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**COMMANDMENT DOCTRINE OF
CHRIST – APPENDIX 2**

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Baptist International University School of the Scriptures

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CLASS 203C COMMANDMENT DOCTRINE OF CHRIST – APPENDIX 2

This Class 203C syllabus contains various Appendices that can be used to supplement the study and teaching of part A of Class 203 *Commandment Doctrine of Christ*. Along with Class 203B, the first appendix, this syllabus is a collection of papers referenced in part A.

This Syllabus can be used in conjunction with other Class Syllabi, which have other Teaching.

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COMMANDMENT DOCTRINE OF CHRIST – APPENDIX 2

A Syllabus Approved for Baptist International University School of the Scriptures – 0 Credit.
N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.; Pastor, Historic Baptist Church

January 7, 2020

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Scripture References

Use of Doctrine in the New Testament.

Matthew 7

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

Matthew 15

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Matthew 16

12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Matthew 22

33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.

Mark 1

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

Mark 4

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

Mark 11

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

Mark 12

38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

Luke 4

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

John 7

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 18

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

Acts 2

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 5

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should

not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Acts 13

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

Acts 17

19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

Romans 6

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

Romans 16

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

1 Corinthians 14

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? 26 How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue,

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hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Ephesians 4

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Colossians 2

22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

1 Timothy 1

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,
10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

1 Timothy 4

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1 Timothy 5

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

1 Timothy 6

1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.
3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

2 Timothy 3

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,
16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2 Timothy 4

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound

doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

Titus 1

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Titus 2

1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:
7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,
10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Hebrews 6

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,
2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Hebrews 13

9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

2 John 1

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9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

Revelation 2

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

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Introduction

CLASS 203C COMMANDMENT DOCTRINE OF CHRIST – APPENDIX 2

Class 203A is one of the most important classes offered in the curriculum of *Baptist International School of the Scriptures*.

Class 203B and 203C are *supplemental syllabi* to Class 203A.

Because of the volume of information that can be added to a teaching syllabus on the subject of Jesus' Commandments, and our desire to keep syllabi to reasonable sizes, we have added various papers written on the subject in added sections 203B and 203C *Appendices*.

The subject of the Doctrine of Christ can never be exhausted. However, we have selected various papers that would be helpful to students.

These papers can be read for expanding knowledge or for detailed study on certain lessons in part A that may be confusing for the student.

Because the collection of the essays contained in this syllabus were written at different times, the student may notice repetition of thoughts from paper to paper.

Appendix A

BLESSINGS and PRIVILEGES of the BRIDE

or,

Benefits that the Righteous Church Members have over those people
who are simply Born-Again Believers,

or,

What You Have with a Good Church

N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D., Pastor of Historic Baptist Church
August 31, 2005

The **OMNIPOTENT CREATOR** Constructed the **Church**
and set **HIMSELF** as the **CHIEF CORNERSTONE**.

Introduction:

It is necessary to define a variety of terms before proceeding to the list of blessings. Because of the few people who will object to such *scriptural truth* as presented here in respect to the Bride – because they are on the wrong side – I shall also endeavor to encourage all with this short paper.

The *Bride of Christ* is clearly defined in scripture, and a few verses to show her can be given as follows:

Matthew 16:18 – Jesus promises to build his church. This church is obviously a local assembly as he set in the church first apostles (1 Corinthians 12); and, secondly, Jesus commands the brethren to “tell it unto the church” in Matthew 18:17. The church here has to be a local assembly, and *NOT* just folks who are saved, because Jesus makes the distinction between “two or three witnesses” (v. 16) and the church (two different entities to whom the issue should be judged – a progression of authority and responsibility. He also says that if “he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” This could *ONLY* be performed in the context of a local church. Otherwise, how could the witnesses tell it “unto the church” (v. 17) if that meant all the saved people? The church has the power to bind or loose because Jesus is in the midst.

The word “unto,” as in “unto the church,” is also enlightening and proving the local assembly (as also the Greek word simply means).

These two passages of scripture in Matthew chapters 16 and 18 are the only two places in the four gospels where the word church is used. In both places the church is tied to the “kingdom of heaven” – which is the visible, physical kingdom the Lord has Kingly authority over. Those who erroneously think there is a “universal” or “invisible” “church” made up of those who are saved (and there is *NO* scriptural foundation for this) must needs associate the church with the kingdom of God – that spiritual kingdom made up of believers.

