Spirit": He. 6:4.
 - c. Filled "with the Holy Spirit": Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31.
 - d. Poured out: Acts 2:33; 10:45*; Ro. 5:5* ("the love of God... within our hearts through the Holy Spirit"); Tit. 3:6 ("poured out upon us richly").
 - e. Fell upon (of the Holy Spirit upon a group of Gentiles): Acts 10:44; 11:15.
 - f. Did give (the Holy Spirit): Acts 5:32; 15:8; Ro. 5:5.
 - g. Sent forth (the Holy Spirit "into our hearts"): Ga. 4:6.
 - h. Baptized (in the Holy Spirit): I Co. 12:13.
 - i. Given to drink (of the Holy Spirit in a baptism): I Co. 12:13.
 - j. Received (the Holy Spirit): Acts 10:47; Ro. 8:15.
 - k. Anointed (by the Holy Spirit): II Co. 1:21; I Jn. 2:27.
 - l. Sealed (the Holy Spirit's presence is the seal): II Co. 1:22.
 - m. Clothed with power (the promised coming of the Holy Spirit): Lk. 24:49.
 - n. Raised up together (with Christ to partake of His resurrection life): Col. 3:1.
 - o. Sanctified (or made holy by the vital life of the Holy Spirit): I Co. 6:11 (follows "washed"); Ep. 5:26 (follows "having cleansed," an aorist participle auxiliary to the main verb).

VI. EVIDENCES THAT TRANSFORMATION HAS TAKEN PLACE

The evidence that this blessed transformation has taken place is an overwhelming consciousness that the loving disposition of the Godhead has moved into our innermost beings with overflowing joy (Ro. 5:5). This transformation has changed our entire outlook and purpose in life (Phil. 1:20-21). The atoning love of Christ our Savior has exposed and conquered our hearts by compassionate forgiveness (Ga. 2:20), so that we now serve our heavenly Father and our fellowmen "in newness of spirit" (Ro. 7:6):

1. There is a direct witness of the Holy Spirit with our spirit, the highest part of our being where God-consciousness resides, that we have in fact been reconciled to God: Acts 15:8-9; Ro. 8:15-16; I Co. 12:13; Ga. 4:4-6; I Jn. 3:24; 5:10; Re. 3:20.
2. There is a fullness of warm-hearted love to God and to our fellowmen in happy submission to the guidance and deliverance of the Holy Spirit, our new-found Companion and Comforter: Ro. 5:5; Jn. 13:35; Ro. 6:22; 9:1-3; I Co. 16:22; II Co. 3:18; 5:14; Ga. 5:22-23; I Jn. 4:7; 5:1.
3. The Holy Spirit may choose to manifest His presence and His approval of our full reconciliation by bestowing miraculous gifts of grace for various purposes, as was often true in the introduction and establishment of the early Church: I Co. 12:11; Mk. 16:17-20; Acts 2:4, 8, 11; 8:17-18; 10:45-47; 19:6.

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4. There will be a deep inner consciousness that we have been cleansed from the defilement of all sin and delivered from its power, since "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (I Jn. 1:7) and the "renewing by the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:5) permeates into the deep recesses of the mind and heart: Jn. 8:34, 36; I Co. 6:11; II Co. 5:17; II Th. 2:13; He. 6:4-5; I Pe. 2:2-3; I Jn. 3:21.
5. Victory over sin through the indwelling Holy Spirit is the predominant characteristic of daily life. Lapses into periods of selfish indulgence would be the exception: Ro. 6:2, 4, 14; 7:6; 8:4, 14, 26-27; II Co. 4:16; Ga. 5:16-18, 25; I Jn. 2:12-14; 3:4-10; 5:3-5.
6. There is a greatly-enlarged knowledge of the nature and Being of Gods and the whole realm of truth: Jn. 17:3; Ro. 15:14; I Co. 2:12; Phil. 3:7-11; Col. 1:6; I Th. 5:5; II Pe. 1:2; 3:18; I Jn. 2:20, 21, 27; 5:20.
7. The coming of the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts always brings great rejoicing, which is only a beginning of serene times of worship and great blessing in the fullness of the Holy Spirit: Acts 8:39 ("went on his way rejoicing"); 13:52 ("filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit"); 16:34 ("rejoiced greatly, having believed in God"); Ro. 14:17 ("righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"); Ga. 5:22 ("the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,..."); Ep. 5:18-20 ("singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord"); Col. 3:16 (similarly); I Th. 1:5-6 ("much full-assurance"... "with the joy of the Holy Spirit"); I Pe. 1:6, 8 ("greatly rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory").

The Lord Jesus "rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit" at God the Father's great desire to bless the humble (Lk. 10:21), spoke of "My joy made full in themselves" (Jn. 17:13), which was "the joy set before Him" in enduring "the cross" (He. 12:2). As we make our full commitment to our loving Lord and Savior in repentance and confession, the burden of our guilt and the cares of life are cast into oblivion and we are "anxious for nothing" (Phil. 4:6) in overwhelming consciousness of the love of God (Ro. 5:5).

The amazing life-cycle of a monarch butterfly is most intriguing and might illustrate the emergence from a very limited life of stupid self-concentration into the glorious realm of reconciliation and ever-enlarging God-consciousness. A parent butterfly lays an egg about the size of a pin-head under a milkweed leaf, from which a striped caterpillar emerges in about a week to feed on such plants and grow very rapidly as it crawls around. Within two weeks it will spin itself into an enclosure or cocoon which it has attached to a rigid surface. In about two weeks a grown beautiful butterfly emerges, pumping body fluid into its limp fleshly wings and soaring away into an entirely new kind of life among the beauties and fragrance of flowers, journeying long distances as seasons change.

The New Testament speaks of being "born from above" (Jn. 3:3, 7) and of becoming "partakers of the Divine nature" (II Pe. 1:4). The Lord Jesus said: "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). He prayed: "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (Jn. 17:3). "Life" is this emergence into Divine fellowship from a state of "death" or separation (Jn. 5:24), with merciful forgiveness and cleansing from sin. "He who has (or is having) the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life" (I Jn. 5:12).

This escape from "the corruption that is in the world by lust" (II Pe. 1:4), which we have all chosen to be a part of (Is. 53:6; Ro. 3:23), will only be achieved by our taking time to enter into a "cocoon" of isolation with the Lord Jesus in concentration upon His sacred life and atoning death (II Co. 8:9). It is this "togetherness" which brings about reconciliation and glorious deliverance. We see our miserable "caterpillar" life and long to emerge into the "butterfly" life, to explore endlessly the incomparable and inexhaustible life of the Godhead in the beauty of intelligence and holiness (Re. 4:8, 11; 5:9-10). Seeing love or true virtue for the first time (I Jn. 4:7-10), "the old self" or old way of living for small temporal things and experiences must go. But the emergence is not easy because of our long concentration on false values and damaging gratifications (Jn. 3:19-20). See again the cloud illustration on page 101.

The Lord Jesus not only has solved the problems of reconciliation but offers to go with us through this painful

process of recovery. The preposition "with" is prefixed to the verb "to crucify" and used in two instances to describe a spiritual resemblance in deep realization (Ro. 6:6; Ga. 2:20). It must mean that the Holy Spirit makes the life, teaching, and atoning sufferings of Christ so real before our minds (Jn. 16:14; II Co. 4:6) that we shutter at the awfulness of our self-centered lives and completely turn from it in disgust, "so we too might walk in newness of life" with our resurrected Savior (Ro. 6:4).

The tenses in the Greek text indicate a past climax of self-renunciation when we came to Christ. "Our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of (or as used by) sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (Ro. 6:6). "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me," wrote the Apostle Paul (Ga. 2:20). "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Ga. 5:24). Through realization of the Cross, "the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world," Paul further wrote (Ga. 6:14).

Thus it is that when we are willing to come "to the light" of the true God-man and man-man relationships (Jn. 3:21) and experience the pathos of the great recovering measures of the Godhead in our salvation in total commitment, we will be gloriously liberated. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 8:32). It will not be some kind of a laborious and tolerable freedom, but a glorious freedom. "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36)--free to live and serve our great God with a heavenly perspective. "The one who does the will of God abides forever" (I Jn. 2:17). "His bond-servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face" (Re. 22:3-4).

CHAPTER 13

The truth about
CONTINUATION IN THE LOVE OF GOD

"Building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life" (Jude 20-21).

"Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you" (I Tim. 4:16).

"He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard" (Col. 1:21-23).

"Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God . . . For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end" (He. 3:12-15).

"He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels" (Re. 3:5).

We have seen in previous studies that sin is a refusal to live intelligently toward God and toward our fellowmen, or a refusal to regard God's welfare supremely and our fellowmen's equally with our own. Sin has resulted in guilt of conscience, separation from God, bodily weakness and the toil of life, and death, after which comes judgment for sin and eternal remorse. Salvation is to be rescued from the consequences of our sin and reconciled back into the favor and blessing of God. The conditions of this restored relationship with God are things that must take place before salvation from the solemn perils of our present life can become a certainty.

The first condition of salvation we have abundantly seen to be repentance, or a turn from all rebellion of heart against the loving and intelligent will of God. It is a willingness to forsake and die out to our own selfish ways, and seek the happiness of God supremely and that of our fellowmen equally. Certainly, God can never reconcile rebels to Himself. How can sinners be cleansed from sin if they insist upon continuing to defile themselves with it?

The second condition of salvation is the committal of faith. The repentant sinner must commit his whole case for the forgiveness of past sins to the substituted sufferings of Christ as the only possible way in which God can extend mercy, consistent with His moral obligations. Thereupon there takes place the gracious pardon of past sin and the transforming grace of God, so that the renewed soul looks to God in profound gratitude and happily resolves that there shall be no more sin to cloud the horizon of his being and bring unhappiness to the Godhead and to his fellowmen.

It is now affirmed that there is a third condition of salvation—that both the Old and New Testaments insist that future salvation is conditional to the Christian who has been truly reconciled to God. As the Lord Jesus said to one He had healed: "Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may befall you" (Jn. 5:14). Every possible Divine aid is promised to the Christian to keep him in a happy state of deliverance from sin. "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 8:36). But there are solemn possibilities of apostasy, which has called forth endless warnings in the Word of God. Although the Holy Spirit is taking the initiative and is working within the

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believer's heart and mind in the direction of happy obedience, it is we ourselves who must "work out our salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12-13). Man is still profoundly endowed with free moral agency and responsibility, which God will not violate. It is "today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (He. 3:7-8).

We will consider passages mostly from the New Testament, since this more specifically relates to our present situation. However, although the blessings of salvation have greatly multiplied in this present age of God's special grace, the requirements for salvation have always remained the same and always will be until the end of man's earthly probation. We will present some of the many Scriptures which, it is affirmed, establish the proposition that the saints of God must continue in happy submission to their most holy faith until the end of their earthly lives if their souls are to be finally saved. The passages relating to the Christian sojourn will be grouped under various questions relating to the proposition:

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY CONTINUING IN THE LOVE OF GOD?

Through the blessed gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ we have been brought into the most intimate relationship of life. Transformation has reached into our innermost beings. God has imparted Divine life to us (II Pe. 1:4) in a habitation of friendship (Jn. 15:14-15; Ep. 2:22) and absolute intimacy (I Co. 6:17; 12:12-13), resulting in total voluntary ownership (I Co. 6:19-20). With hearts full of love and gratitude our minds are overwhelmingly persuaded that we have found the true way of life for which we were created. We exclaim with Peter of old: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life" (Jn. 6:68). We can only pray, "Lord, evermore give us this bread" (Jn. 6:34). This profound background of Christian experience must always be kept in mind in considering the subject of continuance in the faith. The two discouraged disciples on their way to Emmaus were quickened to enthusiasm as their resurrected Savior manifested Himself to them (Lk. 24:32).

A. TO CONTINUE IN THE LOVE OF GOD IS TO CONTINUE IN THAT HAPPY STATE OF OBEDIENT SUBMISSION TO INTELLIGENT TRUTH, into which we were brought by our exposure to the tender suffering love of Christ through our repentance and faith in "Your first love" (Re. 2:4).

The Christian is not to be considered as persevering in something that he is not happy over and therefore is exceedingly laborious, but rather in a life that he is very much attached to and rejoices in. The "first love" must refer to the overwhelming satisfaction of being reconciled to God, to the fullness of our new-born spiritual capacity, "because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Ro. 5:5). It is to "have tasted the kindness of the Lord" as "newborn babes" (I Pe. 2:2-3). "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God," with the result that "we cry out, 'Abba (a term of parental intimacy) Father!'" (Ro. 8:15-16).

1. Love is a voluntary state of impartial good-will toward all moral beings, which results in a conduct according to intelligence and truth without any admixture of arbitrariness, as previously defined. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 13:35). "Love" as used in the New Testament is not a mysterious emotion which descends upon us and automatically captivates us. Love is a willingness to be intelligent in our attitude and actions toward other moral beings. To be intelligent is to face reality or to view our relations to other moral beings as they actually exist and to do what we reasonably can to fulfill our obligations. Love is to be objective in our occupation of mind and not subjective. This involves a willingness to conform our lives according to what is right and proper in our moral relations, for we will not allow ourselves to think upon those relationships of life that we are unwilling to make place for. Love is thus to delight in the obligations that these relationships impose upon us because we are fully convinced that this is the only manner of life that is right and proper. It is to abide in "the love of the truth so as to be saved" (II Th. 2:10). It is to have pleasure in righteousness rather than in unrighteousness (12).
2. "God is love" (I Jn. 4:8, 16), the essence of God's moral character, or the Godhead continually choose to be

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guided in all actions by absolute intelligence of the moral worth of all moral beings, as discussed. The Godhead can accept nothing less as being right and proper in Their moral character. Perfect knowledge and unlimited ability enables the Godhead to produce perfect actions of wisdom. Therefore God is holy in the absolute sense (Le. 11:44; I Pe. 1:16) and is worthy of the veneration and worship of all (Re. 4:8).

3. "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (I Pe. 1:16; Le. 19:2) is the unwavering requirement of man's relationship to God. "Be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love" (Ep. 5:1-2). Or, conform your lives to your intelligence or understanding of truth as I am conforming to Mine. Have the same voluntary disposition of benevolent love that the Godhead have chosen to have. Live in "the way of the truth" (II Pe. 2:2), even as the Lord Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Keep on doing "the truth" (Jn. 3:21) or walking "in the light as He Himself (God) is in the light" (I Jn. 1:7). Just as physical light reveals all objects, so moral light or true intelligence develops what is true and right in our moral relations and obligations.

"Truth" is simply a true perspective of reality, or a true picture in all proper proportions of what exists. In salvation the repentant sinner is brought "to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), or experiences spiritual illumination of the majesty of God, of compassion and mercy through Christ, and of personal sinfulness and guilt. The transformed believer is to live according to this revealed truth. It is most exciting to observe that the Greek word translated "knowledge" in this passage denotes a full knowledge, or a precise and correct knowledge grounded in personal experience. It is more than a perceived knowledge; it is a persuaded knowledge involving full conviction because of what the mind has seen by the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the Word of God.

The Godhead, by virtue of Their infinite greatness, moral character, and creation of all life, must have the supreme place in our thinking and acting. God can never accept anything less than this attitude from His moral creatures, because anything less than this is not right. Our fellowmen, by virtue of their equal importance with ourselves, cannot be shunned or taken advantage of in our manner of life because this is not right. It would be wrong for God to give approval to any moral beings who are unwilling to be guided in life by the intelligence which they possess. This intelligence is not perfect, nor in proper perspective as viewing all the facts involved as God views it. Nor is the resulting conduct of moral creatures perfect or all that it might be. But in the kingdom of God it can never be accepted that its members shall refuse to live according to the intelligence of truth which they do possess. This humble attitude will bring about a continual growing "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pe. 3:18) or in perfecting our conduct "to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Ep. 4:13). "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God" (I Jn. 3:21).

"Love," then, is to allow ourselves to be guided in our lives by an open-minded perspective that gives proper regard for all moral beings that enter our sphere of knowledge, according to their true relative worth. Each one is to "deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me," as the Master pleaded (Lk. 9:23). He said, "My yoke is easy, and My load is light" (Mt. 11:30), because as we join in His burden of life to save as many souls as possible we partake of His great loving heart and affection. To continue in the love of God is to be about the things of My Father, as the youthful Jesus declared (Lk. 2:49). It is to continue being a disciple of the Lord (Lk. 14:26-27, 33) and not break the Savior's heart as many did (Jn. 6:66-67). "Through many tribulations (mental mistreatment and struggles, if not physical abuse) we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

B. TO CONTINUE IN THE LOVE OF GOD IS TO CONTINUE IN THAT ATTITUDE AND CONDUCT PRESCRIBED BY DIVINE REVELATION IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, as further simplified and enlarged upon by the Lord Jesus and later New Testament revelation:

1. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17; De. 5:1-22) is simply God's endeavor to sum up in words the conclusions of Divine intelligence about our reasonable requirements of life, in view of our moral relations. It is a true intelligence of our situation reduced to words. The Ten Commandments did not create obligation; they

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merely defined obligations which already existed by the very nature of our moral relations to God and to our fellowmen. The key idea that the Ten Commandments sought to convey was a true and sincere love to God and to our fellowmen, with all the resulting blessings (De. 6:4-5; 10:12-13; 11:1, 13-14, 22-23; Le. 19:18; Micah 6:8).

2. The Lord Jesus affirmed that the Ten Commandments were reducible to, or founded upon, love as manifested in two directions—toward God and toward man (Mt. 22:36-40), as previously discussed. Love toward God will bring about the fulfillment of the first four commandments; toward man, the last six.
3. In later New Testament revelation, the Apostle Paul was inspired to simplify further the Ten Commandments to the disposition of love in our innermost being, by which the commandments would be automatically fulfilled. "Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law" (Ro. 13:8-10). The bestowal of the Holy Spirit to climax our repentance and faith results in "the love of God" being "poured out within our hearts" (Ro. 5:5). The life lived by faith in the delivering power of the Holy Spirit (Ga. 5:16) maintains this attitude of love, which is the fulfillment of "the requirements of the law" (Ro. 8:3-4). These basics were previously discussed in chapter 4, section 4 and 5.

A lawyer once asked the Lord Jesus, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Our Lord asked him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" Whereupon he replied: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Our Lord then said, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live" (Lk. 10:25-28). This is a present tense command, "keep on doing this," which indicates that the Ten Commandments are still in effect, but now with the abundant presence of the Holy Spirit promised by our Lord to repentant believers in the Gospel age (Jn. 7:37-39).

II. WHY MUST THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO GOD CONTINUE IN THE LOVE OF GOD?

Those passages of Scripture which stress how we are to continue in the love of God and those which solemnly warn against the danger of apostasy and eternal loss of reconciliation to God will be presented in later groupings.

A. THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE, IN THEIR PLAIN AND OBVIOUS MEANING, COMMAND, DESCRIBE, OR IMPLY THE NECESSITY OF THIS HAPPY CONTINUANCE IN THE LOVE OF GOD AS A CONDITION OF ATTAINING FINAL SALVATION. Under this grouping is gathered those passages which stress the positive admonitions and characteristics:

1. Those setting forth a continuing in a state of faith and submission to God:

Mt. 24:13	Jn. 8:31-32, 51	Acts 13:43	I Cor. 16:13	He. 3:6
Jn. <u>3:16</u> , * <u>36</u> *	Jn. 11:26*	Acts 14:22	Col. 1:21-23	He. 4:14
Jn. 5:24*	Jn. <u>15:9</u>	Ro. 1:16*	Col. 2:6-7	He. <u>10:30</u>
Jn. <u>6:54-58</u> *	Acts 11:23	Ro. <u>11:22</u>	I Tim. <u>4:16</u>	Re. <u>2:10</u>

*Present tenses denoting a continuous believing or partaking of Christ.

2. An inner attitude of faith, love, humility, forgiveness, peace, joy, confidence, and hope:

De. 30:15-16	Lk. 6:37	I Co. 16:14	Tit. 2:13	(Ro. 1:17)
Josh. <u>23:8</u> , <u>11</u>	Jn. <u>15:12</u> , <u>17</u>	Ga. 5:6	He. 3:7-8, 15	He. 12:14
Micah <u>6:8</u>	Acts 10:34-35	Ga. <u>5:16</u>	He. <u>3:14</u>	Jas. 1:12
Mt. <u>22:37-40</u>	Ro. 8:4	Ep. <u>5:18</u>	He. 6:12	I Pe. <u>5:5</u>

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Mk. <u>11:25</u> (Mt. 6:14)	Ro. 13:8 Ro. 14:17	I Tim. <u>1:18-19</u> I Tim. 6:17-19	He. 9:28 He. <u>10:38</u>	(Jas. 4:6) I Jn. 3:21
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3. Holiness, submissiveness, and purity of heart:

Mt. 5:8 Ro. 6:13	Ro. 12:1-2 I Co. 6:20	II Co. 7:1 He. <u>12:9</u>	He. <u>12:14</u> I Pe. <u>1:15-16</u>	Re. 3:4 Re. 22:14
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4. Taking heed, watchfulness, carefulness, soberness, diligence, and prayerfulness:

De. <u>4:9, 23</u> Mk. 13:22-23 Mk. 14:38 Lk. 11:35 Lk. <u>21:34, 36</u>	Acts 20:31 I Co. 10:12 I Co. <u>15:1-2</u> I Co. 15:34 I Co. <u>16:13</u>	Ep. 5:15-16 I Tim. <u>4:16</u> Tit. <u>2:12</u> He. 2:1, 3 II Pe. 1:10-11	He. 6:11-12 He. <u>12:15</u> I Pe. 1:13 Re. 3:3 I Pe. 5:8	II Pe. <u>3:14</u> II Pe. <u>3:17</u> II Jn. 8 Re. 16:15 He. 3:12
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5. Obeying, following, walking, and keeping commandments:

De. <u>11:26-28</u> De. 30:19-20 Josh. 23:6 Mt. <u>7:21-23</u>	Lk. 3:8 Lk. 11:28 Lk. <u>14:27</u> Jn. 8:5	Jn. 12:35 Jn. <u>15:10, 14</u> <u>Ro. 6:19</u> II Co. 4:16	I Co. 11:1 Ep. 5:8 He. <u>5:9</u> Jas. 1:22	I Pe. <u>1:14</u> I Pe. 4:17 I Jn. <u>2:3-6</u> I Jn. 2:17
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6. Overcoming trials and subduing temptations:

Mt. 7:13-14 Mt. <u>18:8-9</u> Jn. 5:14 Jn. 8:11	Ro. 6:12 Ro. <u>8:13, 17</u> Ro. 13:14 I Co. 16:13	Ep. 6:10-18 Phil. <u>2:12</u> I Tim. 1:18 Jas. <u>1:12</u>	I Pe. <u>1:5</u> I Pe. 4:18 I Pe. 5:9 Re. <u>2:7, 11</u>	Re. 2:17, 26 Re. <u>3:5, 12</u> Re. 3:21 Re. <u>21:7</u>
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7. Striving for maturity of knowledge, understanding, and life:

II Co. <u>13:11</u> Ga. 4:19	Ep. <u>4:14-15</u> Col. 1:28	Col. <u>2:6-7</u> He. 13:13	I Pe. 2:2-3 II Pe. <u>3:18</u>	I Jn. 2:24 Re. 3:22
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B. THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE REVEAL THAT ALL SIN IS A REVOLT AGAINST THE HEART AND MORAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD AND BRINGS GUILT AND CONDEMNATION. All sin must be repented of, confessed, forgiven, and cleansed away, with a renewed access to the atoning death of Christ in humble faith, or eternal spiritual death in final separation from God will inerrantly result.

We look in vain for any qualifying words to the many solemn warnings that would exempt those who have been truly reconciled to God from applying them to themselves. In many instances it is specifically stated or implied that these warnings apply to true Christians. In a later section it will be discussed how the tender compassions of God, operating through the Christian's two Advocates, seek to keep those truly reconciled to God in a state of affectionate and humble relationship. In this grouping we face the revealed fact, agreeable to common sense, that when we came

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to the Savior in humble repentance and faith, all our sins, or all wrong attitudes and actions that had been committed up to that moment, were freely and graciously forgiven, but not any future sins that we might fall into. They, being then nonentities, could not be repented of, confessed, and mercifully dealt with until they became actualities.