The three general definitions of the word “church” (not including a man-made building) can be summarized as follows:

The Worldly definition of the word “church,” as one would hear on the news or from the minds of the lost usually will refer to the Catholic Institution, portrayed with lavish buildings. I will force myself to restrain

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from further opinion of this group in this writing, as it would no doubt leave a bad taste to the readers. I lack a lot of charity when opining on this Great Whore as God as she is referred to by God. Suffice it to say that the world thinks “the church” is headed by the pope, and that it is a *universal and visible* body. They say incorrectly that the church was built on the “rock” Peter (or Constantine, more correctly), and that he was the first pope. I say Jesus pointed to himself in Matthew 16:19 when referring to the ROCK, and not to the “stone” Peter.

The Protestant definition of the church, which has unfortunately been adopted by evangelicals and a few Baptist brethren, says the church is *invisible and universal*. This was a backlash to the Catholic (katholicos = universal) definition as a result of the reformation. The protestants could neither say the church was “local and visible” or “universal and visible,” because that by definition would exclude themselves – as they came out of the whore. In order to justify themselves they had to insist the “katholicos” was invisible – in spite of the evidence of 1500 years of Baptists (local and visible churches) being persecuted under the bloody hand of Rome. It is no surprise the Protestants also began to persecute the Baptists, as they were the true New Testament churches, and consequently were evidence of the unscriptural ness of the protestant mess. They say the “rock” of which Jesus spoke is the “profession of one’s faith” – hogwash!

The Baptist and scriptural definition of the church is that which refers to the *local and visible* body (called-out assembly) of *baptized believers*, who have *covenanted* with Jesus to carry out his commandments. The first church, started by Jesus himself between Matthew chapter 16 and chapter 18, was composed of “baptized” disciples of John the Baptist or those baptized under Christ’s authority (John 4:1-2). Jesus himself was baptized by John. In Acts 1:22, part of the requirement for the one to take Judas’ place was that the candidate must be one ordained who “beginning from the baptism of John” was a “witness with us of his resurrection.” So if Jesus and the first church leadership were baptized by John the Baptist, it seems very apparent the first church was made up of Baptists, and therefore a Baptist church. Some may hate this thought, but the scriptures are plain – Jesus sought a Baptist preacher when he was to be baptized and took for the charter membership of his first church, men with this same baptism.

Continuing through the Book of Acts to the Book of Revelation, we shall always find the church to be a local and visible body, and *never* universal or invisible. The church cannot be both invisible and visible and be both local and universal. One definition must take preeminence over the other.

In Romans 16:1 Paul commends Phebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea.

In 1 Corinthians 5 Paul admonishes the church to judge her own for purity’s sake, and this is to be done by putting away from among them that wicked person (v. 13).

God shows in 1 Corinthians 12:13, 18, and 28 that he has set each member in the church as it hath pleased him (church here is impossible to be equivalent with salvation without being Calvinistic and throwing half the chapter away). All members are united in rejoicing or suffering. We are not to seek members in our churches other than what God has determined.

In 2 Corinthians 11:2, Paul says. “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” We know that John said, “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom (John 3:29), referring to Jesus Christ as the bridegroom. The church, then, is espoused to Christ, and Paul’s work was to present her chaste, undefiled and unbeguiled by a false Jesus, spirit or gospel.

In Galatians 5:12, Paul wishes the false teachers were “cut off” from the Galatian churches so as not to defile the unleavened servants of God.

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In Ephesians 5:23 we see, that as Jesus is the Head of the church, so the husband is the head of the wife. This Headship shows authority, ownership, and leadership – not an invisible body on earth with a head in heaven. As my wife is my possession, the church is Jesus' possession. As my wife's body belongs to me (I Corinthians 7:4), the church body belongs to Christ. He therefore will sanctify and cleanse it with washing of water by the word (5:26); so that one day he will present the church to himself "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

In Revelation 19:7 we see the "marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Her fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. In 21: 9 we see the Lamb's wife – the bride – in holy Jerusalem with the Lamb.

And lastly, in Revelation 22:17, the Bride says to Jesus "Come." Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

From these and other scriptures we get a good picture of the blessings of the Bride. What she is like and what she is to attain to.

Some other pictures:

How many other places in the scriptures do we see a picture of the Bride of Christ? In Song of Solomon, there is the Shulamite woman – undefiled, choice, and beautiful.

Remember how Abraham sent his servant to *his own family* to procure a wife for Isaac (Genesis 24:4). The bride for his son must come from his family. As Rebekah was especially from the family of Abraham, the Bride of Jesus is especially from the family of God – a holy and obedient people taken from among the family of those who are saved. As Matthew 22:1-14 shows the marriage for the king's son, there is the Son, the Bride, and the guests. As God showed us the sorrowful picture of his relationship to Israel in Hosea's relationship to Gomer (an unjust and harlot of a woman), God has also shown us a joyful picture in that he will make sure the Bride of his Son is holy and without blemish.

Jesus wants his bride holy, glorious, chaste, obedient, reverent, faithful. To those children of God who press toward the mark, Jesus has a special place and glorious crowning (head covering – 1 Corinthians 12) for his wife. Every child of God should make a diligent search of what God requires of him so that he may say as the bride, even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Other Definitions:

Having defined the Bride, we shall further define some other terms as used in the title of this paper:

Righteous church members: Those who are born again, baptized with scriptural baptism (scriptural mode, scriptural administrator, scriptural candidate, and scriptural action), and faithful members in the church as true disciples of Jesus Christ. These are truly holy people who have a spirit of self-judgment, bear the fruit of the Spirit, endeavor to keep the unity of the faith, and honor God with all things.

Those being ***Born Again:*** In contrast to the righteous church members, these are truly saved, have been washed in the blood, and have the promise of eternal life. We do not use the term Christian, as this was used in reference to disciples who showed Christ-likeness. A disciple is a born-again believer who is diligently following Jesus Christ. We therefore see a progression: Salvation, baptism, discipleship, and then displaying

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Christian attributes. One is *NOT* a Christian simply by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ or professing such. We should reserve such a word for those few individuals that merit the name of Christ.

What, then are the blessing and privileges of the Bride over those who are simply saved? There are many. Some are profitable in this life, and some in the life to come. Please keep reading.

What advantage has the Bride over the Family?

1. First, she has a **COVENANT** with the Bridegroom. This covenant shows a **commitment** between the two. The man will provide for, protect, procreate through, give power to, have pleasure with, and have a partnership with the Bride. Jesus promised he will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13). He is with us always – a **Companion** to the church – even to the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). The gates of hell shall not prevail (Matthew 16). He hath purchased the church with own blood (Ephesians 5). Marriage requires a covenant (Malachi 2:14).
2. Next, she has Jesus' **COMMANDMENTS**. Not limited to the preaching of the Gospel in the **Commission**, but also, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:18-20). The duty to carry out the commission belongs to the ones to whom the commission was given – the eleven – the leadership of the Jerusalem Church, and passed down to the other churches that were the result of the obedience to that commandment. As a wife is obligated to obey her husband, the church is obligated to obey the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The church has a public **CONFESSION** – she has taken an outward and public stand for Jesus in the community that is made a testimony to all. That confession is shown first in Baptism, and then in serving the Lord in unity in the church. When one is baptized and hence becomes a member of the church, they are confessing to follow the Savior and walk in newness of life.
4. She has the special **CARE** of the Savior. The church is watched over and whatever things are truly needed are supplied. The Savior directs his flock by means of the bishop – the under shepherd. Proper and Pure doctrine is taught among the people.
5. She has the **CORRECTION** of the Savior. Judgment begins at the house of God. Whom the Lord loveth he scourgeth. The church is given the authority to loose and bind, to execute righteous judgment among her members for the purpose of maintaining purity and truth. The ungodly are put out (Matthew 18:17). Those without a church home can wander aimlessly, be tossed to and from with every wind, because there is no “Pillar and Ground of the Truth” as a stabilizing and correcting force. The word preached by inspiration of the Holy Ghost will reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine, as all scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, etc.
6. She has a **CLEANSING** – washing by the water by the word (Ephesians 5:27). Clothes have no spot or wrinkle as the preaching of the word washes the church. She is maintained chaste and righteous through Bible preaching (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7, 8).
7. She has a special **CALLING** that she offers up to God – “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Let the Bride say come – Revelation 22:17.
8. She has a **COMMUNICATION** directly from the Savior. When Jesus sent his word, he sent it to the churches (see Revelation 21:16). The church has the first word from heaven.

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9. She has **COMPANIONSHIP** among her members. They continue in fellowship and breaking of bread (Acts 2).
10. She has sweet **COMMUNION** with Jesus at the Lord's Table. This ordinance is reserved exclusively for righteous church members and is done in the church assembly.
11. She looks forward to a **CORONATION** of her faithful servants. Those five Crowns offered by the Savior for various areas of faithful service. As we build on the true foundation, we can expect a reward.
12. She has a wedding **CEREMONY** planned in which she is married to the LAMB himself. This will be a great **Celebration** with the faithful and true saints of God. Many guests will attend. There is planned a great supper (Matthew 22:1-14).
13. Then the **CONSUMATION**, she is placed in HEAVENLY JERUSALEM and lives eternally with her HUSBAND – the LAMB OF GOD. He is the LIGHT of the HOLY CITY that is adorned as a bride for her husband.

We should make clear that the bride is made up of those saved and baptized church members who truly follow the Lord in righteousness. This is in contrast to other brethren – people who are truly saved – but are not settled, grounded, and living for God. They may be out of church or in para-church organizations or false religions. They have equal standing with the bride (the churches of Christ) in respect to salvation – they have the promise of heaven, of being caught up (1 Thessalonians 4:17), and of being rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ.