Nothing is said in the Bible as to the forgiveness of present sins being indulged in, nor of the present forgiveness of future sins that we may commit in the process of time. Since forgiveness is the setting aside of guilt and condemnation, it cannot occur until the voluntary events in question have taken place. It would certainly take a lot of Biblical explanation to show how the credit of forgiveness could exist before the debit of guilt. This explanation is lacking. Therefore, as we would expect, all acts of sin come up for review in the august moral government of the great righteous and compassionate God, who is totally free from all favoritism and partiality. Those sins are dealt with as they occur.

We need, therefore, to continue in the love of God to remain in a state of merciful forgiveness and avoid awful guilt and condemnation, with dreadful eternal doom if our sinful actions are allowed to remain registered against us unforgiven:

1. Eternal death or woeful separation from God's presence is the destination of all who live a life of self-indulgence and sin, with no qualifying words to limit application to those who have never been reconciled to God:

Mt. 16:27	Lk. 13:27-28	I Co. 6:9	Ep. 5:5	I Jn. 2:17
Lk. 9:24-25	Jn. 5:28-29	I Co. 16:22	Phil. 3:18-19	Re. 2:23
(Mt. 16:25-26)	Ro. 2:5-11	Ga. 5:19-21	He. 6:7-8	Re. 20:13
(Mk. 8:35-37)	Ro. 8:13	Ga. 6:7-9	II Pe. 2:9	Re. 22:11-12

2. Every act of sin or persistence in rejection of our moral understanding brings guilt and condemnation, with resulting eternal death, unless repented of, confessed, forgiven, and cleansed:

Eze. 18:20	Mk. 8:38	Jn. 5:14	Co. 11:34	Jas. 5:9, 12
Eze. 18:24, 26	(Lk. 9:2 6)	Acts 8:20-23	Ga. 1:8-9	Jas. 5:19-20
Eze. 33:12-13	Lk. 12:8-9	Ro. 6:16, 23	Col. 3:25	I Jn. 5:16-17
Eze. 33:18	(Mt. 10:32-33)	I Co. 3:17	I Tim. 3:6-7	Re. 3:4
Mt. 5:22	Lk. 15:6-7	I Co. 8:11-13	I Tim. 5:24	Re. 14:9-11
Mt. 6:14-15	Lk. 15:9-10	I Co. 9:27	He. 12:14-17	Re. 21:8
Mt. 18:34-35	Lk. 15:32	I Co. 11:27-32	Jas. 1:13-16	Re. 21:27

3. Some climactic willful sins against clearly understood moral enlightenment are unpardonable and result in apostasy and eternal condemnation:

Ex. 2:33	(Mt. 12:31-32)	He. 10:26-29	I Jn. 5:16
Nu. 15:30-31	(Lk. 12:10)	He. 10:30-31	Re. 22:18
Mk. 3:28-29	He. 6:4-6	II Pe. 2:20-22	Re. 22:19

4. God eternally opposes with righteous indignation all falsehood and sinful revolt in whomever is involved:

Ps. 7:11	Ro. 1:18	Ep. 5:6-7	I Pe. 3:12	(Jas. 4:6)
Mk. 3:5	Ro. 2:5, 8	Col. 3:6	I Pe. 5:5	

5. Forgiveness of sins is not automatic in the Christian life—but requires repentance, confession, and the exercise

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of a humbled faith in the atoning death of Christ (really a re-opening of the Savior's wounded heart) before forgiveness and cleansing can take place:

Ex. <u>32:30-35</u>	Prov. <u>28:13</u>	Acts <u>8:20-24</u>	I Co. <u>5:4-5</u>	He. <u>10:26, 29</u>
Ps. <u>32:1-5</u>	Joel <u>2:12-14</u>	Ro. <u>5:9-10</u>	II Co. <u>7:9-11</u>	Jas. <u>5:19-20</u>
Ps. <u>51:1-4</u>	Lk. <u>22:31-32</u>	Ro. <u>6:1-2</u>	He. <u>6:6</u>	I Jn. <u>1:9</u>

C. THOSE RECONCILED TO GOD MUST CONTINUE IN THE LOVE OF GOD BECAUSE ONLY THUS CAN THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE GODHEAD AND AVOID BRINGING UNSPEAKABLE GRIEF TO OUR CREATOR AND BENEFACTOR.

It is most difficult for us to realize how important we are to the happiness of the great God. The Psalmist experienced this when he wrote: "What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him?" (Ps.8:3-4). We have seen that man has been endowed with the moral nature of his Creator, so that he is a microminiature replica of the Divine Beings. Obviously, this remarkable reproduction was brought about for a purpose. Moral abilities are restless without their proper exercise. The Godhead proposed to exercise Their moral abilities in happy manifestation toward man, with infinite comprehension of blessed experiences. Man was to have blessed exercises of his moral nature in the great expanse of the Divine nature and in the realm of physical consciousness. Love is simply the virtuous outflow of the moral abilities of personality. "God is love" in very essence and therefore can only find full happiness toward moral creatures when they are willing to be intelligent and submissive toward their Divine Benefactors. Can there be any greater objective in life than for you and I to live so that we can make our intended contribution toward the unlimited experiences of happiness and joy that the Divine contemplation is capable of?

Job was such a blessing to God, millenniums ago, that God bragged about him to His great antagonist Satan (Job 1:8). God called Abraham and Moses His friends and condescended in a special way to them (II Chr. 20:7; Jas. 2:23; Ex. 33:11). God is pictured as identifying each moral creature willing to live in right relation to Him and singling such out for special manifestations (II Chr. 16:9; II Co. 6:16-18). The Divine joy is limited only by the immeasurable Divine capacity to experience (Zeph. 3:17). But, tragically beyond words, the Divine capacity to experience disappointment and grief is also immeasurable. Think of God's suffering such grief that He experienced a climax of regret that man had ever been created (Ge. 6:5-7)! (The Divine grief over the nation Israel's rejection of the continued overtures of Divine love, and the necessary unhappy measures of judgment that had to be taken, were summarized in Chapter 6, Sections II, III)

The Lord Jesus wanted to raise men in moral resurrection until they would be more than servants—they were to be friends (Jn. 15:13-15) that He could relax with and enjoy along with the other Members of the Holy Trinity (Jn. 14:23, 17; Re. 3:20; Ro. 14:17). Our Lord was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Is. 53:3) during His earthly sojourn, first and foremost, because He was "the Lamb of God" to suffer unto death for the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29), but also because the great mass of mankind did not want to experience the great love and endless blessings that filled His bosom, as has been discussed. His own dear ones whom "He loved . . . to the end" (Jn. 13:1) also caused Him grief and disappointment.

Only God can discern the fine dividing line between sluggishness and stubbornness or indifference. Our Lord was often pained as He looked through the externals and evaluated the heart motives of His disciples. He reprimanded them on occasions, as when He said: "You men of little faith" (Mt. 8:26), when they had awakened Him in panic during a storm. He had said they were "to depart to the other side" (18). With Him in the boat they were secure. When they failed to perceive obvious truth and were not enthusiastic over miraculous feedings of multitudes, He again said: "You men of little faith" (Mt. 16:8), and further, "Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart? Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember...? Do you not yet understand?" (Mk. 8:17-21). They could not cast out a demon "because of the littleness of your faith"

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and prayerlessness. In His disappointment our Lord said: "Oh unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?" (Mt. 17:17-20).

When the Master poured out His heart as to the spiritual intimacy He desired to have with His disciples, many said: "This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?" Many "withdrew, and were not walking with Him any more" (Jn. 6:60, 66). Most pathetically, He said to those closest to Him: "You do not want to go away also, do you?" (Jn. 6:67). His sensitive heart wanted them to do more than merely stay with Him; He wanted them to want or desire to stay. He had to say in the garden, as the shadow of the Cross was approaching Him: "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation" (Mt. 26:40-41). His instances of joy over men's faith did not seem to have been numerous, but drew forth appreciative response (Mt. 8:8-10; 15:27-28).

The intimate personal relationship of the resurrected and glorified Christ with those who have embraced His gospel in repentance and faith is revealed as "the mystery of Christ" (Ep. 3:3-6). The Holy Spirit has been given to indwell the believer with a unique relationship of absolute intimacy—not dependent for communication upon the five senses as every other relationship of man is. The Lord Jesus was active in man's creation and was to have complete prominence (Col. 1:16-18). Christ and His Church was to be an organism, animated by Divine life, not a mere organization (Col. 1:27). The Lord Jesus has redeemed repentant mankind for Himself, "a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" (Tit. 2:14). "The one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (I Co. 6:17). They have been brought into a "first love" for their Savior (Re. 2:4), even as the Apostle John testified: "We are loving, because He first loved us" (I Jn. 4:19). This unity of love was to have moved the world toward God (Jn. 17:23) and bear much spiritual fruit (Jn. 15:5, 8, 16).

Because of this extremely intimate personal relationship, any problem that enters to obstruct the free flow of loving fellowship between God and ourselves brings disappointment and grief to the loving Godhead. "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption, "we are admonished (Ep. 4:30). If God must rebuke us for our conduct and bring about chastisement to restore us to loving relationship, this must be contrary to the way God would like to manifest His love (He. 12:5-11). Our departure from an attitude of loving response appears to deeply affect the Godhead (Re. 2:4-5). Spiritual immaturity is as unbecoming and depressing as physical retardation (He. 5:12-14). We may resist the recovering measures of the Holy Spirit to the point of quenching or extinguishing His operations within us (I Th. 5:19). Then the sin of apostasy takes place, which we have been warned against (He. 6:6; 10:29). God wants to bless man in every way through the Gospel (Ro. 8:32). How must the Godhead feel when all Their provisions for blessing become vain or to no permanent profit (II Co. 6:1; I Th. 3:3-5)?

The greatest motivation to continue happily in the love of God, therefore, is to contribute to the Divine happiness. We thereby have the privilege of immersing ourselves in Divine greatness. Thus we avoid being the grief that Divine love experiences when rejected. (Jn. 3:17).

D. THOSE RECONCILED TO GOD MUST CONTINUE IN THE LOVE OF GOD BECAUSE ONLY THUS CAN WE EXPERIENCE THE FULL ORBIT OF BLESSED RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE GODHEAD AND WITH OUR FELLOWMEN FOR WHICH WE WERE CREATED AND ENDOWED.

We must avoid the wretchedness of a life of sin and defeat, which brings separation from the energizing life of the Godhead or present spiritual death. "The wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23). "The mind set on the flesh is death" (8:6). "She who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives" (he likewise) (I Tim. 5:6). "The wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet... 'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked'" (Is. 57:20-21). "Evil things proceed from within and defile the man" (Mk. 7:21-23). "Fleshly lusts (or desires) . . . wage war against the soul" (I Pe. 2:11). "Both their mind and their conscience are defiled" (Tit. 1:15). "Your heart is not right before God . . . You are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity" (Acts 8:21, 23). Such are in "the snare of the devil,

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having been held captive by him to do his will" (II Tim. 2:26). "They are again entangled in them (the defilements of the world) and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first" (II Pe. 2:20). This state of being "enslaved to various lusts (or desires) and pleasures," leads to a "spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another" (Tit. 3:3).

When a person must exclaim in total spiritual defeat, "Wretched man that I am," this is certainly a radical contrast to the victory of faith, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Ro. 7:24-25). It is the difference between the slavery of sin and the freedom of deliverance (Jn. 8:34, 36). In this state of selfishness and spiritual defeat we cannot but contribute to our own unhappiness and of all we come in contact with. "Day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me," said the Psalmist David in his defeat and guilt (32:3-4). We radiate to others what we are in the depths of our own beings. We cannot lead others into a restful and buoyant spirit unless we have one ourselves.

"I came that they might have life," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 10:10). This life is a state of being "reconciled to God" (II Co. 5:20), a turn about from "continually straying like sheep . . . to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls," the Lord Jesus Christ (I Pe. 2:25). It is a renunciation of the life of unintelligent and restless concentration upon one's own happiness to enter the realm of true intelligence and live a life according to our true relations to God and to our fellowmen. It is to be admitted into "the kingdom of God" and live a life of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Ro. 14:17). It is a state of being able to live quietly with ourselves, with a "blameless conscience" and "confidence before God" (Acts 24:16; I Jn. 3:21).

We ought, therefore, to be continuing in the love of God, not only to be a blessing to God and contribute to the Divine satisfaction and happiness, but to be a blessing to our fellowmen and to ourselves in maintaining that intelligent composure of personality which alone can bring happiness. The Holy Spirit has been bestowed as the special Agent of the Godhead in this age of grace to "convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment" (Jn. 16:8). Because the Lord Jesus would no longer be putting God on exhibition in His earthly life (Jn. 1:18), the world was to be shown what heart righteousness was like by the resurrected and glorified Christ living out His life in the hearts of those reconciled to God, through the enthroning operations of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:10). "We will come to him, and make Our abode with Him," said the Lord Jesus of Himself and of the Father to those who are loving Him and are keeping His word (Jn. 14:23). "I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him" (14:21). "I in them, and Thou in Me, . . . that the world may know . . . that the love wherewith Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them; . . . that they may have My joy made full in themselves; . . . that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full" (Jn. 17:23, 26, 13; 15:11). "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them" (13:17). With all these glorious promises, no wonder the Apostle Paul wrote: "Godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (I Tim. 4:8).

III. HOW ARE THOSE RECONCILED TO GOD TO CONTINUE IN THE LOVE OF GOD IN VICTORY OVER SIN?

In Old Testament times men were saved by accepting God's revelation through the nation Israel, repenting of their sins, and identifying with or bringing the prescribed animal sacrifices in the exercise of faith. They experienced forgiveness and many blessings, but were to be guided in life by God's revealed written declarations through the law of Moses as to how they were to live. Under the New Covenant of New Testament revelation, new internal forces were to be substituted for the external directives of the Old Covenant (He. 8:6-13; 12:24). The Old Testament revelation was blessed and could produce a happy and blessed deliverance, but lacked motivation and dynamic (Ro. 8:3-4). Motivation to continue in the faith under the Gospel is not by duty but out of constraining love (II Co. 5:14). Enforced regulation was not to be a part of this glorious dispensation "of God's grace, . . . the mystery of Christ" (Ep. 3:2-4). It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). The relationships of salvation are now of such a glorious nature that God is not supposed to have problems in keeping His own dear ones in happy submission. "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let every one who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness" (II Tim. 2:19).

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The Epistle to the Hebrews has for its main thrust to show that the New Covenant is far superior to the Old. Thus the fullness of the Holy Spirit brought great victory over sin in early New Testament times: Acts 2:4, 46-47; 4:8, 13, 31, 33; 13:52; Ro. 8:37. This blessed victory over sin is the very core of Gospel truth, not a voluntary addition: Jn. 8:36; Ro. 6:1-2, 4, 14; 7:6; 8:2, 32; 14:17; I Co. 15:57; II Co. 3:17; Ga. 5:16, 18; Ep. 5:18-20; I Pe. 1:6-8; I Jn. 2:12-14; 3:9-10; 5:3-5.

A. REMARKABLE DIVINE RELATIONSHIPS AND INITIATIVES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED, SO THAT GOD CAN SAY THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE HAS BEEN DONE TO MAKE MAN A HAPPY, FORGIVEN AND DELIVERED BEING—BRINGING JOY TO BOTH GOD AND MAN IN FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PLAN OF CREATION.

In Old Testament times, those especially called of God were given many profound experiences of God's presence and deliverance from sin: Is. 57:15; Ge. 17:1-4; Ex. 3:2-8; 33:9-11; Is. 6:1-5; II Chr. 16:9. But in New Testament times, these blessed experiences of God's intimate presence are intended to be given to all who come to Christ in sincere repentance from all known sin and in the committal of faith.

1. Many passages describe this intimate fellowship with the Triune Godhead:

Jn. 4:13-14	Acts 17:27-28	I Co. <u>3:16</u>	II Co. 11:2	I Th. 5:10
<u>Jn. 7:37-39</u>	Ro. 6:14	I Co. 6:17	II Co. 13:5	I Jn. 1:3
<u>Jn. 14:16-17</u>	Ro. 7:6	I Co. <u>6:19-20</u>	Ga. <u>2:20</u>	I Jn. 2:27
<u>Jn. 14:21, 23</u>	Ro. 8:9-11	II Co. 3:18	Ep. <u>2:18, 22</u>	I Jn. 5:12
Jn. 15:14-15	Ro. 8:15-16	II Co. 5:16-17	Ep. <u>5:18-21</u>	I Jn. 5:20
Jn. 17:23, 26	I Co. 1:30	II Co. 6:16-18	Col. <u>1:27</u>	Re. <u>3:20</u>

2. The resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus has become our heavenly Advocate and Intercessor before the throne of God's moral government:

Mt. 28:20	Jn. <u>17:9-13</u>	Ro. 8:34	He. 7:24-27	He. 10:12-14
Lk. 22:32	Ro. 4:25	He. 2:17-18	He. 8:1-2	He. <u>10:19-23</u>
Jn. 10:3-4, 11	Ro. <u>5:9-10</u>	He. <u>4:14-16</u>	He. 9:11-15	I Jn. <u>2:1-2</u>
Jn. 15:17-19	Ro. 7:4	He. 5:8-10	He. <u>9:24-26</u>	Re. 3:21

3. The Holy Spirit has been given to be our Comforter, Guide, and Energizer:

Lk. 24:49	Jn. 16:7	Ro. 5:5	I Co. 10:13	Ep. 4:30
Jn. <u>14:16-17</u>	Jn. <u>16:13-15</u>	Ro. 8:2	I Co. 12:3	Phil. <u>2:13</u>
Jn. <u>14:26</u>	Acts 1:8	Ro. <u>8:14</u>	II Co. 3:17	I Jn. <u>2:20</u>
Jn. 15:26	Acts 9:31	Ro. <u>8:26-27</u>	Ga. <u>5:16-18</u>	I Jn. <u>2:27</u>

B. CHRISTIAN WATCHFULNESS, OBEDIENCE, CONTINUANCE IN THE FAITH, AND PRAYERFULNESS ARE IMPERATIVE FOR SPIRITUAL VICTORY.

Deliverance from sin as promised in the Gospel is impossible unless we are willing to live a life in communication with God, for it is the Godhead who must deliver us. If we do not want to take the trouble to maintain this happy submissive life, then we are left to fight our own battles with gruesome defeat on every hand. If we "hunger and thirst for righteousness," we "shall be satisfied," said Jesus to the mountain multitude (Mt. 5:6). Therefore, the blessed instructions on the "how" of Gospel deliverance must be addressed to those who want it. The following

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passages indicate the necessity of this constant and persistent attitude of sincerity:

Mt. 4:4	Jn. 14:23	Ep. <u>5:15-16</u>	I Tim. 4:16	He. 12:28-29
Lk. 8:15	Jn. <u>15:9-10</u> , 12	Phil. 1:9-11	He. <u>2:1</u> , <u>3</u>	I Pe. <u>1:13</u> , <u>17</u>
Lk. <u>12:15</u>	Acts 9:31	Phil. 2:5	He. 3:6, 12	I Pe. 4:7-8
Lk. 18:1	Ro. 11:20	Phil. 3:7-14	He. 4:11, 14, 16	I Pe. 5:5-6
Lk. <u>21:34-36</u>	I Co. 9:25-27	Phil. 4:8-9	He. <u>6:11-12</u>	II Pe. 1:5-8
Jn. 6:51-58	II Co. 13:5	Col. 1:9-12	He. 10:23	II Pe. <u>3:14</u> , <u>17</u>
Jn. 14:15, 21	Ga. 6:8	Col. <u>3:16-17</u>	He. 10:35-36	Jude <u>20-21</u>

C. THERE MUST BE A CLIMACTIC RENUNCIATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SUPREME SELF GRATIFICATION IN EACH CRISIS OF TEMPTATION OR SOLICITATION TO INDULGE IN WHAT WE KNOW TO BE WRONG.

Deliverance from sin is not automatic. These endless climaxes of will are in essence a renewal of our repentance, or of an attitude of self-denial. There was a total renunciation of self-supremacy when we first came to Christ: Lk. 14:26-27, 33; Jn. 12:25; Ro. 6:6; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14. The endless series of climaxes that must take place for spiritual deliverance are set forth, for example, in the words: "Present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead" (Ro. 6:13) and "Present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification" (Ro. 6:19). "Present" is in the Greek aorist tense, imperative mode, and is thus a command for distinct, sudden, or climactic action, a simple act without regard to progress, and thus is to be endlessly repeated when necessary. The verbs "Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice" (Ro. 12:1), "lay aside the old self" (Ep. 4:22), and "put on the new self" (Ep. 4:24) are aorist infinitives and thus indicate climactic or instantaneous actions, without regard to time, and thus are to be repeated endlessly to maintain our consecration to Christ.

In each challenge to our consecration that faces us, the Holy Spirit is seeking to persuade us by all sorts of approaches to renew our renunciation of self, but in each case it is we ourselves that must respond instantly, or no deliverance can be granted. Passages describing the climactic and sometimes violent nature of this self-renunciation are:

Mk. 9:43-48;	Lk 9:23;*	Ro. 6:11;	Ep. 4:22; +, 24 +
Ro. 12:1-2;	Ro. 13:14;*	I Co. 9:26-27;	He. 3:7-8,15;
Ep. 4:27;	Ep. 4:30;	I Th. 5:19;	Jas. 1:14-16
He. 5:14;	He. 12:9;	Jas. 1:12;	
Jas. 4:7;*	I Pe. 3:10 +*-11;*	Ro. 6:13;*, 19;*	

* Aorist tenses, imperative mode, a command for repeated climactic action whenever necessary.

+ Aorist infinitives, repeated climactic action whenever necessary.

D. THIS CLIMACTIC RENUNCIATION OF SELF MUST BE FOLLOWED BY AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS OF FAITH IF SPIRITUAL VICTORY IS TO BE ACHIEVED.

The Godhead are seeking to inspire or draw out this faith by all means at Their disposal. Faith is "the gift of God" (Ep. 2:8) in the sense that it is Divinely induced. Faith is always our own act in the sense that it is our response to Divine condescension. It is climactic in the sense that it is an arousal of all our energies of confidence and trust to overcome a particular crisis:

1. Examples of and admonitions to faith, which achieved the power of God in men's lives:

Mt. <u>8:8</u> , <u>10</u> , <u>13</u>	Mt. <u>17:20</u>	Mk. <u>9:23-24</u>	Lk. 11:9-10	Jn. <u>16:23-24</u>
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Mt. 9:28, 29	Mk. 4:40	Mk. 9:28-29	Lk. 11:13	Ro. 7:18, 21
Mt. <u>14:29,31</u>	Mk. 5:28, 34	Mk. <u>11:22, 24</u>	Lk. 17:5-6	Ro. <u>7:24, 25</u>
Mt. 15:25, 28	Mk. 5:36	Lk. 5:5	Jn. 11:25-26	

2. Blessed spiritual victory is to be achieved only by aggressively exercising faith or trust in God for deliverance after each instance of self-renunciation. We cannot turn from something into a vacuum, so when we turn from sin we must turn to God in faith (I Th. 1:9). When we refuse to yield ourselves to sin, we must by that act yield ourselves to God to do what our enlightened conscience tells us to do. We "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro. 13:14), or "envelop" ourselves in the loving presence of our Savior and Friend through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and are "transformed into the same image" (II Co. 3:18). We are delivered by being occupied with something better than our own selfish gratification. If this deliverance is to remain a reality, we must stop making "provisions for the flesh in regard to its lusts" (Ro. 13:14). A present tense command with a negative indicates that we are to stop what we have been doing. We cannot hope for spiritual victory while we are making plans not to have it. Further passages are:

Mt. 26:41*	Ro. 1:17	Ro. 8:13*	Ga. 5:16*
I Co. 15:10	II Co. 3:18	II Co. 5:7	Phil. 4:1*
Ep. 3:16-17	Ep. 5:18*-21	Ep. 6:11-17	Jas. 4:8
Col. 2:6*-7	I Tim. 1:18-19*	He. 10:38-39	I Co. 10:12*
I Pe. 5:8 -9	Jude 20*-21	Re. 12:11	Ga. 5:25*
Acts 11:23*	Ro. 8:3-4	Ro. 12:2*	Col. 1:23
II Co. 1:24	II Co. 4:16*	Ga. 2:20*	I Pe. 1:5*
Ep. 4:23*	Ep. 6:10*, 18*	Phil. 2:12*	
I Th. 3:8	I Tim. 6:12*	He. 12: *-2*	
I Jn. 5:4* +	Jude 24*	Ro. 13:14 +	

3. This faith is cultivated and inspired by the loving illumination of the Holy Spirit, as previously outlined:

Jn. 3:27	Jn. 16:13-15	Ro. 10: 17	II Co. 3:18	Ep. <u>3:16-17</u>
Jn. 6:37, 44	Ro. <u>5:5</u>	I Co. 2:4-5	Ep. <u>1:17-19</u>	Phil. <u>2:13</u>
Jn. 6:45, 65	Ro. <u>8:14, 26-27</u>	I Co. <u>12:3</u>	Ep. 2:8-9	Col. 1:27

IV. DO THE SCRIPTURES SOLEMNLY WARN AGAINST THE DREADFUL POSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY?

We have seen that salvation involves a submission to truth and a choice to forsake all known sin and commit ourselves to the atoning death of a loving Savior to be forgiven and restored. Only the action of our innermost being or "heart" could bring about such complete revolution of life. Profound evidences from our own personalities and experiences with the world of men and nature have pressed upon us the urgency of seeking the great Source of all existences in proper respect and worship. In addition, Divine revelation of Biblical truth multiplied this enlightenment and urgency. We had resisted this sum total of moral illumination from the dawn of our moral accountability—until the moment of our conversion, when we submitted to the whole en-masse and took appropriate action to enter into the beckoning mercy of God.