CONCLUSION: Make your church membership and service the high priority. Be holy and live in unity with the church. Support her and be a blessing always. Honor the members, be faithful until death, and say as the Bride, **COME!**

The End.

Appendix B

BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL

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N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D., Pastor

November 18, 1996

Election, Salvation, Freewill, Faith, and the New Birth:

The role of God's election in Salvation

Dear Reader, I hope that you seek diligently for the truth in this matter. I have. I am convinced of what I am about to write. I am glad that you seek the truth. That you truly understand the Biblical truth related to salvation, election, freewill, etc., is very important. If you are wrong on this, you could be teaching a damnable heresy (Galatians 1:8, 9). The error of Calvinism has led astray many a good man. John Calvin (1509 - 1564) was not a theologian; he was a French Protestant reformer who taught the salvation of individuals is predestined of God. The tenets of Five-point Calvinism are often described using the **T-U-L-I-P** formula, listed below as follows:

- T Total Depravity of man.** Such so that he cannot freely believe on Jesus Christ.
- U Unconditional Election.** That God chooses whom He will save based upon His own decision, and not that of the sinner.
- L Limited Atonement.** That Christ died only for the Elect.
- I Irresistible Grace.** That no man can resist God's favor or election in salvation.
- P Perseverance of the Saints.** That only those who are Saved will endure to the end. Eternal security of the saints. Or, sometimes, Predestination of some to Salvation.

This thinking is totally contrary to God's plan for mankind and makes a mockery of the Gospel. I believe that many of those who adopt such error do so out of PRIDE and arrogance. There are some who think they are smarter than most, and that they have figured out what God has designed more than what He has written. They seem to believe they are saved by God because they have been favored in some way.

Because I believe men are willing to learn the truth, I will proceed to briefly explain God's purpose for man as shown in the word of God, and give a description of salvation, election, etc. I will then argue against the T-U-L-I-P heresy.

First, understand that God is Omniscient. He knows all things (John 21:17). He knew before the Creation of the Heaven and the Earth (Genesis 1:1) and the angels that Lucifer would rebel, that Adam would sin, that He would flood the earth; and that, most importantly, He would have to be made flesh and die for man (I Peter 1:20). Knowing this beforehand, He proceeded with His Creation. God also is Omnipotent and Self-sufficient. He does not need you or me. He does not need the angels, the earth, or even Heaven. God is complete and content in Himself -- Father, Son, and Holy Ghost -- without any of His creations.

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One of God's attributes is Love (I John 4:8). He has chosen in His omniscience to exercise His attribute of Love. He chose to create mankind (Colossians 1:16, John 1:1-3) to be a receiver and returner and imitator of His Love (John 3:16; James 2:5; 1 John 3:1; 4:9). He also desires glory, honor, worship and praise from His creation (Revelation 4:11). God understands that unless mankind offers this love, glory, and honor *freely*, that is has no value. God allowed through the creation of Lucifer an adversary to give man a freewill choice: God or Satan. God did not cause Lucifer to rebel, but He did create him with a freewill (Isaiah 14:13, 14). God did *know*, however, that Lucifer would rebel and be the Tempter of man. God knew Adam would sin, and that He would have to come to redeem man Himself. Through His great work of Love -- Calvary -- God shows His Love and goodness to us, and freely offers salvation to all men who will freely choose Him.

When a man freely chooses Jesus Christ in spite of himself, the world, the devil, and all his sins, God indeed gets the glory and honor over all these things in that man's heart, and in view of all who see this sinner's transformation. Where sin abounds, God's grace does much more abound (Romans 5:20).

God has determined that anyone who believes should receive the *Gift* of salvation (Romans 6:23). This *Gift* is not based upon works, but upon *true* Faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-10) for the forgiveness of one's sins. When a man freely chooses Jesus Christ over sin, the Devil, the world, or whatever; God saves that man and seals him with the Holy Ghost, which is the earnest of his redemption (Ephesians 1:13, 14).