The glorious joy of reconciliation to God made the thought of rejecting what the Holy Spirit desired to teach us from day to day unthinkable. We said with the enthusiastic Israelites of old: "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do": (Ex. 24:3). Our hearts were mellow and tender "because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Ro. 5:5). We had one essential thing to do: "Shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?" (He. 12:9). We had "ears to hear" and a submissive heart to obey all

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that our blessed Savior taught us and our hearts were "burning within us" in exquisite fellowship (Lk. 24:32). But we are not mechanical robots operated by push-buttons or causation, therefore God has had to make a very great effort in revelations of Scripture in an endeavor to keep us in that happy submission, apart from which neither God nor man can be happy:

A. THOSE HAPPILY RECONCILED TO GOD MAY RESIST THE TRUTH THAT THEY HAVE COME TO PERCEIVE BY REFUSING TO OBEY OR REMAIN SUBMISSIVE TO INCREASED UNDERSTANDING.

This the Scripture calls a hardening of the heart, which is a choice of our wills not to conform our lives to new perceived obligations. There is no reason why we choose to resist the continued loving manifestations and leadings of the Holy Spirit, except that we ourselves of our own volition mysteriously choose to do so. There is no causation back of our wills except we ourselves, nothing to blame except our own abuse of solemn responsibility. Since such choices are the origination of our own personalities, they form the basis of reward and condemnation from a loving and righteous Moral Governor. We have seen from a multitude of revelations how impartial God is.

This process of hardening has no gauge of intensity except the decision of a great loving God as to how serious our resistance is, which must involve our ability, enlightenment, experiences, and the Divine measures taken in our behalf. We always begin the pathway of resistance over small and sometimes relatively insignificant objects of enlightenment. Heart resistance develops like a callus on our hand. The more the resistance encountered in muscular exertion, the greater the build-up of skin tissue. When the Holy Spirit seeks to turn us from a wrong attitude that we have gotten into, we must increase our resistance or hardness of heart to keep ourselves from breaking down our rebellion and submitting to God. We are frequently warned against the build-up of resistance. Some of these passages appear to relate to those who have never been reconciled to God, but the principles of developing resistance are the same:

Mt. 13:15
Mk. 6:52

Mk. 8:17, 21
Acts 7:5

Ro. 2:5, 8
II Co. 11:27-29

Ep. 4:17-19
He. 3:7-8, 10,15

He. 3:12-13
He. 4:7

B. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FAITHFUL SERVANTS OF CHRIST TAKE VARIOUS MEASURES TO GET US TO REVERSE OUR REBELLIOUS ATTITUDE AND RETURN TO SUBMISSION, BEFORE WE DEVELOP A MORE IMPOSSIBLE HARDNESS OF HEART.

The Holy Spirit has taken an absolutely intimate association in our lives and we are warned not to "grieve" Him (Ep. 4:30). Tragically, all we Christians seem to have resisted the Holy Spirit in His loving recovery measures. Submission is a state of repentance. When we resist God's enlightenment, the Holy Spirit is seeking "to renew (us) again to repentance" (He. 6:6). True servants of God are working along with the Holy Spirit in this great restoring operation. One of the most moving self-prostrations ever recorded was when Moses interceded for Israel over the golden calf apostasy (Ex. 32:30-33), when he earned the title of being "very humble" (Nu. 12:3). Some of the blessed New Testament recovery operations are as follows:

Mt. 18:12-14
Lk. 13:6-9
Lk. 22:31-32

Acts 8:18-24
I Co. 5:4-5
I Co. 11:27-34

Ga. 6:1-2
I Tim. 2:24-26
He. 12:4-11

Jas. 5:19-20
I Jn. 5:16-17
Jude 22-23

Re. 2:4-5
Re. 3:3-5
Re. 3:19

C. SOLEMN WARNINGS ARE GIVEN ON EVERY HAND IN SCRIPTURE AGAINST APOSTASY. These warnings are an endeavor to persuade those who have been truly reconciled to God to be on constant guard that they do not develop a resistance against the loving manifestations of God's will, to the point of apostasy or eternal loss of their souls:

Notes:

De. 4:23-24	Eze. <u>18:24, 26</u>	Lk. 8:14	II Co. 6:1	He. 6:7-8
De. <u>11:26-28</u>	Eze. 33:7	Lk. 12:4-5	II Co. 11:2-3	He. 12:28-29
De. 29:25-28	Eze. 33:12-13	(Mt. 10:28)	II Co. 13:5	Jas. <u>1:12-16</u>
Josh. 23:11-13	Eze. 33:18	Lk. <u>12:45-46</u>	Ga. 1:6-8	Jas. <u>5:19-20</u>
I Kgs. 9:6-9	Mt. 3:10	Lk. <u>13:6-9</u>	Ga. 3:3-4	I Pe. 1:17
I Chr. 28:9	(Lk. 3:9)	Lk. 22:31-32	Ga. 4:9, 11	II Pe. <u>1:10</u>
II Chr. 15:2	Mt. 3:12	Jn. <u>15:2</u>	Ga. 4:19-20	II Pe. <u>3:17</u>
Ezra 8:22	Mt. 5:13	Acts <u>8:18-24</u>	Phil. 2:12	Re. 2:4-5
Ps. 125:5	(Lk. 14:34-35)	Acts <u>20:29-31</u>	Phil. 2:14-16	Re. 3:3-4
Prov. 29:1	Mt. 7:19	Ro. 14:13, 15	Col. 2:8	Re. <u>3:5</u>
Is. 1:19-20	Mt. 18:12-14	I Co. 5:4-5	I Th. <u>3:5-8</u>	Re. 21:27
Is. 1:28	Mt. 24:48-51	I Co. 8:11-13	II Tim. <u>2:11-13</u>	Re. <u>22:18-19</u>
Jer. 17:5-6	Mt. 25:24-30	I Co. <u>9:25-27</u>	II Tim. 2:24-26	

D. THERE ARE ALSO A GREAT MANY SOLEMN WARNINGS AGAINST THE DANGER OF OUR RESISTING GOD'S LOVING WILL AND MEASURES OF RECOVERY TO THE POINT OF A WILLFUL CRISIS OF APOSTASY.

The apostasy is a climactic operation of God whereby the curtain of His loving and gracious operations with our souls is forever drawn. In many of the following passages aorist tenses of climactic action occur, indicating that there is a last willful rebellion on the part of those whom God sees the necessity of rejecting. No one just drifts into apostasy; such a one must rebel his way into it. Judgment may not follow immediately, but it is as certain to occur as the eternity of God Himself. There may be a relative calm from the former climax of resistance. "When a strong man fully armed guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed," said the Lord Jesus (Lk. 11:21). "They call them rejected silver, because the Lord has rejected them" (Jer. 6:30).

This rupture of God's heart as far as His relation to a particular soul is concerned hurts the Godhead more than the tragic subject. Such a one "has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace" (He. 10:29). Such have said with Israel of old, when confronted with great moral light and persuasion: "Let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel" (Is. 30:11). God has had to comply reluctantly with their wishes, to their own eternal mournful and regretful remorse. Such solemn warnings of the danger of approaching this climax of resistance are as follows:

Ex. <u>32:33</u>	(Mt. 12:31-32)	Ro. <u>11:20-22</u>	I Tim. <u>6:9-10</u>	He. <u>12:14-17</u>
Nu. 15:30-31	(Lk. 12:10)	I Co. <u>3:17</u>	He. <u>3:12-15</u>	II Pe. <u>2:20-22</u>
De. 29:18-21	Mk. <u>9:43-48</u>	I Co. 11:27-34	He. 4:1, 11-13	I Jn. 5:16-17
De. <u>30:16-19</u>	(Mt. 18:8-9)	Ga. 5:1-4	He. 6:4-6	Re. 3:15-16
Mt. 5:22	Lk. 9:62	I Th. 5:19	He. <u>10:26-29</u>	
Mt. 5:29-30	Lk. 11:24-26	I Tim. <u>1:19</u>	He. 10:30-31	
Mk. <u>3:28-29</u>	Jn. <u>15:6</u>	I Tim. 5:11-12	He. <u>10:38-39</u>	

V. DO THE SCRIPTURES NARRATE INSTANCES OF TRAGIC APOSTASY FROM THE FAITH?

The Apostle Peter was directed to write that "it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved" (I Pe. 4:18). It is not that the Gospel is weak and deficient in delivering repentant sinners, but rather that redeemed men are still free moral beings and thus must be controlled by moral forces. It is with difficulty, therefore, that God keeps His true spiritual

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children in that blessed state of submission into which they were brought when embracing the Gospel. God is continually on the alert to use means to restrain His children from departing from the way of righteousness and holiness.

"The one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (I Co. 6:17). "You are a temple of God, and... the Spirit of God dwells in you" (I Co. 3:16). With one Advocate with the Father (I Jn. 2:1) and one Advocate or Comforter in the heart (Jn. 14:16), God has established relationships with man that enable the strongest of moral forces to be exerted. Although the obstacles to man's spiritual success are very great, once repentant sinners have experienced the blessings of reconciliation to God, have been brought into intimate fellowship with the glorified Christ, and have been spiritually energized by the indwelling Holy Spirit, these strong moral forces are so effective that relatively few ever rebel against God's loving measures to their own destruction. Nevertheless Scripture narrates a number of personal tragedies and also refers to groups who were successful in revolting against the love of God to their own destruction:

A. THE MOST AWFUL INSTANCE OF APOSTASY FROM GOD'S LOVING RECONCILIATION WAS THE APOSTLE JUDAS. We may outline the facts concerning his life as follows:

1. The Lord Jesus, after a night of prayer for God the Father's concurrence in the most important choice of His ministry (Lk. 6:12), declared His purpose in calling forth the Twelve: Mk. 3:14-15. Notice that they were all His disciples (Lk. 6:13). "Disciple" is the common word for salvation in the Gospels and in the book of Acts (Lk. 14:26-27, 33; Acts 11:26).
2. Judas most certainly must have been in a state of salvation when chosen and sent out to represent Christ: Mt. 10:5, 6, 7, 8 (Lk. 9:1; Mk. 6:13; Mt. 12:25-26); Mt. 10:13, 14, 16, 20 (Jn. 8:44), 22, 25, 40; 7:6; Mk. 6:7, 11, 12, 13, 30; Lk. 7:39; 9:1, 2, 5, 6; 10:20; 22:3-6 (Jn. 13:2); Jn. 13:20.
3. As Jesus spoke more particularly of the requirements of salvation in His later ministry, His popularity greatly declined: Jn. 6:51-60, 66.
4. Some of those close to Jesus turned back in unbelief: Jn. 6:64. The instant of their forsaking the path of submission and faith, along with the secret plans of Judas who "would deliver Him up," were supernaturally known by Christ who "knew what was in man" (Jn. 2:24-25).
5. It is declared in Jn. 6:70 only that Judas then was a devil, with a strong implication that he was not such when called out to serve Christ in an intimate way: "Did not I choose out for Myself you the twelve, and out of you one a devil is." Judas was then "about to be delivering Him up" (Jn. 6:71). It is unthinkable that the lowly sincere Master would choose "a devil" for Himself, with the object of representing Him in ministry to needy souls on the brink of eternal doom. No present day leader (political, moral, or religious) would think of choosing an opponent to receive all his secrets and help in furthering his cause.
6. Judas, who was trusted as treasurer (Jn. 13:29), showed himself out of sympathy with Christ's mission in a state of selfishness (Jn. 12:4-6), made his dreadful covenant with Christ's enemies (Mt. 26:14-16), and finally braced himself against the kind overtures of his best Friend (Jn. 13:21, 26).
7. His doom became sealed (Jn. 13:27); he had rebelled beyond the recovering mercy of God and was abandoned to Satan, his-now chosen master. Going out into the night, morally as well as physically (Jn. 13:30), he could now kiss his former Master with a cold and calloused heart (Mt. 26:47-50).
8. He became conscience-stricken after the Lord was condemned to die and repented, but too late for forgiveness. He went out and hanged himself, entering into eternal remorse as he is endlessly and persistently haunted by the Savior's love which he had spurned (Mt. 27:3-8). He had received the highest ministry possible to man, but had successfully turned aside in rebellion against the most dynamic moral force that man has ever been confronted with--a personalized Divine love (Acts 1:17, 25).

B. VARIOUS REFERENCES AND TENSE STRUCTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT INDICATE THAT

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OTHER APOSTASIES TOOK PLACE:

1. I Co. 10:5-12—This solemn passage refers to many disappointing experiences which God had with the nation Israel, with the judgments that had to be taken. Their doom is set forth as a warning to those reconciled to God under the Gospel.
2. I Tim. 1:5-7—"For some men, straying from these things (from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith), have turned aside to fruitless discussion."
3. I Tim. 1:18-20—"Keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander..."
4. I Tim. 5:15—"Some have already turned aside to follow Satan."
5. I Tim. 6:9-10—"For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang."
6. I Tim. 6:20-21—"Worldly and empty chatter . . . which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith."
7. II Tim. 2:16-18—"Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and thus they upset the faith of some."
8. II Tim. 4:10—"Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me."
9. II Pe. 2:22—"It has happened to them according to the true proverb, 'A dog returns to its own vomit,' and, 'A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.'"

C. KING SAUL IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES REPRESENTS A TRAGIC INSTANCE OF APOSTASY, causing God to repent that He had made Saul King of Israel: I Sam. 15:10-11, 23, 26, 35; 16:1, 14.

1. Saul appears to have been a most impressive person in appearance and heart, transformed and anointed by the Holy Spirit: I Sam. 9:1-2, 15-17; 10:10 6, 9-11, 24-26; 11:6-7.
2. The conditions of happy relationship with God were respect and obedience: I Sam. 12:13-15, 20-25; 15:22.
3. Saul began to manifest a presumptuous and disobedient spirit: I Sam. 13:11-14 (usurped the priestly functions); 15:9 (failed to destroy the Amalekites whom God purposed to judge for their wickedness, 15:1-3, 18); 15:13-14, 19-21 (was presumptive and deceitful, excusing himself).
4. Saul's professed repentance was doubtless insincere and too late for God to pardon: I Sam. 15:23-26, 35; 16:1, 14.
5. Saul was afflicted with evil spirits and lived a greatly agitated and revengeful life until he finally took his own life: I Sam. 16:14-16, 23; 18:29; 31:4.

D. SOLOMON, ALTHOUGH BEGINNING HIS REIGN OF ISRAEL IN A MOST HUMBLE AND GOD-APPROVED MANNER, AMAZINGLY MADE SHIPWRECK OF HIS NOBLE LIFE UPON THE SEA OF LICENTIOUSNESS:

1. Solomon began his public life in a manner pleasing to God, not seeking self-glorification or materialistic prosperity: I Kgs. 3:3 ("Solomon loved the Lord"); 3:5-14 (his humble requests pleased the Lord (10), who richly bestowed abilities and blessings upon him).
2. The luxurious temple was built in Jerusalem and humbly dedicated to the Lord: I Kgs. 5:3-5; 7:51; 8:22-30 (prayer of dedication); 8:54-61 (conclusion with conditions of blessing); II Chr. 6:3 (Solomon most humble); 7:1

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(God's answer by fire); 7:8-11 (an obedient happy nation).

3. Solomon, and Israel through him, was sternly warned of the dangers and consequences of apostasy, and the conditions of mercy and renewal: II Chr. 7:12-22; also see I Chr. 28:9-10; I Kgs. 6:11-13; 9:1-9.
4. The wisdom which God had given Solomon became world-renown (including 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs): I Kgs. 4:29-34 (3:16-28); II Chr. 9:5-8, 22-24; Mt. 12:42.
5. Solomon's empire was greatly prospered and he became known as the great commercial king of Israel: I Chr. 29:23-25; I Kgs. 9:26-28; 10:22.
6. Amazingly enough, this wise man did not continue to apply his supernaturally endowed wisdom to the regulation of his own life, but disobeyed God in multiplying wives (De. 17:17) and built up an even greater establishment of lust than the heathen kings, to his own moral destruction and eternal ruin: I Kgs. 11:1-3 (he involved himself with many heathen women); 11:4-8 (which turned away his heart from the Lord); 11:9-13 (and led to the judgment of God).
7. In view of God's loving but firm warning (I Chr. 28:9) and the absence of any record of repentance, but rather of a rebellion against God's judgment (I Kgs. 11:40), we can only conclude that eternal remorse is now his portion in dreadful remembrance of his forsaken blessing and God-given wisdom. He made shipwreck of his fervent faith and submission to God upon the sea of licentiousness and spent his last days seeking to kill his successor, Jeroboam (who was to reign over ten tribes in God's judgment of terminating his reign and dividing the kingdom), rather than breaking down his heart in humble repentance for forgiveness as he had done in beginning his reign.

CHAPTER 14

The truth about ESTABLISHMENT IN THE LIFE OF SANCTIFICATION

"Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Co. 7:1).

"Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh" (Ga. 5:16).

"Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another (or to yourselves) in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord" (Ep. 5:18-19).

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pe. 3:18).

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith" (Col. 2:6-7).

"That He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness" (I Th. 3:13).

"My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you" (Ga. 4:19).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, . . . may be filled up to all the fullness of God" (Ep. 3:17-19).

We have abundantly seen from Scripture testimony the necessity of persistent watchfulness against all forces that would turn our hearts away from a happy relationship with our Savior. All too often we have experienced a struggle to get our own consent to give up wrongful gratifications (sometimes seemingly small and insignificant). "The breast of every Christian is a field of battle where sometimes benevolence and sometimes selfishness gains the victory," wrote one theologian. Is there no letup from these constant struggles? Is it possible to become firmly established in the life of continuing in the love of God? Is there a point to be reached in Christian experience where intermittent waverings in our consecration are eliminated, or at least reduced to infrequent momentary departures in inner attitudes if not outward actions? Is there a point that can be reached where the balance scale is slanted to the side of virtue? Is there a plateau of spiritual experience that can be reached where we may become established in the faith, so that it becomes easier and more natural to abide in Christ?

Spiritual victory or deliverance in temptation is not to be achieved as we first thought. Sadly enough, we have all exercised our natural tendencies to fight temptation and overcome sin in our own strength, either because we were never taught the promises of the Gospel or because we failed to comprehend what was taught to us. This led to the gruesome experiences of defeat and frustration that the Apostle Paul recorded in Romans 7:7-24, which we may call human experience-not a necessary part of Christian experience (described in Ro.6:2, 4, 6-7, 14, 17-18, 22; 7:4-6; 8:2, 3-4, 10, 13-15 37). This took place either before Paul's conversion after his mind had perceived much truth, or after his conversion but before he himself had learned the secret that unlocks the power of God. As he looked away from himself to his glorified and loving Savior, he experienced the relaxation of deliverance and could truly worship in the words, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro. 7:25).

Happily, the New Testament sets forth frequently, by using many words of different shades of meaning, that a

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more permanent state of abiding in Christ is not only possible but is according to the plan and provisions of a loving God. In fact, God is so determined that all those reconciled to Him shall become spiritually mature and endlessly increase in Divine comprehension, that remarkable intimate spiritual relationships with the Godhead have been provided. Lack of progress toward this achievement, therefore, is very grievous to God (I Co. 2:14-16; 3:1-4; He. 5:11-14).

I. WHAT IS NOT THE MANNER OF ATTAINING A FIRMLY ESTABLISHED LIFE OF CONTINUING IN THE LOVE OF GOD.

A. THOSE TRULY RECONCILED TO GOD DO NOT BECOME FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN A LIFE OF SPIRITUAL VICTORY BY MAKING A SINGLE FULL CONSECRATION OF THEMSELVES TO CHRIST.

1. This full consecration began in repentance, when we turned from a supremely selfish life to God: I Th. 1:9; I Pe. 2:25. Those who affirm that a single once-for-all consecration of ourselves to Christ brings full and constant deliverance have usually held that there is salvation apart from a full consecration, and thus that self-dedication is a hopeful option in the Christian life that does not affect one's standing before God. On the one hand, there are those who hold that repentance from all known sin, or total submission to God, is not a requirement for salvation, that only a single climactic act of faith in Christ is required. Others hold that repentance is in fact required, but that repentance may be partial because of the possibility of mixed moral action. Men may partly obey what they perceive to be their moral obligation, and partly disobey at the same time. Full consecration is attained when we are willing to obey fully or totally submit to Christ. Even so, many holding this view do not appear to believe that man ever does fully obey God, but that man's apparent outward obedience is always tainted by an inner mixed motive-partly virtuous, partly selfish.¹⁷
2. This full consecration could not have been partial since moral action involves our whole personality. We have seen that moral action is of a simple nature; it is either this or that, but not this and that. We either obey and submit to all the moral light we possess at a given moment, or we do not. We may obey one hour and disobey the next, but to do both at once is just as impossible as walking forward and backward at the same time. The blessed Gospel is a remedy for the devastations of sin, and unless we are willing to repent of everything we understand to be sin, no application of the remedy can take place. A loving God could not tolerate man continuing in stupid rebellion when He fully knows that the only way man can be blessed is to forsake his rebellion en masse. There may be and must be endless acts of re-consecration in the Christian life, but never a first full consecration because this is its entrance requirement.

B. NOR BY THE ERADICATION OF A SO-CALLED "SINFUL NATURE," "INBRED SIN," OR A "ROOT OF SIN."¹⁸

If this view of personal psychology is true, then such eradication would enable the Christian to pursue a life of holiness unhampered by past sinful experiences, since the source of sin with all its developments is supposedly gone. Watchfulness would not be necessary, since there is nothing left to need watching. The source of sin is totally gone. We are involved here with two important questions-whether our depravity of constitution causes our wills to act under a law of cause and effect, and whether this depravity is in itself sinful before crystallizing in actions of will.

1. Our depravity is not an isolated tangible something but a permanent damage which we have done to our whole sensitive personalities. Our choice of and persistence in wrongful indulgences or experiences has formed habits of thought and emotion which become a mighty dynamic to keep on doing what we have been doing, only with deeper penetration. This strong tendency to continued action is not, however, a compelling force and does not

¹⁷ See "Theory of Mixed Motive or Mixed Moral Character" on page 70.

¹⁸ See "The Trichotomy Dual Nature Concept of Personality" on page 70.

cause the will to act. By virtue of our mysterious endowment of free will, our innermost personalities alone have the power to originate action. Thus our depravity not only cannot be removed without evaporating our whole personalities, but it need not be removed to make its dynamic relatively ineffective. The wonderful experiences of the love of Christ in the Gospel can bury our depravity under an avalanche of heavenly visitations and give us a new slavery—endless thanks to God's grace (Ro. 6:22; II Co. 5:14). If simmering steaks are waiting to be eaten from a new oven, why bother with cheap hamburger on the old burner?