The method of reaching man with the Gospel -- the *GOOD NEWS* -- of salvation is done by preachers preaching the word of God -- or Sowers sowing the Seed, as illustrated in the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13; Luke 8). The word of God is critical in the salvation process as declared in 1 Peter 1:23 and Romans 10. Please note the *Progression* of How Salvation is achieved by looking in reverse order to Romans 10:8-19:

1. The word of God is sowed in the world by *sent men* -- preachers of the Gospel (v. 15-18). This is the purpose behind the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19, 20) and Romans 16:25, 26. These men are sent by the church and the Holy Ghost (Acts 13:1-3).
2. These sent men *PREACH* the Gospel to *EVERY* creature (Mark 16:15). See verse 14 and 15 of Romans 10.
3. These creatures *HEAR* the word of God (v. 14).
4. Those who receive the word *BELIEVE* (v. 14)
5. Those who believe *CALL* upon the name of the Lord (v. 14)
6. Those who call upon the Lord are *SAVED* (v. 13). Understand that "to call" means to declare that Jesus Christ is the reason for one's salvation, and does not mean that one should pray to God to be saved (as do the Catholics). When the Ethiopian Eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37), he was declaring his faith in Jesus Christ. As a comparison, Paul *CALLED* upon Caesar in his appeal before Festus (Acts 25:11).
7. Those who are saved are then *SEALED* with the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 1:13).

Romans 10:17 makes things so simple: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Faith comes by hearing the gospel – NOT because a person is predestined to be saved.

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These passages also show the importance of men and the scripture work in World Evangelism. It is the *Seed* which is sown *by men* in the hearts of men.

I will now proceed with an explanation of *Election*.

The main error in Calvinism is the equation of Election to Salvation. They are different things. (To assume that Election is equal to salvation, is to declare that one must work for salvation according to 2 Peter 1:10.)

Note:

- Israel is God's Elect (Isaiah 45:4).
- Angels are Elect (I Timothy 5:21), and they need no salvation.
- Jesus Christ is God's Elect (I Peter 2:6), and He needs no salvation.

Election is *not* salvation. Election is, in fact, being a chosen vessel to accomplish a particular purpose for God or to fulfill a particular office. Paul was speaking of his election when he said, "I have finished my course" (2 Timothy 4:7). We have "elections" in this country to choose who will fill a particular office of responsibility or duty. God needs no popular vote. He chooses according to His *foreknowledge*. Remember this, Election is based upon foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2). God knows who is able to do what, and He sets a course for each of His chosen vessels. This course is their election. One can fail in his fulfillment of his election, but he cannot lose his salvation. One can run well in the beginning but be hindered later (Galatians 5:7). One must give diligence to make his calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). If one fails to fulfill his election, although he is still saved, he will, however, lose the potential rewards God had prepared for those who finish their course (2 Peter 1:11; 2 Timothy 4:8). God determines one's election *by grace*. A believer's election has been determined by God since before the foundation of the world. It is based upon the foreknowledge of God that a certain person will, by his freewill, receive Christ, and be able to do such and such for God. God, knowing this, *predestines* that believer to a certain election -- which described generally is being conformed to the image of Christ -- and God then calls him according to this election He has set (Romans 8:29, 30).

You, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, have an election. God has and will continue to call you according to this course which He has set for you. If you are faithful to that *calling*, you will receive a full reward from Jesus Christ at His Judgment Seat. If you are not faithful to your election -- that is, fail in a calling -- you will not receive a full reward.

In like manner, God *knew* before the foundation of the world that I would *by my freewill* believe on His Son Jesus Christ. He did not make me believe, but He knew I would believe by my freewill. God, knowing I would receive the gift of salvation, then predestined me to be conformed to the image of Christ by setting a *course* for me to follow. I know how to follow this *course* because God *calls me* step by step according to my election. As I am faithful to each calling, God calls me to the next step. If I fail, I may become a castaway (1 Corinthians 9:27). This "course" is referred to as my "election." According to Romans 8:29, 30, God's order is defined as foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and then glorification. Salvation, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification are all by God's grace.

Salvation is indeed of the Lord (Jonah 2:9). Only the Lord can save a man's soul and give him eternal life. God has set *this* as the way of salvation: faith in Jesus Christ (John 14:6) and in His work on Calvary (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). We, also, are born again by the Spirit of God and the word of God (John 3:3, 5; I Peter 1:23). We are sealed by the Spirit of God *when we believe* (Ephesians 1:13, 14). Therefore, we believe first, are then sealed with the Holy Spirit, and are made new creatures in Christ by the new birth. The Holy Ghost puts us in Christ when we believe, wherein we are made new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15).

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The Holy Ghost is never “sealed” into an unclean soul. We are washed by the blood of Christ, then sealed. This event when we are put “in Christ” is referred to as a spiritual baptism (Romans 6:1-6). This all happens instantaneously when we, by our freewill, believe on Christ.

I will now proceed to show the error of the T-U-L-I-P doctrine.

T-U-L-I-P

Heresy

Biblical Truth on the Doctrine

-
- T** Man is depraved. All have sinned (Romans 3:23). However, man is not so depraved that he cannot call upon the Lord (Romans 10:13). Paul was an example of God’s longsuffering in that He saved him -- the chief of sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15, 16). Acts 17:30 shows us that God commands *all men* to repent. Paul preached the word while some believed and some did not (Acts 28:23, 24). In that chapter, v. 28, it says also, quoting Isaiah, that some had closed their eyes lest they should be converted. The point is not that men *cannot* believe without the Lord, but that some *WILL NOT* believe. Jesus said this in John 5:37-40. Men can and do resist the truth and the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:51; 2 Timothy 3:8). See also John 1:9; Matthew 11:21; John 5:40).
- U** Election *is* conditional upon one’s receiving of their own freewill the gift of salvation. Election is based upon the foreknowledge of God (1 Peter 1:2). Whom God foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29; 2 Peter 3:9; I Timothy 2:4; Rev. 2:21).
- L** Christ’s atonement was sufficient for all sinners -- past, present, and future. The Blood is not limited to anyone. Christ’s blood is applied to the soul of whoever believes in Him. He died sufficiently for all men, but propitiously for those who do believe. Luke 19:10, Jesus came to “seek and to save that which was lost.”
- I** God’s grace can also be resisted. See acts 7:51; John 5:40; 2 Timothy 3:8; and Hebrews 10:39. Acts 13:43 admonishes to continue in God’s grace.
- P** Philippians 1:6 shows God will get us through this life and take us to heaven. Romans 8:38, 39 -- nothing can separate us from the love of God. In II Timothy 1:12, Paul knew that it is Christ who is responsible for keeping the saints to the end (John 10:28, 29). The security of salvation is wholly God’s doing, and we know He keeps His promises (John 3:16).

We persevere, not by our own power, but by the power of God. See also Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20; 2 Timothy 4:18.

This, then, is the truth as presented from the scriptures. I pray all who are deceived into thinking they are chosen because they are special in some way will repent of this proud thinking. **God saves sinners**. We are commanded to preach the gospel to every creature on account that anyone can be saved if he chooses to be. May God help us to see this truth more and more.

The End.

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Appendix C

Comparison of Moses' Doctrine and the Doctrine of Christ

| COMPARISON OF DOCTRINES | |
|--|---|
| For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1) | |
| MOSES' DOCTRINE | JESUS' DOCTRINE |
| Given by God | Given by God |
| Called the Law of Moses | Called the Doctrine of Christ |
| Contained God's Commandments | Contains Jesus' Commandments |
| Sabbath given as a Sign | Jesus is our Rest (Matthew 11) and is Lord of the Sabbath |
| Greatest Commandments in the Law: Love God and Love thy Neighbor as thyself | Greatest Commandment of Jesus: Love one another as Christ loved |
| Gave Priesthood to Levites | Jesus is Great High Priest |
| Gave Tabernacle | Jesus is God's fleshly Tabernacle |
| Gave Sacrifices | Jesus' Crucifixion is Greatest Sacrifice |
| Gave a lamb and other animals | Jesus is the Lamb of God |
| Covered Sin | Took away Sin (Hebrews 10:4-10) |
| Worshipped at Jerusalem | Worship in Spirit and in Truth |
| Never made man perfect | Jesus makes perfect through himself |
| Was given to Israel | Offered to Jew and Gentile |
| Buildings of Tabernacle and Temple | Jesus Built his church |
| Children of Abraham and Jacob | Children of Abraham by Faith |
| Jews only | Whosoever |
| Sealed with Blood | Sealed with Blood of God |
| Gave Circumcision | Sealed with Holy Ghost |
| Gave Circumcision | Circumcision without hands (Romans 2:29; Col. 2:11) |
| Weak (Romans 8:3) | Power of God (Romans 1:16) |
| Made nothing perfect (Hebrews 7:19) | Better Hope made perfect (Hebrews 10:1, 14) |

Appendix D

THE DOCTRINE OF WHOSOEVER AND ELECTION

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September 11, 2018

- 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:11-13

A long-standing mis-understanding of the scriptures in respect to “whosoever” has been perpetuated by Calvinists who say a man’s salvation or lack thereof is pre-determined by God. These mistakenly refer to this as election. However, after a brief reading of the use of the word in the Bible, one can easily see that election does not refer to someone getting saved. It refers, rather, to the course one is chosen by God to walk, and the course God calls that person to. One should give diligence to make his calling and election sure (2 Peter 1).

In correctly understanding the Doctrines of the Bible, we must always first go to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is the one who clears up all misunderstandings. He can give us light and wisdom. He is our wisdom (1 Corinthians 1).

So, in respect to predetermined salvation, what is the Doctrine of Christ? Let us read these passages:

- 21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.
22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.
23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.
24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.
26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.
27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.
28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Matthew 15:21-28

Here, Jesus clearly says his mission was to a certain class only – the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” One could say those not of this class were “doomed to hell.” However, we see that this woman, though a Gentile, because of her *faith*, she was given what she sought.