2. All sin can be resolved into a wrong voluntary action and is not some sort of fixity in back of our wills causing action. As to the nature of sin, all agree that submitting to wrongful desires is sinful. These are acts of will. The question is, is this urgency of depravity sinful before submitted to in acts of will? Is sin not only a dynamic something of action, but also a static something of inaction, before moral actions or choices are brought to pass? If so, then depravity must be eradicated before the holiness of personality so often described in the New Testament could exist. But if sin is a wrong action, a choice of our wills to indulge the impulses of depravity, as our study has abundantly concluded, then no eradication of the impossible is necessary to enable us to live holy lives before the Lord. "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh" (Ga. 5:16). Spirituality is not an eradication of selfish desires, but a conquest of them and a starvation of them by victorious neglect.

C. NOR BY CLAIMING TO HAVE AN ESTABLISHED CONSTANT VICTORY OVER SIN WHEN WE DO NOT IN FACT HAVE THE REALITY.

1. A life of spiritual victory is manifested before all and will not need to be claimed. From the many blessed words studied, it is most evident that sanctification or holiness reaches to the innermost depths of our personalities. "The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart" (Mt. 12:34). "Every good tree bears good fruit; . . . a good tree cannot produce bad fruit," said the Lord Jesus (Mt. 7:17-18). A life lived in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit will unmistakably be recognized in the struggles of daily living. The outward manner of life will testify to all of an inward reality. Therefore, it is entirely unnecessary to tell anyone that we have experienced the grace of God in sanctification or inner purification and deliverance from sin—they will automatically know it by our works.
2. Testimony is most effective when others ask us as to the reasons for our way of living. The Apostle Peter was moved to give this good advice: "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to every one who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you" (I Pe. 3:15). In other words, we are to concentrate upon maintaining a humble heart before the Lord and tell people the secrets of sanctification only when the net product of our manner of life has caused them to be curious as to why and how we live as we do. If we go about claiming an advanced state of sanctification, we are setting ourselves up as possessing more than others, whereas we need to prove it by our lives if this is so. The Apostle Paul said: "In holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you" (II Co. 1:12). "By the grace of God I am what I am" (I Co. 15:10). He proved the depth of penetration of the grace of God into his personality by laboring for his Master "more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me."

**II. THOSE RECONCILED TO GOD EXPECTED TO ATTAIN
A MATURE STATE OF SANCTIFICATION**

Many different words with various shades of meaning are used in the New Testament to indicate not only the possibility but the expectancy that all those reconciled to God should attain an established or mature state of sanctification. The various usages of these words that relate to the subject of the perfection of personality are given for study. Transliterations of the various Greek words into English letter equivalents are given, along with the number

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references from the Greek Dictionary portion of Strong's Concordance, for identification:

1. Perfect (te'lios, S-5046)-Full-grown, fully-developed, matured, or complete; fully accomplished in Christian enlightenment: Mt. 5:48; I Co. 2:6; 14:20; Ep. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 4:12; He. 5:14; Jas. 1:4; 3:2; I Jn.4:18.
2. Perfection (telio'tees, S-5047)-Moral and spiritual perfection or completeness: Col. 3:14; He. 6:1-2.
3. To perfect (telio'o, S-5048)-To complete, to make perfect or complete, to bring to maturity (of character) or completeness, to bring to the end or goal proposed, to develop fully: Jn. 17:23; II Co. 12:9-10; Phil. 3:12; He. 2:10; 5:8-9; 7:19,28; 9:9; 10:1,14; 11:40; 12:23; Jas.2:22; I Jn. 2:5; 4:12, 16-17, 18.
4. To perfect (fully) (epitel', S-2005)-To complete (fully), to make (fully) perfect or Complete, to accomplish, finish, fulfill, bring about, realize, perform, or bring to an end or goal: II Co. 7:1; Ga. 3:3; Phil. 1:6.
5. Perfectly (holotelee's, S-3651)-Completely, perfect, complete in all respects, also complete to the end: I Th. 5:23-24.
6. To perfect (katartizo, S-2675)-To complete, prepare, readjust, restore, render fit, put in order or in proper condition, equip or furnish completely, qualify fully, mend, repair, or adjust thoroughly: Lk. 6:40; II Co. 13:11; Ga 6:1; I Th. 3:10; He. 13:21; I Pe. 5:10.
7. Completeness (pantelee's, S-3838)-Completely, perfectly, fully, wholly, entirely, absolutely, or utterly: He. 7:25.
8. To establish (bebaioo, S-950)-To make firm or sure, strengthen, confirm, make steadfast, constant, and unwavering, fix on a firm basis: I Co. 1:8; II Co. 1:21; Col. 2:7; He. 13:9
9. To establish (steerizo , S-4741)-To make stable, firm, or steadfast, to fix or place firmly, set or make fast, render constant, confirm, strengthen or settle: Lk. 22:32; Ro. 1:11; 16:25; I Th. 3:2, 13; II Th. 2:17; 3:3; Jas. 5:8; I Pe. 5:10; II Pe. 1:12; Re. 3:2.
10. To cause to take root (rizoo, S-4492)-To strengthen with roots, to firmly root, firmly fix, establish, cause a person (figuratively) or thing to be firmly rooted, grounded, or fixed, to put on a firm foundation: Ep. 3:17; Col. 2:7 (both perfect passive participles).
11. To ground (themelio'o, S-2311)-To found, to lay the foundation of, to found firmly, establish, make stable, render firm and unwavering, or settle: Ep. and Col. 1:23 (both perfect passive participles); Mt. 7:25; He. 1:10; I Pe. 5:10.
12. To form (morpho'o, S-3445)-To shape, mold, fashion, to give form or shape to; used of the development of the embryo into the fully formed child; used of artists who shape their material into an image, especially an idol: Ga. 4:19.
13. To strengthen (krataio'o, S-2901)-To make strong, to become strong, to increase in vigor, to empower, acquire strength, to be firm: Lk. 1:80; 2:40 (of Jesus); I Co. 16:13; Ep. 3:16.
14. To strengthen (dunamo'o, S-1412)-To make strong, to empower: Col. 1:11; He. 11:34.
15. To strengthen (endunamo'o, S-1743)-To make strong, to endue with strength, to empower, invigorate: Ep. 6:10; Phil. I Tim. 1:12; II Tim. 2:1; 4:17.
16. Steadfast (hedraios, S-1476)-Firm, settled, constant, steady, or immovable, of those who are fixed in purpose: I Co.F 15:58; Col. 1:23.
17. To confirm (episteeri'zo, S-1991)-To make or render more firm, to make stronger, to strengthen more, to support further, establish further or reestablish: Acts 14:22; 15:32, 41.

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III. SCRIPTURAL INSTRUCTIONS ON THE NATURE OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

From the above references the passages have been gathered that more particularly instruct us upon the nature and manner of experiencing a maturity of spiritual development or stability of life, as follows:

Mt. 5:48	Ep. 3:17	Col. 1:23	He. 6:1	Jas. 3:2
Lk. 6:40	Ep. 4:12-15	Col. 2:6-7	He. 13:9	I Pe. 5:10
II Co. 1:21	Phil. 3:12-15	I Th. 3:12-13	He. 13:21	
II Co. 13:11	Phil. 4:13	I Th. 5:23	Jas. 1:4	
Ga. 4:19	Col. 1:11	He. 5:12-14	Jas. 1:5-8	

Not included in the above list of words is the designation "spiritual," as describing a manner of life being lived in vital relation to God, a having "the mind of Christ," as contrasted with the "natural" or soulish man (not reconciled to God) (I Co. 2:14-16; also Ga. 6:1), and with the "fleshly" man (I Co. 3:1-3) as being an unestablished "babe" in Christ. The spiritually-unhealthy "babe" distinction is also made in He. 5:12-14.

1. Greek aorist tenses indicate that climactic or sudden actions are being brought to pass in connection with our being established, viewing an overall process: Ga. 4:19 ("is formed in you") and I Th. 3:13 ("may establish").
2. Present tenses indicate that the established deliverance must be maintained: Phil. 4:13 ("strengthens"); Col. 1:11 ("strengthened"); Col. 2:6-7 ("built up" and "established"); He. 13:9 ("strengthened"). We also have future tenses as admonitions to continue: Mt. 5:48 ("be perfect"); I Pe. 5:10 ("will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you").
3. Perfect tenses indicate some sort of climax in our becoming established in the spiritual walk of faith: Ep. 3:17 ("rooted and grounded"); Col. 1:23 ("firmly established" or "grounded"); Col. 2:7 ("firmly rooted").

The Greek perfect tense involves a process, a climax and the continued existence or influence of the climax. To convey the idea, Ep. 3:17 might be rendered: "That Christ may dwell through faith in your hearts, in love having come to be (and remaining) firmly rooted and grounded," indicating that certain experiences have made a permanent impression and will influence future action.

This climax occurs when we discover, with great blessing and thanksgiving, that faith in our risen Savior really brings deliverance from temptation and sweet rest of heart amidst the turmoils of life. In answer to the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" the Apostle Paul wrote: "I have come to be (and continue to be) persuaded" that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro. 8:35-39), using the perfect tense. Perhaps the apostle is referring back to the climax of Romans 7:25 as a happy discovery.

IV. HOW IS THIS MATURED SPIRITUAL LIFE OF VICTORY OVER SIN TO BE ACHIEVED?

The habitual life of spiritual deliverance is achieved when we learn the profound secret, through many sad experiences of defeat, that victory over our own selfishness and sin is accomplished by looking in faith to our heavenly Lord and Savior in a climax of self-renunciation at critical moments of evil suggestions or temptations. According to the promises of the Gospel, when this is done the energizing power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is loosed within us in blessed worshipful victory. "Sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace" (Ro. 6:14). "The righteous man shall live by faith" (Ro. 1:17).

We must not only learn the "how" but also the "when." We must not only learn how to look to the Lord in faith but must become sharpened in our spiritual perception and sensitivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we

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instantly recognize when we need to look to the Lord for deliverance. The quicker we do this in the process of temptation, the less will be our emotional agitation and the easier will be our victory (Jas. 1:13-15). We simply must learn that we are to "make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts," if we are to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro. 13:14). Spiritual rest is attained through Holy Spirit illumined contemplation of our heavenly Master (II Co. 3:18). This illumination takes place when with tear-stained defeat we look to the Savior, "the author and perfecter of faith" (He. 12:2). "The joy set before Him" in all His struggles was that repentant sinners might have glorious victory. When we recognize our personal failures and want deliverance enough to arouse ourselves to seek the face of God for whatever we need to know and do, with great joy God will lead us and grant our request.

This blessed deliverance from sin is not optional; it is a must. "If you are living according to the flesh, you must die" (Ro. 8:13). Then we have described the simple principle of Christian victory: "If by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Two thoughts emerge from this passage. First, there must be a "you" in spiritual victory. We must want deliverance from temptation and take action--it will not come automatically. Then, victory must be "by the Spirit" in the look of faith, as previously discussed. The principle is well illustrated in the application of power steering in a vehicle, where hydraulic power from a pump supplies the force to turn the wheels as the steering wheel is turned. A little resistance to movement of the steering wheel has to be built into the system so that the driver will have a proper feel of steering control. Our struggle against temptation in our own strength is like turning the steering wheel of an automobile without the engine running. When the engine is started and the power steering is operating, steering becomes pleasantly easy. So it is when we learn and apply the prescription of God's gracious blessings, a newness of life results.

We may summarize the detailed steps involved in achieving this wonderful fullness of life, where "we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Co. 5:7) and where "His power . . . mightily works" within us (Col. 1:29), by saying that it is a development that comes about:

1. Through the enlightenment, affectionate pleadings, and continual guidance of the Holy Spirit: Jn. 16:13; Ro. 8:14, 26-27; I Co. 10:13; Phil. 2:13; I Jn. 2:20, 27.
2. Through the loving fellowship and ceaseless intercession of our glorified Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: Mt. 28:20; Lk. 22:32; Jn. 10:3-4; 17:9, 11, 15, 17; He. 7:25; I Jn. 2:1.
3. Through the help and prayer of other Christians who have learned to practice spiritual victory and a ministry of faith: Ga. 4:19; Ep. 3:14-19; Col. 1:9; 4:12; I Th. 5:23.
4. Through our own longing and sincere determination to grow or mature in our spiritual life and have victory over all obstacles: Mt. 5:6; I Pe. 2:2; II Pe. 3:18.
5. Through diligent and prayerful application of our minds to the revealed truth of God, so that we may become greatly enlarged in our understanding of our moral relations to God and man and of our antagonists: Mt. 4:4; Jn. 8:32; 19; Acts 20:32; Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-12; II Pe. 1:5-8.
6. Through a thorough arousing of our minds to a new energy of perception and observation: Ep. 5:14; He. 5:14; I Pe. 1:13. In He. 5:14 we have a perfect tense, with a verb which means to be trained or disciplined vigorously, trained as in gymnastic discipline, and may be rendered: "But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice the senses having come to be (and are continuing to be) exercised vigorously." In I Pe. 1:13 we are admonished: "Gird your minds for action."
7. Through the painstaking moment by moment application of our aroused and developed perception to recognize tendencies and occasions of temptation before they become strong enough to challenge us: Ep. 5:14-16; Phil. 1:9-10; He. 5:14.
 - a. Ep. 5:14-16: "Awake, sleeper, . . . be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil."

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- b. Phil. 1:9-10: "That your love may abound still more and more in real (or full) knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve (or be continually examining, scrutinizing, distinguishing, discerning, proving by trial) the things that are excellent (excelling, superior, of greater value), in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ."
 - c. He. 5:14: "The senses (faculties of the mind for perceiving, understanding, or judging) having come to be (and continuing to be) exercised vigorously (perfect tense) toward a discerning (distinguishing or judging) both of good and evil."
8. Through the willingness and know-how of instant self-renunciation and the look of faith to our heavenly Lord and Savior for immediate deliverance, thanking Him in advance for glorious victory: Ro. 6:11, 13, 19; Ep. 6:10; II Tim. 2:1; He. 12:2; I Pe. 1:5; I Jn. 5:4; I Co. 15:57. Reconciliation to God took place when our wills responded to truth or intelligence. Likewise, spiritual victory and the establishment of Christian consistency must involve the highest exercise of intelligence. We must use intelligence in mastering the various performances of life, but after certain abilities are attained very little concentration is needed for such activities. For example, we all have experiences in the matter of balancing ourselves. There is in the mind a sensitivity of balance so that we may stand and walk straight. In learning to ride a bicycle there had to be a concentration of balance in turning the front wheel to obtain a shift in weight to keep from failing and for direction. After the mind accomplishes this sensitivity, little attention needs to be exercised. Professional mono-cycle riders and tight-rope walkers have concentrated on developing sensitivity to weight shift to an astonishing degree. For balance, the center of mass must be over the point or line of support. As soon as a slight shift takes place, counteraction must be taken to restore the state of balance or falling occurs. Sensitivity must be developed to recognize smaller and smaller shifts in the center of mass so immediate corrective action can be taken. This only comes by long and persistent practice and becomes somewhat of a permanent attainment. There must be continued performance to maintain the sensitivity, but never in the sense of starting over again once certain abilities are attained. So it is in learning the "how" and "when" of spiritual victory in our Christian lives. The longer we practice the prescription provided, the easier and more sensitive we become in recognizing potential challenges and taking counter-measures of obedience and climaxes of faith to maintain spiritual stability. Just as selfish choices develop a habit of sinning, so the awakening to virtuous choices by the grace of God develops a habit of victory which is the greatest and most worth-while experience of life.

If we want spiritual victory because of the consequences that sinful indulgence brings, we will be left to grind away at our own mill. We must turn from sin because of its relative emptiness and utter inconsistency with the great moral worth that we see ourselves to have in our relationships to the great God and our fellowmen in a profound universe. Sin can only be defeated by contrast. To view our true moral worth to God and the universe of moral beings is like shaking a beautiful rattle before a small child, who quickly puts down a harmful toy that we wish to take away. When our concepts are enlarged so that we really see that manner of life in solemn relationship to the great benevolent God and our fellow men that is worth living, we put down with joyful relief those gratifications which are inconsistent with this Divine eternal viewpoint. When sinful gratification is viewed as the real value in life, it is a struggle to deny ourselves and give it up. But when by contrast these gratifications are seen to be totally inconsistent with the Divine perspective of our moral worth, the struggle ceases to give up the unworthy. "The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (I Jn. 2:17).

V. IS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY A PERMANENT STATE OF BEING, WHERE DELIVERANCE FROM SIN IS AUTOMATIC, WITHOUT THE CONFIDENT ABIDING IN CHRIST?

- 1. Spiritual victory is an achieved state of intimate relationship with God-not an accomplished state of isolation. "Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body . . . Because we are members of His body"

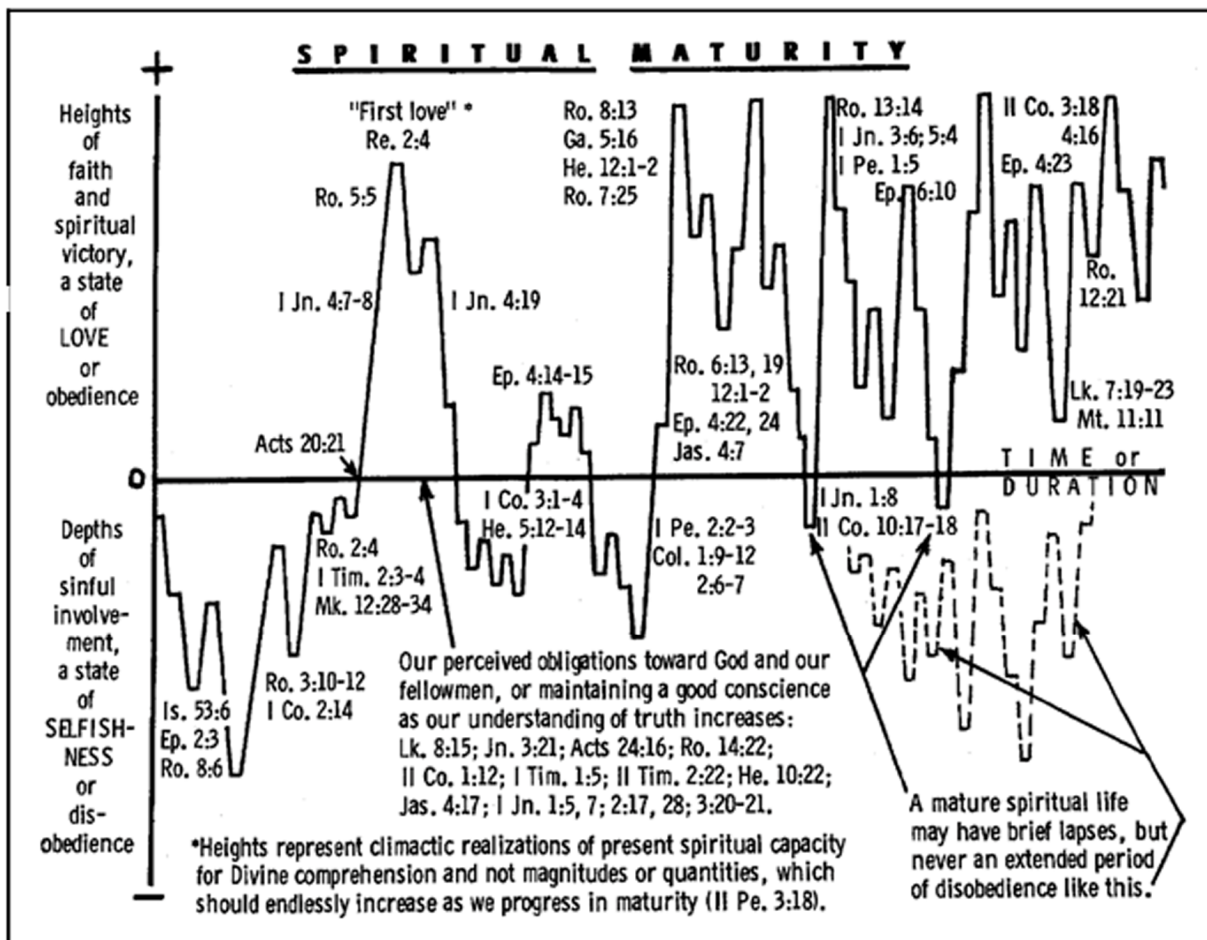
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(Ep. 5:23, 30). Just as our head is the nerve center and source of life, so our Lord is the source of spiritual life through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Obviously, therefore, if we stupidly rebel against and forsake the source of life, we will have nothing left except an agonizing memory of the spiritual victory we once enjoyed.

2. To be "protected by the power of God through faith" (I Pe. 1:5) is to "become partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (II Pe. 1:4). Just as the power from the generating station passes into our electrical appliances when they are plugged into the line, so the life of the Godhead flows into the life of faith to deliver from the lesser appeals of our former self. The power flow ceases if the line connection is broken. Just so, the Divine energy and life ceases to dominate and deliver us from the appeals of selfishness, if we choose the gratifications of sin or cease to maintain the look of faith. Continual deliverance depends upon our having learned the secret of continual abiding in Christ, and, therefore, is not automatic. "I am the vine, you are the branches;" said the Savior. "He who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5). "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness" (II Pe. 3:17).
3. The modern Hovercraft rides smoothly and swiftly above the churning waves of the sea, supported by a mighty blast of air directed downward within a surrounding inflated rubber enclosure, provided by several large engines and driven by propellers on top. The comfort and speed of the craft depends upon the continuous operation of the engines. If the engines are shut off, the craft will rest down upon the turbulent waves and be tossed to and fro. The turbulent sea may be likened to the disturbing encounters of life, which often bring a fluttering response of one sort or another in our emotional reactions. As with the Hovercraft, our spiritual deliverance rests upon a steadfast abiding in Christ. If the flow of life and power becomes shut off, the turmoil and chaos of our former lives will rise up to do us battle and bring us back into bondage, if possible. We are left to grit our teeth and fight the waves, so to speak, in our own strength because we have lost the buoyancy of Gospel deliverance.
4. Most happily, there is a deepening of affection toward the Godhead, which makes continuation in the love of God easier and blessed: Col. 3:12-14; Jn. 21:15-17. God experiences this deepening of affection and refers to His submissive spiritual children as "beloved" (Col. 3:12, for example, where we have a perfect tense, "having come to be (and continuing to be) beloved," involving some kind of a personal attachment or development of love). Our Savior's prayer at the close of His earthly life also displays this tender affection: "I do not ask on behalf of the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine" (Jn. 17:9). The broken but restored Apostle Peter said thrice to his loving Lord, "You know that I love you" (Jn. 21:15-17). He used the word for affectionate love and refused to use the word for objective virtuous love that the Lord twice used. In His third question, "Simon,... do you love Me?" our Lord changed to Peter's word for affectionate love. Perhaps Peter was so warmly attached to his loving Master for His double rescue of his soul, that he could only think in terms of the deep affection of his heart for his loving Friend. Oh, sweet conquest of the pure virtuous and yet affectionate love of God! "You are My friends, if you do what I command you." said the great "Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (Jn. 15:14; I Pe. 2:25).

The walk through life becomes more and more blessed as our Savior communicates with us along the way. The two discouraged Emmaus disciples said after a mysterious visit of the resurrected Christ, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?" (Lk. 24:32). The tenses indicate a continuous duration of blessing. Attachment deepens with fellowship and continually makes abiding in Christ easier and departure into sin more stupid and unlikely. There is a new sweetness in God's reasonable requirements, a new trustfulness, a new relaxation that knows no termination of development. "Perfect love casts out fear . . . The one who fears is not perfected in love" (I Jn. 4:18).¹⁹

¹⁹ See lower angles of the Development of Moral Depravity diagram on page 69.



VI. IS THERE AN END TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH?

Is there a finality of Christian experience, where we arrive at some plateau with no further challenge of spiritual attainment?

A. MAINTAINING A GOOD CONSCIENCE BEFORE GOD AND MAN IS THE FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENT OF ALL SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND CHRISTIAN GROWTH.