Faith in Christ pleases God. Faith in Christ is the means of salvation. God will reward this kind of faith.

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When reading the New Testament, we find that, though Jesus “came unto his own” – the Jews – they did not receive him as a nation. In response, the Lord said, “as many as received him” (now, he includes Gentiles) he will save.

God opened the door to the Gentiles – a way of saying “whosoever” – and used the apostles Peter to testify of this. Peter, one could say, was a respecter of persons. He thought only Jews should receive the Gospel. God had to remind him that the Gentiles were part of God’s plan.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

Acts 14:27

Israel *is* God’s elect. They were chosen for many things – caring for the oracles of God, being heirs of the promises, bringing for the Messiah, being the sheep unto whom Jesus was sent, etc. See Isaiah 65:9, 22.

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

Isaiah 45:4

God uses elect in reference to some angels:

21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

1 Timothy 5:21

Jesus also is God’s elect:

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

Isaiah 42:1-4

Peter now mentions we who are saved are elect:

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

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Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

1 Peter 1:1, 2

James includes the Jews, and Paul shows shows that as believers, there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles:

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

James 1:1

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Colossians 3:11-14

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

Romans 3:9, 29-30

Peter had to learn of Gentile election through the salvation of Cornelius and the other Italian believers:

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me.

12 And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

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13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

Acts 11:7-21

Paul understood that the Gentiles were part of God's plan:

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Romans 11:13, 25

Notice the "fulness of the Gentiles." Many more Gentiles will be saved during this time than Jews, but Jews can still be saved. The Gospel was to go the Jew first, then the Gentiles (Romans 1).

Gentiles become equal to the Jews, and are made no different than the Jews. Gentiles who are saved are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:14, 26-29

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This doctrine of election of Jews, Gentiles, and Jesus Christ shows us that “*whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved.*”

We should not limit salvation to any class or pre-determined individuals. Both Jew and Gentile are able to receive the Gospel:

- 1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.
- 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.
- 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.
- 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.
- 5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.
- 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)
- 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)
- 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;
- 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
- 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
- 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.
- 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.
- 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Romans 10:1-13

Understanding the Doctrine of Christ in respect to “whosoever,” we can now have a better understanding of this chapter in Romans (objective for class study and discussion):

- 1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,
- 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.
- 3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:
- 4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;
- 5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.
- 6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:
- 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.
- 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.
- 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

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10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;
11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)
12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.
13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.
14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.
15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.
16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.
17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.
18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.
19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?
20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?
21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?
22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:
23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,
24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?
25 As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.
26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.
27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:
28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.
29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.
30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.
31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.
32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;
33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Romans 9:1-33

Appendix E

**EIGHT ILL EFFECTS OF PROMOTING
THE UNIVERSAL (INVISIBLE) CHURCH FALLACY**

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Introduction

Many evangelical and Protestant groups teach and promote the non-scriptural idea that the church that Jesus built is a universal or invisible “church” that is comprised of “all who are saved.” We also find from time to time some fundamental Baptist churches have adopted this false teaching. Pace everyone who thinks the church is universal or invisible, the New Testament teaches no such thing.

I suppose those who blindly accept this teaching of a universal church as true do so because they have not really studied the subject out for themselves – they just flip to a few verses out of context, making them say what they do not really say. This is not study. This is simply referring to a few familiar passages trying to use them to say what they do not say. Possibly, these promoters of a universal church think they do no harm – that it actually sounds good. Maybe they just have not really considered diligently what they believe. Maybe they confuse the church with the family of God, or the kingdom of God. But the study of the church in the New Testament is not as abstruse some may think, which thing I hope to show.

Certain people go to the Bible with a pre-conceived idea and search out verses that they think support their view. These do not take a deductive study putting their bias aside and letting the scriptures speak for themselves. Their pride drives them to resist the truth.

And sadly, there are simple believers who blindly follow what they are taught and go about their lives thinking they know the facts, when indeed they are deceived on this matter.

Allow me to say this: the source of truth is God. A man’s person does not make an untruth to be true. So regardless of who says what, we should search out what God says and follow that – regardless of who agrees. Too many people put confidence in man.

Whether the church that the Lord built is visible only, or invisible, or both, is *not* a minor issue; it is not a simple disagreement on details. Wrong thinking on this can affect one’s behavior so as to have eternal consequences.

This false teaching of the universal or invisible church is a *Protestant* teaching with *Protestant* roots (true Baptists are *not* Protestants, and never were); made up by Protestants as justification for their church’s existence. They want to play church and give New Testament credence and authority to their groups, so they justify their efforts with a putative false teaching. Many “Bible Churches” and “Community Churches” are in fact offshoots from Protestant groups; they hide their true identity under a generic, non-defining name. They say they are “non-denominational,” but with a little research one can find their true roots. And through these avenues the leaven spreads.