The Lord Jesus said: "I have not come to call righteous men but sinners to repentance" (Lk. 5:32). He spoke of the necessity of "an honest and good heart" if salvation is to be accomplished (Lk. 8:15). The Apostle Paul testified that he maintained "always a blameless conscience both before God and before men" (Acts 24:16). He wrote (with Timothy): "The testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity . . . we have conducted ourselves in the world" (II Co. 1:12). "Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves" (Ro. 14:22). "Be sincere and blameless" (Phil. 1:10). "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (I Tim. 1:5). "Timothy, my son . . . fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience" (1:18-19). "Pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart" (II Tim. 2:22).

We are admonished: "Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (He. 10:22). "One who

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knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). "God is light. . . Walk in the light as He Himself is in the light" (I Jn. 1:5, 7). "He who practices the truth comes to the light" (Jn. 3:21). "The one who does the will of God abides forever" (I Jn. 2:17). "Abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence" (28). "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God" (3:21).

The "Spiritual Maturity" chart is an endeavor to represent this basic concept of maintaining a good conscience. The zero line is this state of will in submission to all truth perceived by the mind at a given period in the process of time. In such a chart only generalities can be represented. We are not thinking of any specific long or short duration of time, nor that there are only a few oscillations as represented. We are never static, or without activity of mind and being, so there are continual variations in our choices and experiences. The chart above the line represents a state of love or obedience to all truth that we perceive at a given time in the particular situation and opportunity that we face, and is a state acceptable to God. Below the line is the area of selfishness, as we choose not to Conform to the moral light that we possess at a given time and pursue with greater or less intensity such gratifications as we think will give us the most out of life, all things considered. Fear of consequences intrudes into the outreach for pleasure to limit indulgence and disturb its concentration.

B. EMERGENCE FROM OUR FORMER PURSUIT OF SUPREME SELFISHNESS WAS A STRUGGLE THAT BROUGHT ABOUT A GLORIOUS SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT OF FORGIVENESS AND A DELIVERANCE FROM THE BONDAGE OF OUR SINS.

In our discussions we have seen that a divided personality is impossible and that 'each of us has turned to his own way' (Is. 53:6). "There is none righteous, not even one . . . There is none who does good, there is not even one" (Ro. 3:10, 12). "The kindness of God our Savior, and His love for mankind appeared" (Tit. 3:4) and is seeking in a wide variety of activities to lead all to repentance, in acceptance of the whole realm of revealed truth (I Tim. 2:3-4). Our past life is represented, therefore, as being below the line of good conscience in a state of loving "the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil" (Jn. 3:19). The process of thought and evaluation that precedes repentance and faith is represented a little below the line as we consider "the kindness of God (that) leads . . . to repentance" (Ro. 2:4). A religious leader asked the Lord Jesus what the most important truths of the law of God were, whereupon Jesus gave a concise summary of supreme love to God and equal love to our fellowmen. The scribe manifested such thoughtfulness in his reply that Jesus said: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk. 12:28-34).

The cross-over by repentance and faith into the realm of, total submission to God brings about the glories of salvation-forgiveness, transformation, with "the love of God... poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Ro. 5:5), bringing an exuberant state Of "Your first love" (Re. 2:4) with complete satisfaction. Anyone not completely satisfied and delivered has never met Jesus, the loving Savior who "shall make you free,... free indeed." Anyone who plans to have one more evil thought or indulge in one more sin has never met the loving Savior, who rescued us at an unthinkable price (II Co. 8:9).

C. THE GREAT PROBLEM OF THE NEW-BORN CHILD OF GOD IS TO STAY FREE AND BE DELIVERED FROM THE PITFALLS OF TEMPTATION THAT FACES EVERYONE IN THE STRUGGLES AND DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE.

"Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord" (I Pe. 2:2-3). A child taking its first steps is buoyant in accomplishment, but has not developed the control of balance and thus will have many falls and must get up and try again. So without much experimental knowledge of the "how" and the "when" of spiritual victory, the soul finds itself all too often in the gloom of defeat, a situation which the "first Love" condition did not foresee or imagine. The wounded heart may take a little time to recover before sheepishly coming to the Savior again for forgiveness, as represented by a slight extension in the central portion of the chart. Entrance has again been made into the negative sphere of selfishness. There may be many such oscillations before the mind is awakened to the glorious provisions of the Gospel, although there need not be. "We

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are no longer to be children, tossed here and there... but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all respects into Him, who is the Head, even Christ" (Ep. 4:14-15), as has been discussed.

D. UNENDING MULTITUDE OF CLIMACTIC SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS ARE TO BE EXPERIENCED IN THE LIFE OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY.

Jude "felt the necessity to write" and gave us a concise summary of the Christian life: "Beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life" (20-21). Having learned the secret and experienced blessed deliverance in loving Divine relationships, we are constantly to be building ourselves up in greater and greater comprehension of the truth of God in earnest prayer and study. When Barnabas "witnessed the grace of God" in Antioch, he said that they had one main thing to do, "with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord" (Acts 11:23). "Though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (Ro. 6:17-18).

The peaks on the maturity side of the chart are intended to represent times or climaxes of great blessings which are to be frequent experiences in the obedient way of life. It is conceived that we cannot live at these peaks of spiritual concentration for long, because of our human strength limitations and our necessity to devote ourselves not only to the duties and cares of life but to practical ministries of service for God and for our fellowmen. This common area of activity would be represented by the middle or lower lines in the state of love or obedience. These sometimes laborious activities of great struggle are to be interrupted by peaks of concentrated spiritual blessings, as we look to the Godhead for refreshment, soon to return to obligations at hand.

Such a chart must be limited to main concepts or it becomes too complicated. As expressed in the footnote, the peaks are not intended as magnitudes of spiritual blessings or quantities of manifestations, but as realizations to the full of our progressively greater capacity of comprehension of truth or the reality of the greatness of God and spiritual blessings. It is the Holy Spirit filling us to our capacity for truth that we have at a given period of life.

E. DYNAMIC POWER OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE IS TO INCREASE ENDLESSLY AS OUR COMPREHENSION OF DIVINE REALITY AND ETERNAL TRUTH INCREASES.

No two persons have the same comprehension in any field of knowledge. We can never find out what others comprehend because words fail to convey perspectives of knowledge or concepts of reality that reside in the mind. No two people have the same appreciation of a beautiful painting. The artist who painted it would have the greatest, since he could not quite convey what he had in mind. Over 400 years ago, Michelangelo directed his men to bring a large block of granite to his studio, because he "saw a man in it." The enduring statue of David in the Vatican, viewed by millions, is still doubtless short of what he saw, in his mind of David's dynamic personality. No two musicians enter into the same depth of appreciation in hearing a great symphony. Music is a limitless development of the resonance of the soul, which again cannot be fully communicated. In the course of life, all of us have developed skills of mind and activity which have become a part of us and determine the pleasure and involvement in the various experiences We encounter.

The greatest of all development that we are privileged to enter into is the endless increase of comprehension of Divine reality and the perspectives of eternal truth, spoken of as a growing in "grace and knowledge" (II Pe. 3:18). We may liken spiritual comprehension to various sizes of vessels. We may say that a glass has a Q-1 capacity; a pail, Q-2; a barrel, Q-3; up to a large oil storage tank, Q-10. Each can be filled to its capacity. The glass will run over and can hold no more, and so up to the large tank. Quantity-wise, there is no comparison. The glass, pail, barrel, and tank are fully satisfied when filled, as no vessel "knows" what the next larger can hold.

It appears that the "first love" of the new-born child of God is a state of full satisfaction or fullness of the Holy Spirit, up to its small "glass" of capacity. It should never be possible to bring any dissatisfaction to the warm, happy heart in tearful forgiveness, where "the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Ro. 8:16). But in no sense is this new glorious experience of salvation any kind of a finality of Christian experience. There is great excitement in the newness of Divine exposure, with a fervent longing to learn more and more. There must be the "grace"

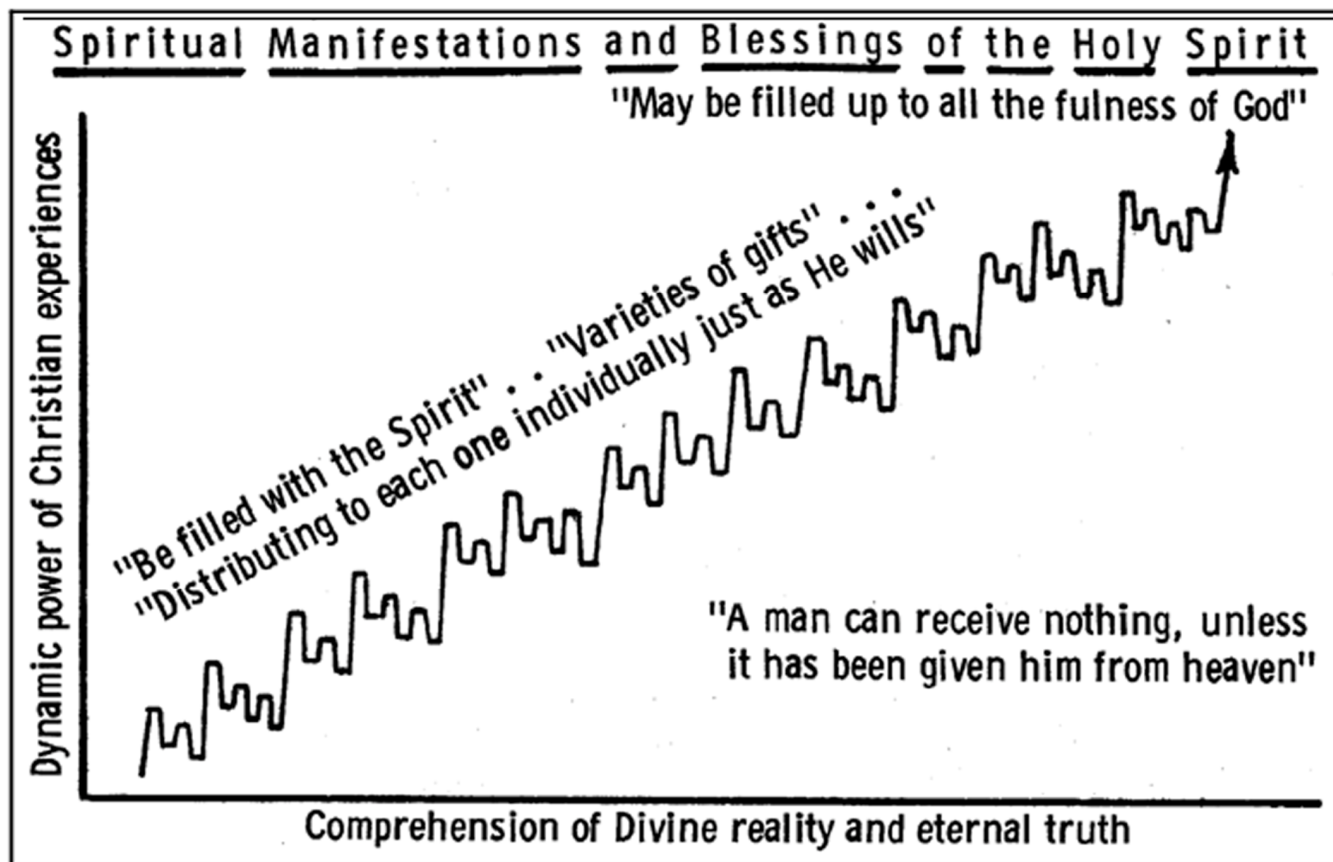
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of spiritual development in relation to God, along with the progressive enlightenment of the Holy Spirit in faithful and prayerful study of the Word of God, which is so often promised to the humble (Jn. 16:13-15; I Jn. 2:27).

The attainment of spiritual stability greatly furthers this longing, since there is not the tragic detours into selfish involvement to distort and bring sorrow to the sensitivity and composure of the soul. The Apostle Paul had a great anointing of the Holy Spirit when he prayed that Christians "may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God" (Ep. 3:14-19). This unending enlargement of spiritual manifestations and blessings could be represented somewhat as follows:

Only a generality of Christian experience is represented, with increasing peaks of spiritual reality which cannot be long endured. These peaks may not only be glorious times of spiritual worship, when "the love of God has been poured out within our hearts" in new and greater climaxes, but also the bestowal and operations of the various gifts of the Holy Spirit to energize us in carrying on spiritual warfare with evil forces (I Co. 12:4-11; Ep. 6:10-18). As the Apostle Paul labored for the Lord, he happily was "striving according to His power, which mightily works within me" (Col. 1:29), ever "upward" (Phil. 3:13-14).

It is not intended in the chart that there will be any specific uniformity of increments of development, but only that in healthy Christian growth the greatest spiritual experiences to date should be what we have at present or recently, from which we are to reach out for greater and greater involvement with the great and glorious Godhead—without any end or finality of experience on earth or in God's eternal heaven. Just as the finite can never absorb the infinite, so we tiny personalities will never even approach any finality of spiritual experience in our comprehension of the Godhead. Yet there will be satisfaction and glorious worship all along the process of enlargement. "Because I live, you shall live also," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 14:19).



- F. **THERE APPEARS, THEN, TO BE NO SINGLE CLIMAX OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE WHICH IN ANY SENSE FINALIZES GOD'S MANIFESTATIONS TO US.** Therefore, we can never say that we 'have arrived at any kind of an ultimate plateau of Divine bestowal.

Boastfulness of spiritual attainment is completely out of order. "What do you have that you did not receive?" the Apostle Paul inquired of some who were proud (I Co. 4:7). Spiritual growth is always downward in humility, rather than upward in pride of accomplishment. To know the Lord Jesus is to follow Him, which brings endless embarrassment to pride. "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28). This was a collapsing rebuke to two of His closest disciples and their mother, who had a lapse into pride and self-importance (20-27). "If any one serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if any one serves Me, the Father will honor him" (Jn. 12:26). We should never claim any kind of special holiness or sinless perfection, but keep on pressing forward in the power of the Holy Spirit to greater and greater intimacy with the Godhead in endless spiritual enlargement. This was the attitude of the Apostle Paul as expressed in that concise summary of his life (Phil. 3:3-16). "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

We may also illustrate spiritual growth in capacity for becoming greater "partakers of the Divine nature" (II Pe. 1:4), to the flow of electricity through various electrical units in a building. The heavy wires bringing the power from a transformer out on a pole into a building can provide a great amount of energy, but the amount of power used is determined by the size of the light bulbs or appliances that are connected to the line. A 10-watt bulb will flow only 10

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watts of electrical power because of its very fine wire, which resists or limits the power flow through it, no matter how much is available in the line. A 60-watt bulb, with its courser wire and lesser resistance, will flow more; a 150-watt bulb, with still courser wire, still more; on up to a 1500-watt heating or cooking unit, with its very course wire, providing much greater flow of power. A great source of power is available, but the capacity of the electrical unit determines how much will be used.

Just so, it is our spiritual capacity or comprehension of truth, in humble realization of the austere greatness of God, that determines how much Divine life and power will flow through our lives, as the Holy Spirit fills us to our capacity with His loving presence. "It is the Spirit who gives life," said the Lord Jesus (Jn. 6:63). Our Lord admonished His dear ones: "Have faith in God." A "mountain" of difficulty can be moved if we enter into a secret relationship of confidence in prayer. "All things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you" (Mk. 11:22-24). Since the power source is so great and we humans are so very small in any capacity of personality that we can ever attain to, there is no place whatever for any pride of spiritual achievement. It would be like living next to a large generating station, which provides electricity for a whole city, and feeling our importance in consuming its output with our very small facilities.

G. BRIEF LAPSES INTO SELFISHNESS FROM A STATE OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY ARE TO BE GUARDED AGAINST. Brief negative lapses into selfishness may occur in the life of the one who has learned the secret of abiding in Christ, against which constant watchfulness must be exercised.

Such departures are represented on the Maturity Chart as of brief duration. The mature Christian has learned by sad experiences that he must face himself in reality in his relationship to God and cannot cover up sinful thoughts or actions without disturbing blessed peace and fellowship. "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion" (Prov. 28:13). The extended period of selfish indulgence shown is entirely inconsistent with the life of abiding in Christ and would indicate an abandonment of truth and a departure into a state of strained relationship of guilt, calling forth recovery measures. Such a tragedy is possible but unlikely to those who have learned to appreciate their Savior and rest in His guidance.

As has been discussed, temptation cannot be avoided and becomes sin only as we voluntarily entertain its consideration and decide to take such action. This has long been discussed in church history. Pelagius, who has been grossly misrepresented, distinguished (about 400 A. D.) three kinds of evil thoughts: First, those which merely pass through the mind and which the soul immediately rejects with horror; secondly, those with which the soul must.. struggle and which the will resists and finally conquers; thirdly, those finally to which mental assent is given. Only in the third case can evil thoughts be called sin.²⁰ The process of involvement in the second area becomes a very sensitive issue within our minds, as to whether we may have agreed to entertain approval for a period of time which increased the conflict. Even though there may be no external involvements, sin may have been committed before God and it is spiritually healthy to acknowledge such a possibility and confess for forgiveness, rather than contending that we had full deliverance. This caution against boastfulness appears to be the meaning of I John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us." As previously discussed (Chapter 10, Section II). Many passages in this epistle require us to understand that sin may be intermittent but is not continuous in the Christian life. Sin is rather portrayed as not being common. "No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him" (3:6). "He who boasts, let him boast in the Lord. For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends" (II Co. 10:17-18).

²⁰ Pelagius distinguished three kinds of evil thoughts: Those which merely pass through the mind and which the soul immediately rejects with horror. Those with which the soul must struggle and which the will resists and finally conquers. And finally those to which mental assent is given. Only in the third case can evil cogitatio (thoughts or reflections) be called sin. Eastern perfectionism would assert: "Passion does not arise in the heart of the believing man." Pelagius would differ, as above. (Robert F. Evans, *Pelagius: Inquiries and Reappraisals*, New York, 1968, po 56.)

We have such a kind Savior, our heavenly Intercessor (I Jn. 2:1) and helpful Friend (Ro. 5:9-10), who is laboring as our Shepherd to save and deliver from temptations and not to destroy us (Jn. 10:11, 27-29). He will give us every benefit of doubt that He can in His great compassion, which was learned in His human experiences (He. 4:14-16). The beloved John the Baptist, whom the Lord Jesus said was the greatest born (except Himself) (Mt. 11:11), even though he performed no miracle (Jn. 10:41), had a lapse from faith under the extreme pressures of his imprisonment when it appeared that God had forsaken him. The kind Master took all these extremities into account in His prescription, that all John needed was a report of what was taking place to release his spirit of faith once more to fly the heavens in confidence (Lk. 7:19-23). The Lord said the best things about His humble servant in his weakest hour (24-28). We are to be most careful, however, not to take advantage of God's mercy because of the sensitivity of our relations. "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ep. 4:30).

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CHAPTER 15

The truth about
OUR PARTICIPATION IN GOD'S ACTIVITIES

"We are God's fellow-workers; you are God's field, God's building" (I Co. 3:9).

"We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (II Co. 5:20).

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses... " (Acts 1:8).

"With great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"They were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking" (Acts 6:10, Stephen).

"I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" (I Co. 9:22).

"For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me" (Col. 1:29, Paul).

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

The Lord Jesus viewed the winning of one soul as of such great value that all the possessions of the world would not balance it. "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mk. 8:36-37). He spent a great deal of His time speaking to one person at a time about his soul's welfare. Somewhere in the winning of every soul there must be a personal contact. Christ came to put God on exhibition, as the word "explained" tells us in John 1:18. He so lived the needs and burdens of men in His bosom that He was easily moved to tears (Mt. 9:36). Men are confronted with eternal issues which shall doom their souls. The Lord Jesus has gone to heaven in resurrection triumph and has commissioned His own spiritual children to be His representatives on earth. The progress of the Gospel was dependent upon their sincerity and efforts. They must represent Him not only in word and in truth, but in manner of life and in approach. Men would judge the Godhead by the disciples of Christ. Abundant provisions were made and bestowed upon the servants of Christ to endue them with power for deliverance and holy living. They must also be supernaturally endued by the Holy Spirit in wisdom and understanding to present the truth of God. "As the Father has sent Me. I also send you," our resurrected Lord said (Jn. 20:21). "You shall be My witnesses . . . to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations . . . and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:19-20).

"The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10) and invites us to share the privilege of His great effort. It is unthinkable that we the benefactors of great Divine love and exertion should do anything else except "be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma" (Ep. 5:1-2). Our Lord said: "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:16). Since it is the persistent effort of the Godhead for "all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), the only possible way to have Divine fellowship is to rise up and busy ourselves in a similar manner. It is certainly impossible to have fellowship with the Godhead, if They are busy in the great rescuing endeavor of love and we are

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living a drifting life of carelessness. "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me," was the tender pleading of the Master (Lk. 9:23). "Deny" and "take up" are verbs calling for repeated climactic action in the continual process of following our Lord. There was such urgency in saving souls, that "no one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk. 9:62).

The great joy of life is Divine fellowship and, secondarily, human fellowship centered in Divine fellowship, as the Apostle John wrote his First Epistle to demonstrate (1:3-4). If we spend our lives cultivating our own happiness, we will miss the only life that can bring happiness. A seed placed in the ground must lose itself if it is going to germinate and multiply (Jn. 12:24). "He who loves (or has affection for) his life (or soulish experiences) loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal" (12:25). The expression and invitation of the loving Master must have been almost compelling when He met some fishermen and said: "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mk. 1:17). "If anyone serves

Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if any one serves Me, the Father will honor him" (Jn. 12:26). The Apostle Paul wrote in happy voluntary slavery: "The love of Christ controls us (constrains or urges us on)" (II Co. 5:14). Shall we become day by day "God's fellow-workers" and be a part of this greatest of all efforts?

All who are owned by the Lord Jesus are to be His ambassadors. We do not give God our time. God owns our time, if Jesus is our Lord and Savior . . . "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (I Co. 6:19-20). It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain," wrote Paul after he had been conquered by the risen Christ (Phil. 1:21). "You are My friends, if you do what I command you," said the greatest friend that ever walked the earth (Jn. 15:14). If we are to represent Christ, we must take on His spirit and compassion. We must take time to "be with Him" before He can send us "out to preach" (Mk. 3:13-15). We must be motivated by His love, which is to be "poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Ro. 5:5). We can lead others no further than we have come ourselves.

The representatives of God must speak God's message in God's way. Exactly what is spoken and how it is spoken will make a great difference, because men are subject to moral influence and effective presentation of truth, the guidance of the Holy Spirit has been promised. "It shall be given you in that hour what you are to speak. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you" (Mt. 10:19-20). We are to be as a "watchman" for God: "Whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me" (Eze. 3:17). God desires that His servants should "be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves" (Mt. 10:16). The religious leaders "were marveling" at the wisdom and boldness of Peter and John "and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Paul was not accused of being ignorant, but as having "great learning" (Acts 26:24). He had spent countless hours in the presence of the living Christ. He spoke forth "words of sober truth" (25). "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5). "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Ro. 10:15).

I. WHAT ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE GODHEAD SEEKING TO ACCOMPLISH?

The Bible reveals the remarkable fact that each Member of the Godhead is a sacrificial servant of love and mercy toward man. "The kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared" (Tit. 3:4). The word translated "love for mankind" conveys the idea of affectionate fondness. Man has been created in the "image" and "likeness" of God and is therefore of great concern to God. Experiencing unthinkable grief and sorrow at man's totally illogical rebellion, "God so loved the world, that He gave Himself In a great sacrificial recovery process involving the desperate measure of the incarnation and atonement of the Lord Jesus. God's great mercy continues: "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Ro. 8:32). "Love your enemies, and do good," said Jesus, for "the Most High . . . is kind to ungrateful and evil men" (Lk. 6:35). "He who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me" (Jn. 12:45). "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (14:9). We may, therefore, study with devotion and intensity the life of the Lord Jesus and understand that God the Father is exerting

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Himself in similar sacrificial activity, rather than in any kind of vindictive sensitivity as seems often to be implied. This is a great and challenging revelation concerning God the Father.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the model for all Christian activity. His motto was: "I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (Jn. 6:38). "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28). "I am among you as the one who serves" (Lk. 22:27). "He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). The ultimate of self-sacrifice occurred when our Savior, in the love of the Father, laid down His life (Jn. 10:17-18). "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13). He "loved me, and delivered Himself up for me," wrote the Apostle Paul (Ga. 2:20).

The Holy Spirit also shared in this great adventure of recovering love. The Holy Spirit in striving against man's rebellion (Ge. 6:3), had been resisted down through the ages (Acts 7:51). He was active in Old Testament revelations, "predicting the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow" (I Pe. 1:10-12). He was the Divine Agent in the virgin birth of our Lord's humanity (Lk. 1:35; Mt. 1:18, 20), anointed our Lord in His baptism for His life's ministry (Mt. 3:16-17), enduing the Son of Man with power for unending ministry (Acts 10:38), and had a solemn part in intimate relationship with our Savior in accomplishing the Atonement (He. 9:14). Then further, there are "myriads of angels" who are "ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation" (He. 1:14). Truly, there is perfect unity of activity of the Godhead in man's salvation.

A. IT WAS IN NO SENSE GOD'S WILL THAT SIN SHOULD EVER HAVE ENTERED INTO THE WORLD:

Acts 17:24, 28; Ep. 2:22; De. 10:12-13; Mt. 6:10; I Jn. 2:17; Ge. 6:12, 5-7.

It is mind-boggling that theological and philosophical theorists should ever have developed such an extreme contradiction to the whole tone and urgency of the Bible, as exemplified in the desperate adventure of the Lord Jesus into our world to live and die in atonement. It is always God's will for moral beings to live intelligently and find happiness with their Creator and with each other. Since "God is love," it would be totally inconsistent to will anything but good to His moral creatures. Man's rebellion and persistence in sin brought a great emergency of grief to his loving Creator and Benefactor, with profound measures of suffering mercy. Certainly, God would not author His own grief.

B. IT IS GOD'S OBJECTIVE THAT EVERYONE SHOULD COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH AND BE SAVED;

God has no elected favorites: Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:46-47; Jn. 3:17; Acts 1:8; 10:34-35, 43; 17:30; Ro. 2:11; I Tim. 2:3-4; Tit. 2:11; II Pe. 3:9.

Man has forsaken truth in his sinful rebellion. He has "exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever" (Ro. 1:25). He is living in "the error of his way" (Jas. 5:20) and loves "the darkness rather than the light" (Jn. 3:19-21). On the other hand, "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (I Jn. 1:5). "Light" and "darkness" are figurative expressions referring to a manner of life that is either right or wrong, to one that will stand up to intelligent investigation or one that will not. Any plan of reconciliation must bring about such moral enlightenment in the minds of repentant sinners that they shall be purged from concepts of error and be made to realize what is the only true life before God. Man must "come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4) concerning himself and concerning God.

To be saved is not only to submit to truth, but to "receive the love of the truth" (II Th. 2:10). It is to be doing "the truth" in the "light" (Jn. 3:21). It is to "worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:24). It is to have "the Spirit of Truth" take up His abode in us (Jn. 14:17; Ro. 8:9; I Co. 3:16; 6:19). He who came to introduce "grace and truth" in a fuller measure (Jn. 1:17) and said that He was "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6), declared that "the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). Peter wrote that salvation involved a purifying your souls "in obedience to the truth" (I Pe. 1:22), and James that the new birth was by means of "the word of truth" (1:18). Certainly there is no salvation except by a re-entry into the realm of truth by sincere repentance from the "fables" to which man has turned. "What partnership has righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" (II Co. 6:14). Man must "lay aside the deeds of darkness and

put on the armor of light" (Ro. 13:12). Man must begin to "behave properly as in the day" (13). Thus any plan of reconciliation must uncover error and bring man to a true perspective of life by an experimental realization of truth. Man must cease to reject his natural discoveries, or must cease to "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro. 1:18-20), by being willing to conform his life to them. Man must return to "the way of truth" II Pe. 2:2).

From these many Scriptures we can form some concept as to how far mankind has departed from that happy sphere of life for which they were created and what a revolutionary change must take place. God had to begin a long process of enlightenment directly to receptive individuals and bring about the advent and sufferings of His blessed Son, as recorded in the Bible. God commands and anxiously desires that all men should repent, submit to His transforming grace and be forgiven through faith, and enter into the joy of His presence. We need never pray: "Lord, if it be Thy will, save such a one." If we do, we will be like the Pharisee who "stood and was praying thus to himself." God cannot join in such a prayer, because "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro. 5:8). The Lord Jesus prayed: "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10).

C. SALVATION AND THE SACRED ATONEMENT OF CHRIST HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR ALL UNIVERSALLY: Jn. 3:16-17; Mk. 16:15-16; II Co. 5:14-15; I Tim. 2:5-6; He. 2:9; I Jn. 2:24.

The sacred atonement of Christ was universal in the absolute sense and did not literally discharge the guilt of anyone. It solved the problems in restoring a broken God-man relationship in all that is involved. It enabled God to be just to all His obligations as a righteous Moral Governor in the exercise of free pardon to repentant sinners (Ro. 3:24-26):

1. It upholds God's moral government by showing forth the awful nature of sin and its just due of eternal punishment, thus providing a moral force of consequences in restraining sin.
2. It reveals God's inner hatred of sin and how terrifying have been the effects of sin upon the Members of the Godhead, thus the true depth of redeeming love.
3. It furnishes the crushing force to subdue the tremendous structure of human pride, humbling man to the place where God can pour out His storehouse of blessings in tender kindness.
4. It provides the means for man's complete transformation and affectionate motivation in a newness of life.

The only thing left is for man to repent of all sin and stupidity and seek the face of God in proper humbleness, identifying himself in a committal of faith to the sufferings of Christ for his sins, as the only hope of his forgiveness and spiritual restoration from a state of ruin. God, then, can become joyful in loving forgiveness (Lk. 15:7), consistent with His righteous obligations, "because He delights in unchanging love" (Micah 7:18).

D. IT IS MAN'S WILL IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVING APPROACH OF MERCY THAT DETERMINES HIS SALVATION—GOD WILL NEVER COERCE THE SANCTITY OF MAN'S MORAL FREEDOM: Is. 1:19-20; 55:1-3; Eze. 18:30-32; Mt. 23:37; Jn. 3:36; 5:40; 7:17; Re. 3:20; 22:17.

Who can in the least fathom the Divine grief over man's sin and stupid persistent rebellion? Who can properly put himself in the mind and heart of the tender and compassionate Savior as He traverses the earth in His resurrection glory, with all humility knocking at the heart's door of mere man seeking admittance and the opportunity of blessing them, only generally to be turned away (Re. 3:20)? Sin is the unspeakable tragedy of the universe that blocks the manifestation of the unlimited benevolence of God. The Word of God expresses with mournful Divine regret that all men are not responding to God's universal overtures of mercy (Is. 55:1-3; 65:2-3; Eze. 18:30-32; 33:11; Micah 6:1-3; Mt. 23:37; I Tim. 2:3-4; II Pe. 3:9). The outflow of tender Divine love and compassion is limited by man's created sovereignty over his own actions, which God will not violate (Ps. 78:41). While on earth our blessed Lord enlightened men with "the light of life" (Jn. 8:12; 12:35) and confronted men with a force of persuasion as never before. His conclusion was simple but painful and remorseful: "You are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life" (Jn. 5:40). Our developed depravity or sinful tendencies become a strong persuasive force for evil, but we ourselves in our

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innermost personalities, our wills, have the God-given ability to choose and perpetuate sinful rebellion or insubordination, or renounce it in an energetic climax in breaking down and turning to God. Men cannot blame anyone but themselves for their lost estate and their impenitent condition.

If we are going to represent any business organization and be an effective part of the enterprise, we must spend enough time at headquarters to learn the secrets of the product and under what conditions business is to be transacted. No firm allows its sales force to choose its own terms of sale. Often these terms are arbitrarily established by the company, based upon what the public will take and can be changed when necessity arises. But salesmen must always present what is currently authorized. The Word of God lays down specific explanations as to how sin came about and what God has done and proposes to do in our individual lives concerning it. The wonderful thing in the domain of God is that everything is final and permanent, since everything God does is based upon absolute love and wisdom. God has taken the initiative in devising and bringing to pass a way by which man could be reconciled back to Himself. There are certain unalterable conditions which Divine intelligence has dictated must take place. God has taken great pains in the progressive revelations of the Bible to bring man into agreement with truth and to win back his allegiance. Can anything be more important to the happiness of God, to ourselves, and to others than to understand exactly what has to happen in reconciliation and what the conditions are if these glorious bounties are to become effective? We can either exert our efforts against what the Holy Spirit is seeking to do, or be positive and cooperate with His sacred efforts to bless mankind, according to our knowledge of the Divine proceedings.

Common sense can only dictate that if God is going to energize us in our ministry and witness, He can only do this in proportion as we are laboring in accordance with His will and purpose. It is to be feared that many zealous Christians are unwittingly opposing the very effort that they are giving themselves for by failing to discern clearly the mind of God as revealed in His Word. The Lord Jesus said to the strongly religious Pharisees: "Thus you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition" (Mt. 15:6). Theological tradition and philosophies are a great hindrance if they are not based upon a simple interpretation of the Word of God. We stress the word "simple," for the Bible is a plain message to plain people and develops simple concepts of truth that we are to live by. In connection with laboring for God, we have the admonition that much of our effort may be "burned up" when "the quality of each man's work" is tested (I Co. 3:9-15). This passage does not have to do with so-called worldly Christians, but with those who are "God's fellow-workers" but are laboring unwisely—not according to God's heart nor the true terms of salvation. They think they have won multitudes to Christ, which God will not be able to recognize, because they have not understood and represented the only true reconciliation that God can authorize. "The firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and, 'Let every one who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness.'" (II Tim. 2:19).

II. HOW IS A PERSON BROUGHT TO REPENTANCE AND SALVATION? WHAT AGENCIES ARE INVOLVED?

To be reconciled to God is not to enter into a manner of life which is superhuman or not adapted to our human existence, in which we cannot experience the normal relations and functions of life. It is rather to enter into a state of life in which we live out our intended relationships with God and man in all true intelligence and wisdom. Holiness is simply intelligence applied to our various relations in proper proportion and esteem. "In Him (God) we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28). "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (I Co. 10:31).

Salvation is not a partial reconciliation to God or a partial transformation of heart which leaves part of our personality unconquered and unsatisfied. It is rather a full reconciliation to God in blessed fellowship and a full transformation of life, referred to in the New Testament as being "born again (or from above)" (Jn. 3:3-7). Certainly such a forceful analogy stresses a grand climactic experience that is to take place in a total revolution of our manner of living. This spiritual transformation extends to our whole personalities and is accomplished only with man's consent and participation. Man is not dead to spiritual reality or to the reality of the existence of God. Man is disturbed and has a guilt complex in a state of restlessness because he knows that he is not fulfilling his known relationships with a Supreme Being nor living rightly with his fellowmen. Man may thus be reasoned with or persuaded to repent and embrace the

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Gospel.

When the Scripture commands "that all men everywhere should repent" (Acts 17:30), from Old Testament times (Is. 55:6-7; Eze. 18:30-32) through our Lord's words (Mk. 1:14-15; Lk. 13:30-5) unto the Apostle Paul in full development of "The gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:21, 24; 26:18-20), it nowhere says that man is unable to renounce his own selfish ways and turn to God. We cannot partly repent and partly not repent, or be partly selfish and partly not selfish at the same time. We either receive all the truth of God that we are convinced of, or we do not. If God would accept a partial repentance and do a partial work of grace in our hearts, there would have to be a reason for this partiality or incompleteness, which a God of love and grace is unable to find. God desires to bless man to the fullest extent of his created capacities. God has planned that we should enter through the door of repentance and faith into the most glorious experience of our lives, in which we are actually cleansed from our sins and filled with vital Divine life. This spiritual transformation takes place upon a full committal of faith in the atoning death of Christ, into which climax only the penitent are led. We know that we have repented and exercised saving faith by the resulting experience.

Man's salvation and transformation is a cooperative enterprise of three agencies: Supremely, the agency and activity of the Holy Spirit; secondarily, the voluntary agency and fervent prayers of Christian witnesses; and thirdly, the necessary agency and response of the subject. The Word of God, particularly Gospel truth, is the instrument or medium of all persuasive activity and resulting response. We have seen that Scripture reveals the sad fact that no one is seeking after God out of his own initiative to be reconciled and forgiven. The process is too painful and self-revealing, with inner doubts that God could be merciful. Not a person on earth would ever be saved, therefore, apart from the involvement of great effort on the part of someone else. "The kindness of God leads you to repentance" (Ro. 2:4). The Holy Spirit brings enlightenment and convicting power with great energy from every source of truth (Jn. 16:8-11). Christians are more than mere instruments that God uses to further His work. "We are God's fellow-workers." We are active voluntary agents who are to go forth in the name of the Lord as "divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses" (II Co. 10:4). "He who is wise wins souls" (Prov. 11:30). Repentance and the saving faith which follows is man's personal response to this Divine and human persuasion, based upon his natural discoveries and upon the Word of God which enlightens man as to his moral responsibilities and reveals the truths of the blessed Gospel.

A. THE HOLY SPIRIT, AS THE DELEGATED AGENT OF THE GODHEAD, TAKES THE INITIATIVE IN SALVATION AND IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WHOLE PERSONALITY OF THE REPENTANT SINNER THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF THE ATONING SACRIFICE OF CHRIST AND THE GIFT OF HIS ENERGIZING PRESENCE.

The Holy Spirit:

1. Enlightens every man as to his moral obligations: Jn. 1:9; Acts 17:27; Ro. 1:18; 2:14-15; Lk. 4:1, 14, 18-19 (through Christ); Acts 10:38.
2. Seeks to restrain every man from sin: Ge. 6:3; Acts 7:51; I Th. 5:19.
3. Exerts powerful convictions of guilt: Jn. 16:8-11; Ro. 2:12; 3:19.
4. Manifests the moving love of God through the Gospel proclamation: Jn. 12:32; 16:14-15; Ro. 5:8.
5. Seeks to persuade all to renounce sin and be saved: Is. 1:18; 55:2-3; Eze. 33:11; Lk. 14:17-18, 23; 19:10; Re. 3:20.
6. Washes, cleanses, or sanctifies the whole inner being of repentant sinners by uniting their minds with the sacred atoning love of Christ in the committal of faith: Jn. 17:17; Acts 15:9; I Co. 6:11; Ep. 5:26; Tit. 2:14; 3:5; I Jn. 1:7,9.
7. Makes "purified" repentant sinners "become partakers of the Divine nature" through the gift of His intimate indwelling presence, enthroning the resurrected Christ in our lives. Referred to as:

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- a. A being "born of God": Jn. 1:13; Jas. 1:18; I Jn. 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18.
- b. A spiritual birth issuing from partaking of the atoning love and resurrection of Christ: Ro. 7:4, 6; II Co. 5:17; Ep. 2:5-6, 10; I Pe. 1:3; I Jn. 2:29.
- c. A being born of the Holy Spirit in new energizing relationship: Jn. 3:3-8; 6:63; Acts 15:8; I Co. 3:16-17; 6:19; II Co. 4:6; 6:16; Ep. 3:6 (Jn. 14:16-17); Tit. 3:5.
- d. A continual transformation by the renewing of the mind through the enthronement of the resurrected Christ: Ro. 12:2 and II Co. 3:18 (same word used of Christ being "transfigured," Mt. 17:2); Ep. 4:23.

B. GOD'S SERVANTS AS FREE MORAL AGENTS MAKE CHOICE TO EXERT SIMILAR PERSUASION AND HAVE A VITAL ACTIVE PART IN TURNING MEN FROM DISOBEDIENCE TO OBEDIENCE AND IN THEIR TRANSFORMATION TO "WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE."

So intimate is our human spiritual parenthood as "God's fellow-workers" "in bringing many sons to glory" that the same word "to beget" and the same climactic tense, as is used concerning the Divine agency, is also used of our human agency. To the Corinthians the Apostle Paul wrote: "In Christ Jesus through the glad tidings (or the Gospel) I myself did beget you (did give birth to you, did bring you forth, or did impart spiritual life to you). I am exhorting you, therefore, imitators of me become" (I Co. 4:15-16). To Philemon he wrote: "I am beseeching thee concerning my child (or son-literally, the of me child, or the child of mine), whom I did beget in the bonds, Onesimus" (10). He wrote "to Timothy, my beloved son" (II Tim. 1:2), and to the Corinthians: "Are you not my work in the Lord?" (I Co. 9:1). "I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin" (II Co. 11:2).

- 1. "God's fellow-workers" must live a loving sacrificial life, manifesting the compassion of Christ: Mt. 20:25-28; Lk. 9:23; Jn. 3:27-30; 13:20; 15:8; Acts 20:33-35; I Co. 4:9-13; 2:19-23; 10:33; II Co. 12:14-15; I Th. 2:5-12; II Th. 3:7-9; I Pe. 5:1-3.
- 2. Must be faithful witnesses of the revealed truth of God and the Gospel: Jn. 20:21; Acts 1:8; 8:4, 29-35; Ro. 1:15-16; 10:15; I Co. 15:1-4; I Th. 2:3-4, 13; I Tim. 4:16; II Tim. 2:15.
- 3. Must engage whole-heartedly and urgently in Holy Spirit-anointed persuasion, yet with the love and kindness of Christ as representing the Godhead: Mt. 10:16-20, 27-28, 40; Acts 4:13, 19-20; 5:28-29, 42; 6:8-10; 17:16-17; 18:4; 26:18, 24, 28; 28:23-24, 30-31; I Co. 2:1-5; II Co. 5:11; II Tim. 2:24-26; 4:1-2; Jas. 5:19-20; Jude 3.
- 4. Must labor with great persistency in a spiritual travail of prayer for God's special guidance and visitation upon specific individuals in the process of salvation, since Jesus said, "apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5), and since "God is not one to show partiality" (Acts 10:34-35; Ro. 2:11)—God has no special elected favorites: Mt. 19:25-26; Mk. 9:28-29; 11:22-24; Jn. 15:5; Acts 4:31, 33; 6:4; Ro. 9:1-3; II Co. 1:28; Ga. 4:19; Ep. 3:14-19; 6:18-20; Col. 1:9-10; 4:12; Jas. 1:5-6.

Prayer enables God to be partial impartially—partial, in that more is done for one than for another; impartially, in that our choosing to strive in voluntary prayer and discomfort gives God an independent reason for granting special illumination and moral persuasion, to the utmost extent of His wisdom and justice. God needs our human agency in a "warfare" of prayer that He may be "divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses" (II Co. 10:4), since God does not favor one above another without a reason. We free moral workmen for God become that reason, when we "labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within (us)" (Col. 1:29). We are to "pray at all times in the spirit, and . . . be on the alert with all perseverance and petition" (Ep. 6:18), as the only way to "be strong in the Lord" and have "the strength of His might" in our conflict "against the spiritual forces of wickedness" which are laboring to keep souls in "the domain of darkness" (Ep. 6:10-17).

C. THE SUBJECT AS A MORAL BEING IS ABLE TO RESIST ALL THE MEASURES THAT CAN BE

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TAKEN TOWARD HIS SALVATION AND MUST OF HIS OWN FREE WILL RESPOND TO THE TRUTH, BREAK DOWN HIS HEART BEFORE GOD AND TURN FROM ALL KNOWN SIN.

Thus coming to Christ in a total committal of faith to participate in his own transformation of heart and life, as the Holy Spirit illumines his mind on the life and sufferings of the Savior. Salvation is profoundly simple and requires very little knowledge or spiritual insight. It is simply to forsake the realm of deceitful "darkness," in which we have lived our lives in supreme selfishness, and be willing to bring our lives into the "light" and live a life of truth, in acceptance of Gospel forgiveness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3:19-21; Lk. 10:21-22; Jn. 16:13-15). "To this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word" (Is. 66:2). "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Ps. 34:18). "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (I Pe. 5:5).

The difficulties and complications that may be experienced arise from one's unwillingness to give up and acknowledge one's sins, as the Holy Spirit brings conviction. God simply cannot compromise reality in reconciliation. One is either willing to face the "light" of truth or intelligence in which the Godhead live, and revolutionize his life accordingly, or he is not. Man simply must open his heart in good conscience to the Savior who has been "knocking" and accept any discoveries that the Savior's presence brings about (Re. 3:20). How can anyone think of going to the heavenly "place" that the loving Savior is preparing, if he is not willing to live with Him in the intelligent atmosphere of holiness (Jn. 14:2-3)? The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy that "the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (I Tim. 1:5). "If any man is willing to do His will," said the Lord Jesus, "he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself" (Jn. 7:17). "Let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost" (Re. 22:17).

The following arrangement of Scriptures outlines the detailed procedure of this simple reconciliation to the loving mercy of God "in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers" (Jn. 4:23):

1. Man must no longer "suppress the truth in unrighteousness," and must stop "resisting" and "quenching" the Holy Spirit, who has been "striving" against our way of living: Ro. 1:18; Acts 7:51; I Th. 5:19; Ge. 6:3.

2. As the resurrected Savior "stands" and "knocks" for admission, man must "awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead," hear His voice and open the door to his whole life, "open (his) eyes" and "turn from darkness to light," using "eye salve to anoint (his) eyes, that (he) may see," have "ears to hear" the truth of God "in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast," receiving "the word implanted, which is able to save your souls" and make you "doers of the word," for "the seed is the word of God," "the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus": Re. 3:20; Ep. 5:14; Acts 26:18; Re. 3:18; Mt. 11:15; 13:15; Lk. 8:15; Jn. 5:24; Jas. 1:21-22; Lk. 8:11; II Tim. 3:15--references of quotations.

3. Man must come to God in faith, "must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him;" must "seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near;" must "search for Him with all (his) heart and all (his) soul" and "with fasting, weeping, and mourning," "even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven," but "beating his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, the sinner," "for the sorrow that is according to God produces a repentance without regret to salvation," for God "is not far from each one of us" and if we "draw near to God" who "gives grace to the humble," "He will draw near to you" and as "we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness": He. 11:6; Is. 55:6; De. 4:29; Joel 2:12-14; Lk. 18:13; II Co. 7:10; Acts 17:27; Jas. 4:6-10; I Jn. 1:9—references of quotations.

4. Man must repent or solemnly resolve to have a complete change of mind and be willing to live according to the God-man perspective of truth in all his moral relations (Lk. 10:27-28), since "God is now declaring to men that all men everywhere should repent," "that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance," turning "from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of

sins,—"that "the wicked" must "forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and... return to the Lord," before God "will have compassion on him, and . . . abundantly pardon;" that men must "repent and turn away from all (their) transgressions... and make (themselves) a new heart and a new spirit," if they are to "live" and not "die;" that men must "lay aside the old self." their "former manner of life." "which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, . . . and put on the new self which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth;" that men must "deny ungodliness and worldly desires and... live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age," if they are to be "a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds;" that men must "repent and believe in the gospel," or "perish," must experience "repentance toward God" before "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, " or "repentance for (or unto) forgiveness of sins": Acts 17:30; 26:20, 18; Is. 55:7; Eze. 18:30-32; Ep. 4:22, 24; Tit. 2:11-14; Mk. 1:14-15; Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 20:21; Lk. 24:47—references of quotations.

5. The subject must "believe the gospel" (Mk. 1:15) or exercise complete trust in the atoning death of the Savior for the forgiveness of past sins (Ep. 1:7), with deep sincerity of "heart" in full acceptance of the Lordship of Christ (Ro. 10:9-10). He must be "persuaded" of the truthfulness of and make a total commitment of his whole life to the greatest event ever recorded in human history (Acts 28:24; II Co. 8:9). This great rescuing adventure of the love of the Godhead (Jn. 3:16-17) is so overwhelming in its implications that any withholding of any part of our tiny personalities is impossible as long as such belief prevails. If the Godhead have gone through all this humiliation and exertion to be able to throw a "life-preserver" to man, it would be incredible to think that man can lay hold of it with anything less than total sincerity and abandonment in salvation. The "faith" that saved (Ep. 2:8), therefore, is equated with obedience (Jn. 3:36; Ro. 6:16-18; He. 5:9; I Pe. 1:22), since partial response to such a desperate undertaking is unthinkable. The subject is drawn by the loving purity of life and profound sacrificial suffering of the Savior to "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Mt. 5:6), desires to "come to (Him) and drink" from "rivers of living water" (Jn. 7:37-39), and "take the water of life without cost" (Re. 22:17). In receiving this new-found loving Savior to have full-sway in his inner being (Jn. 1:12; I Co. 15:1; Col. 2:6; Re. 3:20), the subject must consent to an unhappy "crucifixion" of his selfish life in order that a new happy blessed life with the risen Christ may become a reality (Ro. 6:6; Ga. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14). He must "eat" and "drink" or partake of the life and sufferings of the Lord Jesus, as "the living bread that came down out of heaven" (Jn. 6:50-51, 53-58); must "wash away (his) sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16; I Co. 6:11; also Re. 7:14 and 22:14); must "cleanse (himself) from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Co. 7:1; Jas. 4:8); must "purify" his heart and soul "in obedience to the truth" at the provided remedy "just as He is pure" (Jas. 4:8; I Pe. 1:22; I Jn. 3:3); and must "pursue sanctification without which no one will see the Lord" (He. 12:14).

D. THE TRUTH AS REVEALED IN THE BIBLE, THE WORD OF GOD, AND PARTICULARLY THE RECORD OF THE COMING, LIFE, TEACHING, AND ATONING DEATH OF THE LORD JESUS, IS USED AS AN INSTRUMENT BY BOTH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND "GOD'S FELLOW-WORKERS" IN THE PROCESS OF MORAL ENLIGHTENMENT AND PERSUASION, and provides the means through which the innermost being of the repentant sinner is purified and quickened to a newness of life: Ps. 19:7; Lk. 8:11, 15; Lk. 24:44-47; Jn. 8:32, 36; 17:17; Acts 8:29-35; 18:4-5; 28:23; Ro. 6:17-18; I Co. 4:15; 15:1-4; Ep. 5:26; II Tim. 3:14-15; He. 4:12; Jas. 1:18, 21; I Pe. 1:22-23.

Thus in the salvation and transformation of the repentant sinner, the Holy Spirit illumines the Word of God, brings conviction of sin, guides in the whole process, applies the sufferings of Christ, and bestows spiritual life; the servant of Christ is the human agent to proclaim the truth of God, pray, and influence with compassionate firmness; the subject is awakened by the truth of God and is drawn to the suffering heart of Christ in spite of painful self-disclosures and actively partakes of the blessed remedy to pass from the abyss of ugly selfishness and be translated into "the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13).

Salvation is a miraculous synergism (or cooperative action) of the three agencies involved in its attainment. Each of the three contributes to the resulting reconciliation, which means that if one of the three fails to take effective action, salvation will not take place. The Lord Jesus spoke about "the narrow gate" of salvation and that relatively "few" would

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be saved (Mt. 7:13-14; Lk. 13:23-24). Mankind experiences great difficulty in giving up supreme selfishness as an end in life and submitting to the intelligent will of God. Apart from special Divine persuasion, it appears that none would give up the temporal, which seems so real, for the unseen which at first seems so remote (II Co. 4:18). It appears that the loving persuasion of the Holy Spirit in unveiling the reality of eternal truth and the unthinkable love of God in the advent and suffering of Christ, induces us to lay down the supremacy of the temporal. Prayer enables God to increase moral pressure to persuade a person to let loose of his sinful ways, and yet this never becomes a compelling force. No one would repent apart from this drawing to something better (Ro. 2:4; Jn 6:44; 12:32), and yet the drawing requires a "magnetic" response of the will to be effective.

The Godhead thus operate a prayer "bank" where prayer deposits may be accumulated in anyone's name for whom we choose to engage ourselves, provided such have not hardened their hearts against God's mercy "so that He does not hear." Such who possess prayer deposits are subject to special consideration, within the wisdom and discretion of God. The Lord Jesus lovingly admonished: "Have faith in God." He challenged His servants to pray for things in faith: "Believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you" (Mk. 11:22-24). Obviously, there are deep secrets and mysteries about arriving at this climax of the prayer of faith where one "does not doubt in his heart"—it is not a matter of mere words.

The prayer of faith is not an individual accomplishment in achieving a pinnacle of confidence and then approaching God in a spirit of demand to do what we think should be done. The prayer of faith is rather a delicate merging of voluntary sacrificial adventure of humble servants of Christ with the energy and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, as to what the Godhead decides can and should be done in a particular matter. It is a combination or melting together of the servant's will and the Divine will. It is a mutual achievement in our relationship in the Holy Spirit, with utter dependency "for we do not know how to pray as we should." In communication with God the Father, "the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Ro. 8:26-27). Earnest faith always appears to be a challenge to the Godhead as to what can be done. The Lord Jesus "marveled" at the faith of the centurion and said: "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel" (Mt. 8:10). He asked two blind men who came to Him for healing: "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" When they said, "Yes, Lord," He said: "Be it done to you according to your faith" (Mt. 9:28-29). To a persistent mother who came with great urgency for her daughter, He was pleased to say: "O woman, your faith is great; be it done for you as you wish" (Mt. 15:28).

In attaining some worthy conquest of the forces of evil we must rise up and use all the faith we have and then earnestly look for the Holy Spirit's approval and enlargement of our faith. A father brought his son to the Lord Jesus for healing, and said: "If You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" Jesus challenged him over his "if you can," and said: "All things are possible to him who believes." The father then did what all prayer warriors must do. He put his full present faith into action: "I do believe." But then he realized his great need for a higher level of faith and humbly said: "Help me in my unbelief" (Mk. 9:22-24). The achievement of the prayer of faith, then, is like climbing a ladder. We start climbing by exerting the faith we have. If as we pray with a purity of motive for an enlargement of faith (Jas. 4:3), the Holy Spirit approvingly encourages and draws us into greater fervency, we take another step with greater faith, until after a series of mutual responses an experimental pinnacle of faith is attained which enables the Holy Spirit to take dynamic action.

In praying for the salvation of souls, the enlargement of prayer that we may experience also depends upon the response of the subject to the enlightenment being given. The Lord Jesus said to a religious leader who was deeply pondering truth: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk. 12:34). Such reception of truth moves the Holy Spirit to exert a greater drawing out of our hearts in prayer, that such a one may experience salvation in "the power of God" (I Co. 2:4-5). When the Holy Spirit draws out our deep involvement in prayer and inspires us to thank God in advance for what is going to take place, "believing, you shall receive," this is the prayer of faith that moves "mountains" (Mt. 21:21-22). A "mountain" needs to be moved in a travail of prayer (Ga. 4:19) each time a soul breaks down his rebellion and gives himself up to the atoning love of Christ for forgiveness and affectionate ownership.

III. WHAT HAS BEEN GOD'S MANNER OF APPROACH IN SEEKING TO TURN

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MEN FROM SIN INTO A WARM-HEARTED DIVINE RELATIONSHIP?

Through utter stupidity and gruesome rebellion Adam and Eve isolated their hearts from their great loving Creator and Benefactor and became spiritually bankrupt. The grieved and broken-hearted God in great manifestation of love had to begin a long process of moral enlightenment in an endeavor to awaken man to his moral relations and responsibilities. The ultimate purpose in view was a full reconciliation of man to a state of forgiveness and happy relationship with the Godhead and with his fellowmen. The Godhead have approached sinful man by patiently reasoning with man over the issues of life and eternal truth. The only way that the heart of man can be humbled in true repentance is for man to be led to reason out his situation and his obligations and come to intelligent conclusions. All professed humility which is not based upon a satisfying understanding of the problems of life is superficial.

A groundwork of truth had to be established among mankind, which was simply the application of true intelligence to man's moral relations. A nation was called into being to represent God to the world of lost men. This nation was to be a depository of truth and provide a channel through which the Savior might come to accomplish His mission of enlightenment and atoning sacrifice. A great step forward was the giving of a system of laws or helpful regulations through Moses, involving primarily a system of animal sacrifices for sin and particularly the moral law or Ten Commandments.

As great and blessed as this revelation of law was, it fell short of manifesting the loving and compassionate heart of the Godhead. Man needed a perfect tangible manifestation of the moral character of God—something he could behold in the atmosphere of life's struggles. Thus it was that "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son" (He. 1:1-2). "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him" (Jn. 1:17-18). Christ, then, by His life, deeds, profound teachings, and broken-hearted suffering unto death for sin, put God on exhibition before rebellious man and made salvation possible.

With great effort God invites men to reason out their situation with an eternal viewpoint and understand the requirements of the Gospel, and sends forth His ambassadors to do likewise, with the promise that the Word of God will bear fruit. Man is admitted into the secrets of the Godhead, with the promise that the Holy Spirit will enlighten our minds and reason with us as we read. 'God wishes us to understand why certain dispensations have been taken. The Bible is not an account of the arbitrariness of God, but of the reasonableness of God. God was under no obligation to reveal all that He has of the Divine secrets, but has done so to inspire confidence in man that He is a God of intelligence and truth. God must win man through an enlightened understanding so that man will declare himself "without excuse" and capitulate to the overtures of God's mercy. The Bible inspires the mind to think through every problem and doubt. When we understand God's point of view and intelligently acknowledge our true rebellion and false accusations against God, then for the first time with openness and honesty we can meet God "face to face" over the sin question in our lives.

The following passages of Scripture are examples of God's intelligent approach toward man in seeking to persuade men to turn from sin, and in various decisions and plans that have been made as a wise and benevolent Moral Governor:

1. God explained to Noah the reason for the flood and for His plans, and revealed the profound depth of sorrow and grief that man's persistence in sin had brought into the Divine consciousness: Ge. 6:5-7, 12-13; 7:1.
2. When Sodom and Gomorrah were about to be destroyed, God revealed to Abraham the reasons: Ge. 18:17-19. Then went on that wonderful intercession when Abraham reasoned with God. God was prayed down from 50 to 10 righteous as a condition of sparing these cities (18:23-33). Who knows whether the great compassion of God could have been prayed down to five or less, if Abraham's confidence in God's goodness had been greater?
3. God reasoned with Moses in his call to deliver Israel when Moses hesitated: Ex. 3:7-15; 4:1-9.
4. Moses with great meekness reasoned with God in his great intercessory prayer when God was determined to destroy

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Israel over the golden calf rebellion: Ex. 32:9-14. Moses had the opportunity to replace Abraham as the head of a nation, but humbly declined. God harkened to his petition (30-33).

5. Samuel reasoned with the nation Israel in behalf of God when they were determined to have a king: I Sam. 12:6-7. He reviewed some of the main points of God's dealings with them (8-12) and stated their present case (13-15). Samuel had many times of blessed fellowship with God during these times of stress (8:6-9; 15:10-11).
6. King Hezekiah of Judah reasoned with God to be healed and had given to him an extension of life and reign: II Kgs. 20:1-7.
7. God desires to reason with man about his own situation and the invitation of reconciliation being extended: Is. 1:18-20.
8. God beckoned to Israel to give reasons for their disobedience and their rejection Of mercy, if they could: Is. 41:21.
9. Again we have God inviting an examination of the situation: Is. 43:22-26.
10. God not only reasons but strongly urges mankind to evaluate their lives and be reconciled in forgiveness and partake of Divine life: Is. 55:1-3.
11. God seeks to lift man's thoughts to the level of His, particularly on the necessity of repentance: Is. 55:8-9, 6-7.
12. God pled through Jeremiah in a most compassionate way that His people might return to obedience, inviting any complaints they might have: Jer. 2:1-5, 9, 13.
13. God made a final plea that Judah would listen and turn from their sins, so He could spare them the planned seventy years captivity: Jer. 26:2-7, 12-13.
14. God thinks thoughts of good-will towards man, and strongly desires man to know His processes of thought: Jer. 29:10-14.
15. God not only invites man to think with Him upon their differences, but pleads with man to do so: Micah 6:1-3, 8.
16. The Lord Jesus spent most of His earthly sojourn as the world's greatest teacher, seeking by humble illustrations to penetrate peoples' minds and get them to sit down and think over their lives and relationships to God and to each other, God longing to forgive and bless all who repent and become a part of "the kingdom of God": Mt. 5:1-2; 7:28-29; 13:1-2; 23:37; Mk. 1:14-15; Lk. 4:31-32; Jn. 5:39-40; 7:46; 8:12; Acts 1:1-2 (the Gospel of Luke); 4:13, 19-20.
17. The Holy Spirit was to continue this glorious penetrating teaching in an even greater way until the end of the age: Jn. 14:26; 16:7-15.
18. The Apostle Paul expressed his great confidence in the goodness and mercy of God to do everything possible for everyone: Ro. 8:32.
19. The Bible as the Word of God was designed to be an intelligent communication from the Holy Spirit to our spiritual understanding, so "that we might know the things freely given to us by God": I Co. 2:9-13; I Th. 2:13; II Tim. 3:16-17.
20. God designed His Word to be so plain that it would pierce through the mental "fog" which we have generated for ourselves and bring full understanding of ourselves, when read with humility in the illumination of the Holy Spirit: He. 4:12-13.
21. God has taken great pains to reveal many details of the future course of this world, which He knows must end in judgment: Re. 1:1-2.

IV. WHAT WAS THE APPROACH OF THE APOSTLES AND SERVANTS OF CHRIST IN

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NEW TESTAMENT TIMES, AND PARTICULARLY THE APOSTLE PAUL?

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples after His resurrection: "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (Jn. 20:21). The Apostle Paul received a most energetic commission (Acts 26:15-18), in response to which he could faithfully say: "I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision" (19). Men must "repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance" (20). His God-appointed task was "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins," by powerful, Spirit-anointed reasoning on the truth of God. Thus the early servants of Christ went forth to persuade men to repent and embrace the Gospel by reasoning with them "by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven" (I Pe. 1:12), as in the following passages:

1. On the Day of Pentecost they spoke forth with great learning and intelligence "the mighty deeds of God" in languages which they had never learned, after the Holy Spirit was granted according to the promise of the risen Christ: Acts 2:4-11.
2. Peter and John, with a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit, reasoned with the people with such conviction that great numbers were converted to the Gospel, the Church now expanding to about 5000 men (no doubt plus a great number of women and older children). The conclusion of the rulers was that they spoke with such brilliance and persuasion that they must have had some direct connection with the greatest teacher that they ever heard, Jesus of Nazareth: Acts 4:2, 4, 8, 13, 31, 33.
3. Peter and other Apostles were miraculously delivered from prison to continue their persuasive teaching (backed up by miracles as Christ promised, Mk. 16:17-20), with such force that those who refused to submit "were cut to the quick and were intending to slay them." The Apostles were so satisfied in the revealed truth of God that they said with overflowing enthusiasm: "We must obey God rather than men": Acts 5:19-20, 25, 29, 33, 42.
4. The religious opposition who were disputing with Deacon Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," were completely defeated and had to resort to violence. "They were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking." Their violence turned out to be for Stephen's good, for he received a home-going from his kind Master that he might not have otherwise known, as he sweetly "fell asleep." In his going he no doubt did irreparable damage to a violently intelligent young man named Saul, who could not but have been confounded by his Spirit-given reasoning powers and compassionate departure from this life: Acts 6:5, 10; 7:54, 55-56, 57, 58, 59-60.
5. Philip was directed to meet the chariot of the Ethiopian Eunuch and guide him into an understanding of the Scripture, until he was saved and "went on his way rejoicing" Acts 8:29-39.
6. "God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed (or appointed) a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed." This repentance, apart from which was no salvation, was such a change of mind that a changed life always resulted. There was only one final approach to such a revolution of life—only through the reason as the powerful claims of truth were presented in a deep burden of prayer (Ro. 9:1-3; Ep. 6:18-20). Thus the humble but great Apostle Paul went everywhere with God-given intellectual understanding to confound men's minds as he proclaimed the kingdom or moral government of God and the glorious "gospel of the grace of God" Acts 17:30-31; 20:21, 24, 25.
7. The church in Thessalonica was founded, when "according to Paul's custom, he . . . for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures." "Our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction." "You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God," "having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit": Acts 17:2-4; I Th. 1:5, 9, 6.
8. At Athens Paul "was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present," also with the philosophers on experiencing reconciliation to God

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through repentance: Acts 17:16-17, 22-33.

9. At Corinth "he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks." He "began devoting himself completely to the word," staying a year and a half: Acts 18:4-5, 11.
10. At Ephesus "he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God." He later was "reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus . . . for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord": Acts 19:8-10, 20.
11. The Roman ruler Felix sent for Paul to hear "about faith in Christ Jesus." Instead of telling him simply to believe, Paul discussed "righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come," the principles of God's moral government, which required a rethinking of his whole life. "Felix became frightened" and was unwilling to do this: Acts 24:24-25.
12. Hearing Paul's Spirit-anointed "words of sober truth" in his defense, the Roman ruler Festus spoke of Paul's "great learning," while King Agrippa said: "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian": Acts 26:24-25, 28.
13. As "large numbers" came to Paul's place of confinement in Rome, "he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God, and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening. And some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe": Acts 28:23-24.
14. Paul "stayed two full years in his own rented quarters, . . . preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ": Acts 28:30-31.

V. CAN WE BE "GOD'S FELLOW-WORKERS" AS "THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD," IF WE ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC AND CHRIST-LIKE IN MOTIVE AND CONDUCT?

The Lord Jesus knew that His time on earth was short and that He must delegate to others the responsibility of spreading the glad tidings to all men after His accomplished death for sin and resurrection. Of the many disciples who followed Him at the beginning of His ministry He, therefore, after much prayer, made choice of twelve, "that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons" (Mk. 3:14-15). He spent most of His time instructing them in "the mysteries of the kingdom of God." He said: "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). It would soon be true that His disciples would be the only moral light that the world would know. Viewing their extreme importance to the blessing of mankind, our Lord with great earnestness prayed to the Father "that they may be one, even as We are" (Jn. 17:11). This spiritual oneness would be the only way that mankind would believe in the advent of the Savior and the blessings of salvation (Jn. 17:23). Mankind must learn of the tender love and compassion of the Godhead. The only way that this could be achieved was by the disciples of the Lord to be filled with His love and manifest it to others (Jn. 17:26). They were to be "the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13) and manifest the sweet savor of the love of God to all men. The Savior prayed: "As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world" (Jn. 17:18). See study on moral "Light."

A. TO WITNESS IS TO REPRESENT SOMETHING OR SOMEONE WITH OUR WHOLE PERSONALITY.

It is impossible to say anything without manifesting how we feel or are reacting toward what we are saying. Our Lord denounced the religiously strict Pharisees as hypocritical, "for they say things, and do not do them" (Mt. 23:3). He said that they were right in what they said, but not in what they did. Thus while their words pointed one way, their actions pointed the opposite way and negated their witness.

We are so wonderfully constituted that our whole personality enters into our thoughts and actions. God has created us with the ability of reason or thought. This intelligence also has the ability to imagine or form mental pictures

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of the various things we think about. This is particularly true concerning the existence of God as related to us. Our mentality cannot help making comparisons of our actions with our knowledge as to how we ought to act. Thus we have conscience, which commends or condemns. So that our lives can advance to higher thought accomplishments, our mentality was given the ability to store our former thoughts and actions, which we call memory. These complicated mental processes enter into every thought, expression, and action, without our being aware of it. It is extremely difficult to deceive ourselves as to our actual state and more difficult yet to deceive others. When James wrote: "Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (1:22), he seems to imply that we cannot really deceive others.

If our thought life is extremely difficult or actually impossible totally to misrepresent, much more our emotional life or reactions. God did not want our lives to be dull or uninteresting. Therefore He created the ability of reaction within our consciousness so that we would have an experience with everything we think upon. This we call feeling or emotion. These reactions involve physical sensations of pleasure or pain. The conscience also approves or disapproves what is being felt and the memory records the tempo of such reactions to give a more or less permanent record of pleasure or pain.

Psychological science has developed instruments to indicate this total involvement of personality. The lie detector functions by recording changes in perspiration, respiration, and blood pressure under questioning. It depends upon the activity of conscience as relating to our emotional nature and our physical reactions. If we say what our conscience affirms is not true, there is an actual physical change brought about through our emotions, which delicate instruments indicate to the scientific observer. Another type of instrument has to do with changes in voice vibrations under emotional stresses. Each voice has its own pattern of vibrations under normal expression. When statements are made that are not true, the operation of conscience causes emotional disturbance which changes the vibration pattern of the voice. This change is indicated by flashing lights on the electronic voice stress analyzer. The instrument is applicable to all conversations. Man is "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14). God has embedded secret weapons within man which man is never quite the master of and afflicts the evolutionist with endless unsolved problems.

The field of personality interpretation or discovery has become a very specialized one, with rash claims being made as to how much of ourselves we unwittingly manifest in whatever we do. Some say that our hand writing manifests our personality; others our walking and carriage. Others look for mannerisms and peculiarities to reveal things that we are endeavoring to cover up. Tests are devised to reveal emotional balance or temper control under critical situations. The scrutinizers are trained to look beyond what is apparent on the surface for in-depth discoveries. It is not so much that they discover reactions that the untrained observer is unaware of, but that they dissect and segregate various character traits that the untrained observer does not take the pains to analyze.

We all are far more observing and are influenced by the total manifestations of our fellowmen than we suppose we are. The total image or impression of words, facial expressions, bodily manifestations, and the timing of events are automatically fed into our personal "computer," to use modern terminology, which gives instant reactions of favorable or unfavorable in various degrees. From these remarks we can readily conclude that we cannot be any kind of an effective witness for our blessed Lord unless we are willing to be genuine and whole hearted in our inner lives.

B. THUS TO REPRESENT CHRIST IN ANY TRUE SENSE WE MUST BE ENTHUSIASTIC AND CHRIST-LIKE IN MOTIVE AND CONDUCT.

The word "enthusiasm" is from a Greek word and literally means to be inspired or possessed by God, "God" being the main part of the word, basically, "in God." Enthusiasm is the measure of success in any endeavor and certainly is paramount in any effective Christian activity. One recent psychological study indicated that the majority of our decisions regarding relations with other people are made within the first four minutes of contact. Another study concluded that people are impressed 83 per cent by how you say something and only 17 per cent by the content or what you say. The content must impress us to the extent of personal involvement, if forceful expression is to be made.

The Lord Jesus exhibited unbounding enthusiasm throughout His whole earthly life. "My food is to do the will

of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work," He said (Jn. 4:34). "He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him" (Jn. 8:29). "We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work" (Jn. 9:4). "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (5). Peter and John exhibited such enthusiasm and confidence that the rulers "began to recognize them as having been with Jesus." "We cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard," they said (Acts 4:13, 20). It was the fervent enthusiasm of the Apostle Paul and the early disciples of Christ that challenged the opposition to expect things to happen: "These men who have upset the world have come here also" (Acts 17:6). Peter wrote about the enthusiasm of compulsory fruit-bearing that resulted from the cultivation of spiritual virtues in devotion to Christ (II Pe. 1:5-8). "They render you (make you or cause you to be) neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Enthusiasm cannot be manufactured. It must be a fruit of a life lived as a disciple of Christ.

To be Christ-like is not to manifest perfect conduct in all the relations of life, but rather to be humble and genuine as Christ was. It is to have "an honest and good heart," which the master-teacher likened to "good ground" that brought forth "fruit with perseverance" (Lk. 8:15). It is "to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48), as the Lord commanded. This perfection, which is to characterize the children of God, can only refer to a perfection of motive. It could not possibly refer to a perfection of conduct. Perfect conduct requires perfect knowledge of all that is involved or that can result from every action. This knowledge we will never possess, since we will always be finite creatures. Absolute perfection of conduct is reserved only to God, who alone possesses infinite understanding of all relations and reactions.

Human perfection of conduct must always be relative, since it depends upon the state of our knowledge and ability. Perfection of motive or intention, on the other hand, may be absolute in that we may purpose with all our heart to live in a disposition of love. Virtuous love places the welfare and happiness of God supreme in our lives in true worship and happy service, and that of our fellowmen equal with our own. The Apostle Paul revealed the inner secret of his life in the words: "I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men" (Acts 24:16). In other words, he was ruled by a voluntary attitude of love up to the limit of intelligence of what actions were right and proper. He intended to do no one harm. He had no malicious intentions motivating his actions. His rule was "to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:10).

We are always being influenced by the motives which others manifest to us. It is remarkable how obvious are the motives of our hearts in all our actions to those who are impartial enough to evaluate them honestly. Virtuous motives always shine out even to those who are prejudiced and hateful towards us. Courts of justice are intent upon learning whether a certain crime was premeditated and planned, and if so for how long. Lesser guilt is attached if it was believed to have been committed on the spur of the moment. Thus when men honestly seek to evaluate the moral character of their fellowmen, they look through the particular action to the motive behind it and interpret the action by the motive. Even animals seem to be able to interpret motive. Often they will attack or defend themselves against the approach of one and be friendly to another.

In interpreting motive we automatically make some evaluation of the understanding of persons and form some concept as to whether they really knew better or not. We also evaluate something of their present circumstances. What would receive favorable or passive acceptance in one situation might not in another. If we really believe a person was ignorant of a wrong action, we exonerate such, but not for long for there ought to be an increase in knowledge as to what a right action is in a given instance. The Apostle Peter wrote: "Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord" (I Pe. 2:2-3). This growth will be a growth "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pe. 3:18). It will be a growth in understanding as to how we ought to act in the various situations that we meet, a growth in our sense perception "to discern good and evil" (He. 5:14). It is that our "love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment" (Phil. 1:9).

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). This term was probably originated by Gentile unbelievers who had to admit that those who claimed to be Christ's followers were in truth so in their daily lives.

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"Let every one who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness" (II Tim. 2:19). The true Christian consistency which alone can qualify us to be the Lord's witnesses must consist in keeping ourselves "in the love of God" (Jude 21), or in maintaining through dependence upon the Holy Spirit an intelligent balanced attitude of love toward God and toward our fellowmen. This will always involve an aggressive reaching out for an ever-increasing perfection of conduct in all the events of life.

To be effective witnesses for Christ we must live above the common failings of life so that unbelievers will take notice and ask us what the secret of our lives is. It is then that we can "give an account for the hope that is in (us)" (I Pe. 3:15) with great force. Men must be able to become "imitators of us and of the Lord" (I Th. 1:6) at the same time. We must live such lives that we can say: "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:9). We must live by God's grace so that we can tell men "to follow our example" of a well-disciplined life (II Th. 3:7-9).

Think of the victory over sin that the Apostle Paul daily experienced when he could say: "I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me" (I Co. 4:16)! This was not boastfulness but was founded upon the witness of the Holy Spirit as the source of his strength: "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ" (I Co. 11:1). The Apostle John later wrote: "No one who abides in Him (the resurrected and living Christ in glory) sins" (I Jn. 3:6). This was the secret of Paul's life that enabled him to be a leader of those who "have upset the world" for their Savior (Acts 17:6). Like Moses, "he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen" (He. 11:27).

C. TO BE CHRIST-LIKE, WE MUST BE TRANSFORMED CONTINUALLY BY THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT IN A HUMBLE WALK OF FAITH.

The Christian life was not intended to be a set of regulations which we are to try to live by, but an intimate spiritual relationship with the resurrected and glorified Christ. It is to be "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). This relationship was intended to be so profound that it is called "the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known... as it has now been revealed,... fellow-partakers of the promise (of the Holy Spirit) in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Ep. 3:4-6). It is a blessed state of being "under grace." The main characteristic is that "sin shall not be master over you" (Ro. 6:14).

The Savior's love was to mean so much to those partaking of salvation that "the love of Christ" would be constraining them to continue in this new happy life (II Co. 5:14). This is the life real and genuine as God had created it. This life is Christ-like because it is the living Christ manifesting His resurrected life within the inner sanctum of the heart (II Co. 3:18). It is buoyant and energetic because it is quickened by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

To maintain this Christ-like life in happy and effective service to God and man, there appears to be three things that must continually engage our concentrated attention:

1. We must continually turn away from every obviously sinful and injurious indulgence, confessing and being forgiven and cleansed from every sin. "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me," said the Savior (Lk. 9:23). "I am dying daily," wrote the Apostle Paul (I Co. 15:31) (a present tense). When we first came to Christ in salvation, we repented of everything that hurt the heart of the loving God, that hurt ourselves and our fellowmen. The New Testament knows no salvation while continuing in a state of sinful indulgence. Sin as a manner of life is always referred to in the past tense in the Christian. "Such were some of you; but you were washed..." (I Co. 6:11). "We also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient..." (Tit. 3:3). If we have never turned from all known sin in repentance and come to the Savior in a full committal of faith for the forgiveness of sins, we have never experienced salvation. God in great love desires to bless man with great abundance of spiritual life and happiness. Man's rebelliousness and past sin stands in the way. Man agrees fully to turn from all rebellion and to be intelligently submissive to his loving Creator. Man is forgiven all through faith in Christ's atoning death and fully reconciled to God. There is no other way, no halfhearted way. God would not be loving if He planned and permitted anything less than full reconciliation.

But, sadly enough, sin has a way of working itself into our hearts again, if we are not watchful. We face struggles of life which challenge us. We are in contact with endless temptation to go back and follow the ways of the world again, or at least in part. Within us memories of sin often are aroused and Satan helps to paint a false picture of gratification. The pangs of sin have been mostly forgotten because of the sweet grace and mercy of God in forgiving and cleansing us. James uses such words as tempted, carried away, conceived, and gives birth to describe the encroachments of sin, which without any qualification he said "brings forth death" (Jas. 1:13-15). This departure may be in the secret recesses of our hearts or may become external and involve others. In such a state of defeat, effective witnessing for Christ is impossible.

The tender admonition has been sent forth to God's erring children: "Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Co. 7:1). Thank God for the promise: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I Jn. 1:9). The grieved Holy Spirit takes the initiative to bring us back into peace of conscience and fellowship again, but unless we respond to His tender pleadings we are paralyzed as far as any spiritual service is concerned. Is it not highly embarrassing, to say the least, for anyone to plead with another to give up sinful indulgences to be saved when not willing himself to do so? This is obviously so inconsistent that no further comment should be necessary.

2. We must also turn away from questionable and unprofitable activities, if we are to be effective witnesses for our Master. Writing about suffering "hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus," the Apostle Paul illustrated this separated life by referring to the necessity of being relieved from the common duties of life for army service. "No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier" (II Tim. 2:3-4). There are many things that do not appear to be sinful in themselves, but we may soon find ourselves so engrossed in them that little time will be left for devotion and service to Christ. This is what the Lord Jesus meant by the words in His parable of the sower: "The worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word (or seed), and it becomes unfruitful" (Mk. 4:19). Christians simply must follow the rule, "first things first," or the urgent work of the Gospel will be crowded out by seemingly legitimate things. This must ever be a watchful activity, warding off projects and activities before they master us. "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age . . . zealous for good deeds" (Tit. 2:11-14).

The Apostle Paul likened the uses we are making of our lives to the various uses that are being made of vessels or household utensils that make up the equipment of a large house. There are vessels of gold, silver, wood, and earthenware. Some have elevated or honorable uses and some lowly or dishonorable. "Therefore, if a man cleanses (or purges, eliminates, prunes as Jn. 15:2) himself from these things (of common or less important use), he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work" (II Tim. 2:20-21). The word "cleanse" or "purge" is an emphatic verb, indicating a climax when we thrust or cleanse out of our lives every dishonorable use of our beings. We notice that it is we ourselves who must renounce all evil or unworthy actions. It will do no good to pray God to take away what we are unwilling to let loose of. When we come to the Lord Jesus in humble penitence and faith, a miracle of the grace of God takes place. We are sanctified or purified from the inward damage of our wrongful indulgences and are brought into a state of deliverance to become highly useful to our blessed Master.

We have the twofold forsaking of sinful indulgences and hindrances to Christian service in the words: "Let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us" (He. 12:1). The verb involves a climax in our actions and might be rendered: "Having put off from yourselves." The picture is that of an athlete preparing to run a race. The word translated "encumbrance" has the idea of a weight, burden, or hindrance, which would slow us down and make it impossible to win the race. As mentioned, things seemingly not sinful in themselves may occupy our efforts and work their way into our affections to limit our usefulness for God. There must also be the putting off of

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"the sin which so easily entangles us," or that particular form of sinful gratification which has received the greatest development in our lives. This form of selfish indulgence surrounds us more than any other and cleverly seeks to bring about our defeat. The figure is that of entangling our feet and preventing or retarding our running.

3. We must learn the secret of continually "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith" for blessed spiritual victory over every temptation and hindrance to happy Christian service. (He. 12:2). In this passage we have two present tenses that are the key to spiritual victory: First, "Let us run," or "with steadfastness let us keep on running the lying before us race." Idleness is the pathway to defeat. To set our minds upon pleasing God and serving our fellowmen, and to keep endlessly at it is the first step. "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Ro. 12:21). But in our "running" we are, secondly, to be continually "looking away unto Jesus." This is a very simple concept but very difficult to learn. It is natural for us to fight sin in our own strength. This is what the Galatian Christians did. Thus the Apostle Paul wrote: "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (3:3). He then admonished them: "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh" (Ga. 5:16).

One of the most graphic promises of spiritual victory is found in the command: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Ro. 12:2). Or we might render the passage: "Do not keep on conforming yourselves to (or fashioning yourselves to the pattern of) this age, but be ye (continually) transformed (transfigured or changed into another form) by the renewal (or renovation) of the mind." This same word "transformed" was used concerning the Lord Jesus when He was "transfigured" before Peter, James, and John on the mountain (Mt. 17:2), when "His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light." This same verb occurs also in II Corinthians 3:18, where the secret of spiritual victory or deliverance is embodied in the words: "We all, with unveiled face beholding (for ourselves) as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being (continually) transformed (or transfigured) into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit." Thus it is the personal manifestation of the resurrected and glorified Christ within our minds through the indwelling Holy Spirit, that is to revolutionize and sustain our lives.

This blessed state of happy Christian service is the crowning provision of "the stewardship of God's grace," in which it is our privilege to live (Ep. 3:2, 6). We are now confronted with the constraining love of Christ as to whether we will take the yoke of our blessed Lord upon us day by day (Mt. 11:29), and "prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Ro. 12:2). The Master could say, "My yoke is easy, and My load is light" (Mt. 11:30), because He has promised to be with us always (Mt. 28:20) and grant us the blessed fellowship of His great heart of love and spiritual enlightenment as He walks and speaks "to us on the road" (Lk. 24:32).

"LIGHT" THE UNIVERSAL STANDARD OF CONDUCT

True LIFE is a voluntary choice to live according to what is right and true in our Moral relations--the light of life" (Jn. 8:12).

GOD IS "LIGHT" IN THE ABSOLUTE SENSE:

Because the Godhead are living according to the dictates of Their absolute intelligence in all Their relations--God "is in the light" (I Jn. 1:7). The three greatest statements about God in the Bible appear to be:

"God (is) Spirit"--God's essential immaterial essence (Jn. 4:24).

"God is love"--perfection of motive or voluntary character (I Jn. 4:8, 16).

"God is light"--perfection of conduct because of perfection of knowledge and Perfection of motive (I Jn. 1:5).

God is, therefore, the source of all moral enlightenment--"All things become visible when they are exposed by the light" (Ep. 5:13).

OUR LORD JESUS PUT THE MORAL "LIGHT" OF THE GODHEAD ON EXHIBITION:

He could say: "I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (Jn. 6:38). He put the Godhead on exhibition and could say: "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (Jn. 1:18; 14:9-11). "I am the light of the world"--perfection of motive and conduct demonstrated (Jn. 8:12).

"The life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4).

"Which one of you convicts Me of sin?"--a challenge to His enemies (Jn. 8:46).

"Who committed no sin"--His claims to Deity were the only charges that could be made against Him (I Pe. 2:22; Jn. 10:33).

"He who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12).

THOSE RECONCILED TO GOD ARE NOW

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD:"

(Mt. 5:14): They became such by being willing to allow the "light" of God's truth to expose their past life of "darkness" and turning toward God in repentance and faith. "I am come that they might have life," said the Savior (Jn. 10:10). "Now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light" (Ep. 5:8).

"You are all sons of light and sons of day" (I Th. 5:5).

"If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another" (I Jn. 1:7).

"He who practices the truth comes to the light" (Jn. 3:21).

"Let us . . . love . . . in deed and truth" (I Jn. 3:18).

"If our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God" (I Jn. 3:21).

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:16).

VI. HOW IS GOD'S WISDOM AND ENERGY RELEASED THROUGH THE SERVANTS OF CHRIST?

As Christian workers we can accomplish nothing except we labor as "God's fellow-workers." The Lord Jesus, after illustrating how penetrating salvation must be by the camel and the needle, was confronted with the question from His amazed disciples: "Then who can be saved?" Our Lord bluntly said: "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God" (Mk. 10:25-27). Viewing this same most difficult problem on a later occasion, He said: "Apart from Me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5). "He who is wise wins souls" (Prov. 11:30). The servants of Christ need 'Divine wisdom which they do not possess. In our relationship to our risen Savior we find "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3), which will be imparted to us as we walk day by day in the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the Word of God.

In his life of making known the treasures of the Gospel to the world, the Apostle Paul described both his own energetic activity and the mighty power of God upon him: "For this purpose also I am (continually) laboring (or toiling), (continually) struggling according to the energy of Him who is (continually) operating in me in power" (Col. 1:29). The word "continually" is inserted to stress the present tenses. The Lord Jesus had promised the energy of the Holy Spirit for those presenting the claims of God. "When they deliver you up, do not become anxious about how or what you will speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what you are to speak. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you" (Mt. 10:19-20).

A. THE BESTOWAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TO BE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE GIFTS OR OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

1. The abundant blessings of the Holy Spirit that were to be poured out in this Gospel age were prophesied in the Old Testament (I Pe. 1:10-12; Joel 2:28-29) and particularly by John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus. In introducing the Lord Jesus, he said: "He Himself will baptize (or overwhelm) you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Mt. 3:11), as he preached repentance with great humility. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Lord Jesus in His baptism would indicate that "this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33). Before this new intimate Divine relationship with mankind could be granted, there had to be the manifestation of the solemn moral force of humiliation that the sacred atoning sufferings of Christ would bring about (Jn. 7:37-39). This new relationship of the Holy Spirit as the indwelling Helper, Illuminator, and Energizer (Jn. 14:16-17) would be so profound that the Savior said: "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you" (Jn. 16:7). The resurrected Christ gave His fearful disciples a preview of the new relationship, when He entered through closed doors and said: "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you. . . . He breathed on them, and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 20:21-22). Forty days later, in His final words before His ascension, He referred back to the prophecy of John the Baptist and said that it would soon be fulfilled: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1:3-5, 8).
2. This new relationship of power and energy was bestowed on the Day of Pentecost upon each of the "about 120" disciples, who had banded together in prayer and were observing the prescribed feast day. Immediately in great physical manifestation they were filled with profound concepts of truth and presented the claims of God fluently to the multitudes gathered in the Temple area, in languages which they had never learned so all would understand, (Acts 2:1-11). Peter explained the great new manifestation from the prophecies of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (14-18), referring to Christ's words fulfilled in His ascension (33), which resulted in multitudes being "pierced to the heart" in great urgency to be saved (37). He declared that all who would meet the conditions and repent from all sin would receive forgiveness and the abundance of heavenly blessing manifested (38-39). He solemnly exhorted them: "Be saved from this perverse generation!" (40).

About ten years later, as Cornelius and his household were in humble repentance before God, "the gift of the

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Holy Spirit (was) poured out upon the Gentiles also," apart from the regulations prescribed for Judaism, to establish the pattern for world-outreach of the Gospel (Acts 10:1 to 11:18). The other Apostles "heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God" and took issue with Peter for visiting them. Peter had said that the Gentiles "have received the Holy Spirit just as we did" (10:47) and affirmed that God sent him there to "speak words . . . by which you will be saved, you and all your household" (11:14), that "the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as He did upon us at the beginning" (15); that the promise, "you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit," was fulfilled; that "God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ" (17). The Apostles then concluded that "God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance unto life." Peter and the other Apostles had previously said: "We are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey (or are obeying) Him" (Acts 5:32).

To the Apostle Paul, the object of the Gospel was to reconcile man in repentance and forgiveness through faith to become once more "a dwelling of God in the Spirit" (Ep. 2:22). "You are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you" (I Co. 3:16), "whom you have from God, and that you are not your own" (6:19). "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (Ro. 8:9). "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body,... and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (I Co. 12:13). "Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it" (12:27). To be "fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" is the glorious provision in this age "of the stewardship of God's grace" (Ep. 3:6, 2).

3. Endless increasing climaxes or fillings of the Holy Spirit are to be experienced as daily needs and opportunities for ministry arise, and as gifts or operations of the Holy Spirit are bestowed. The Apostle Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, but when called before the rulers, we read: "Then Peter, having been filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them," using a climactic tense (Acts 4:8). The rulers immediately perceived the boldness and power manifested through Peter and John (13). After threatening them, they were released and had a moving time of prayer with their companions, whereupon "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness" (4:31), another climactic filling of the whole group. We read that Stephen, "full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people," so that the opposers "were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking" (Acts 6:8, 10). Summarizing the struggles of his ministry, the Apostle Paul said: "Having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great," using a climactic verb (Acts 26:22). "Be (continually) filled with the Spirit," the Apostle admonished, which involves a continual seeking for climactic energy to be bestowed (Ep. 5:18). As our Divine comprehension increases, the quantity of the Holy Spirit's manifestations can also be increased. It appears that there is no once-for-all filling of the Holy Spirit and no plateau of final accomplishment, but a constant reaching out in faith to "become partakers of the Divine nature" (II Pe. 1:4) in an ever-increasing measure (Phil. 3:13-14). See chart on page 164.
4. In all experiences in the Holy Spirit, there must be a purity of motive and a willingness to be purified. John the Baptist spoke about "fire" in connection with the baptism of the Spirit, doubtless in a figurative sense of purifying. In describing the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles, Peter affirmed that "God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit. . . . cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). Seeing the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in Samaria, Simon wanted them for self-glorification. Peter rebuked his sinful purpose and said: "Your heart is not right before God" (Acts 8:18-24). James wrote: "You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures" (4:3). The Lord Jesus said: "He who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me" (Jn. 13:20). Just as sure as the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of truth," there must be truthfulness and total honesty in all relations.

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B. GOD'S PROGRAM NOW IS FOR THE SPIRITUAL CHURCH AS "THE BODY" OF WHICH CHRIST IS THE HEAD TO BE AN INTEGRAL OPERATING UNIT, ANIMATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WITH ALL MEMBERS CONTRIBUTING TO THE ACTIVITY: I Co. 12:12-27.

The functioning of the Church of Christ is distinguished from that of the nation Israel, which functioned primarily by an endowed leadership. If we study the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times, we find that all the essential New Testament gifts were functioning there among chosen leaders, even though at times their sincerity might be questioned. God simply had to exert leadership over the nation Israel in His endeavors to reach the world. Moses longingly said: "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:29). This is God's plan in the present Gospel age. Every single member of "the body of Christ" should earnestly humble and even prostrate himself before his Lord to become partaker of some gift of the Holy Spirit for the mutual edification of the whole Church and the furtherance of the Lord's work. "To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Co. 12:7). All are to earnestly desire the greater gifts" (12:31), which seem to involve wisdom, knowledge, and faith, so that we may understand and be able to instruct others on the truth of God and the Gospel. We have here a most urgent admonition, the word meaning to burn with zeal for, aspire eagerly after, or be ardently devoted to, the greater (the more exalted or important) gifts of grace. This diversity of operation is illustrated in the different kind of members composing our human body, all of which are necessary (I Co. 12:14-27). Spiritual gifts, then, are to be the rule in the Church, not the exception, with every true member participating. All spiritual gifts are to be exercised in the "still more excellent way" of love.

C. TWO IMPORTANT FACTS ARE REVEALED CONCERNING THE BESTOWAL OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS:

1. Spiritual gifts are modes of operation of the Holy Spirit within and through humble servants of Christ, and not deposits given to us as our own possession and independent control and use, as we choose. This is brought out in I Corinthians 12:4-11, where we have present tenses of durative action. "Now to each one is being given the manifestation of the Spirit towards that which is profitable" (7). "For to this one through the Spirit is being given a word of wisdom, but to another a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit" (8). "Now all these things is working the one and the same Spirit, distributing (or dividing into parts) separately to each one according as He is willing" (11).

We do not travel to some place to receive a particular gift of the Holy Spirit, therefore, with the idea of carrying it back with us as some kind of personal possession, because if the Holy Spirit does not come back with us and operate through us day by day there will be no gift. We are like light bulbs through which electric power is manifested. We partake first of the illumination and then pass it on to others, and thus the work of the Holy Spirit within us becomes a part of us, always to reside in our memories. But if the switch is turned off, we have nothing left but our memories to torment us, somewhat like the disciples in their walk to Emmaus after the risen Savior had left them (Lk. 24:32), although they had no guilt as we would have if we had grieved the Holy Spirit into ineffectiveness.

2. The Holy Spirit is absolutely sovereign as to what gifts He may choose to manifest in each one of us. As quoted above, He is "distributing separately to each one according as He is willing (purposing or desiring)" (I Co. 12:11). In this individual choice for each one of us, the blessed Holy Spirit is not in the least arbitrary. He evaluates our characteristics and qualities, with the care of a potter mending a valuable vessel, and decides wherein we can best serve for the glory of God and the blessing of our fellowmen. Then He operates within us in this direction. Do we know enough of ourselves to tell Him what gift we want? Do we know what the greatest specific need is? Do we know where we can best serve our blessed Lord? If not, then let us humble ourselves for the Holy Spirit's directive "toward that which is profitable (advantageous or expedient)" (I Co. 12:7). The kind Master saw what He could make out of oscillating and eccentric Simon and called him Peter (a little rock) ahead

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of time (Mt. 16:18). We are all, however, "to covet earnestly the best (or greater) gifts" (I Co. 12:31), which are defined for us in this chapter (I Co. 12:7-11, 28-30).

D. THE FOLLOWING ENUMERATIONS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS APPEAR IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

<u>Ep. 4:7, 11-16</u>	<u>I Co. 12:7-11</u>	<u>I Co. 12:28-31</u>	<u>Ro. 12:4-8</u>
Apostles	Wisdom	Apostles	Prophecy
Prophets	Knowledge	Prophets	Service
Evangelists	Faith	Teachers	Teaching
Pastors and teachers	Healing	Miracles	Exhortation
----	Miracles	Healing	Giving
"Equipping of the saints for the work of service."	Prophecy	Helps	Leadership
	Distinguishing of spirits	Administrations	Mercy
	Tongues	Tongues	
	Interpretation	(Order of importance)	

"The body of Christ" is to function as a unit to the glory of God through the animating Holy Spirit, who conveys the life of the risen Christ to us as our Head. There are no divisions in "the body of Christ" as to any who have a special status or class distinction, although there is a called-out ministry who are to take the earthly leadership through the direction of the Holy Spirit.

1. Ephesians 4:7, 11-16—Here we notice that the saints are to do the greater part of the ministering or Christian service of one form or another, and that "pastors and teachers" (apparently one office) are to prepare and guide them in their service.

2. I Corinthians 12:7-11—The general concept seems to be that each one of us will possess or receive the Holy Spirit's operation in only a few of these gifts, and to possess all nine would be an extreme rarity. Then again, the Holy Spirit may stress one area of operation in our lives, or in the Church at large, at one period and another at a different period.

3. I Corinthians 12:28-31—This passage establishes beyond question the Divine order of importance of the various spiritual gifts mentioned. The gifts are viewed as embodied in individuals, established or appointed in the Church.

4. Romans 12:4-8—The expression "according to the proportion of his faith" indicates our response and initiative in bringing about a greater maturity and development in spiritual gifts. Where is the limit of the look of faith? Shall we not "be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love" (Ep. 5:1-2), and follow the admonition of our blessed Lord . . . "Do business until I come" (Lk. 19:13)? "He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:6). "For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy" (I Th. 2:19-20). Now is the day of opportunity and challenge to impart our glorious Gospel to a needy world.

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