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For example, Bob Jones, of the university with the same name, was a Methodist. He was an “immersed Methodist” – whatever that means. His mother was a Baptist and his father a Methodist, so he was immersed before joining and being licensed by the Methodists. So, whatever he taught and promoted, although I am sure it contained much good, is still tainted with *Protestant* doctrine. And you will find that some graduates of Bob Jones start “Bible churches” thinking they are non-denominational.

In contrast, consider my pastor, J. G. Tharpe, who was chancellor of five Baptist schools (two Baptist universities, two Baptist seminaries, and a Baptist college) under the authority of Baptist Tabernacle in Shreveport, Louisiana. This man was raised Methodist until he got saved and called to preach. When the Methodist leaders in his day knew “Jimmy Gid” was called to preach, they offered him many promises of success and religious prosperity in the Methodist system. Bro. Tharpe rejected those offers and instead became a Baptist, thus alienating many of his family and choosing instead the hard road of fundamentalism. Bro. Tharpe became to be known as “Mr. Baptist of Louisiana” because he was solid in his Baptist teaching.

During his ministry, Baptist Tabernacle authorized the founding of over a hundred *Baptist* churches – one of them being ours (number 51). He understood the church was “a body of baptized believers, covenanted together to carry out the commandments of Jesus Christ,” neither universal nor invisible. He rejected alien baptism, stood for the King James Version, and loved his brother. He often told the story how that once he decided to leave Methodism and join the local Baptist Church, that he went forward at the end of the Baptist service and informed the pastor that he wanted to “move his letter.” To this the preacher laughed loudly and said, “*Boy... You ain’t got no letter to move! If you are going to be a Baptist, you gotta be baptized by a Baptist.*”

From that point onward, Jimmy Tharpe was a steadfast defender of the Baptist way. Not only did he live his life tenaciously as an independent Baptist, but he taught the same in all his schools.

Preliminary Teaching

Before I list the *ill effects* of falsely teaching that the church the Lord built is a universal or invisible church, I should like first to briefly teach on the subject of the church; mainly to provoke good-hearted brethren to honestly study out for themselves the truth on this matter. No doubt some will dismiss what I say being content they are fully persuaded they are right. These are beyond correction, first; and secondly, for them to admit they are wrong jeopardizes their life work. They have traveled too far down the path and cannot return to the right way. They have too much of their pride invested in what they have promoted and built to admit their error.

As the young maiden who has lost her virginity, she cannot go back and undo her actions. As for me and brethren of like understanding, we can always go where she is (not that we would); but she cannot return to where we are.

Hopefully, there are a few brethren who have not traveled too far down that road. They will be humble enough to prayerfully search the scriptures and prove what I say. And hopefully, once they have seen the truth, they will admit the truth and undo what they have done in ignorance. There is no shame in admitting one is wrong. That shows one has learned. And we all are learning. To be willfully ignorant, however, is something to avoid.

To define this study, I am showing the reasons why there is no universal church. Although some may see this as a straining of terms, most believers understand we are born again into the *family* of God. We are children of God by faith. We become part of the kingdom of God when we are born again (John chapter 3). But we

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need to be clear that this kingdom or family, which we enter by being born again; is *not* a universal church. Salvation is one thing; discipleship is another. As children of God we have a duty to serve God *through* a local church assembly. Our loyalty and faithfulness to Christ is demonstrated as to how we honor the church *Jesus* built. In the last section the reader will see how an incorrect understanding of the church indeed has serious repercussions.

I proceed then, first, to supply some simple *exhibits* that I believe are beyond gainsaying:

1. One would have to willfully blind, ignorant, or of a dishonest purpose to deny that the churches in the New Testament were local bodies of baptized believers. It should be obvious to anyone with even a partial understanding of the New Testament that the Jerusalem church, the Antiochian church, the Corinthian church, the Ephesian church, the Philippian church, the churches in Galatia, the Thessalonian church – and over twenty more given by name – were local bodies of baptized believers. If anyone denies this fact, he is beyond the point of reason. It would be an easy study to show this fact, but I hope the readers have at least a basic understanding and knowledge of the New Testament to admit the churches in the New Testament were *not* universal and *not* invisible. Paul and the other apostles visited them. Paul and John wrote to them. There they broke bread and fellowshiped. They extended the right hand of fellowship. They met in houses. Of the hundred and fifteen or so places the word church is used, well over a hundred are undoubtedly speaking specifically of a local body of baptized believers.

So, as we take as our first step, we see the undeniable fact that the churches shown in the New Testament were indeed shown to be local, visible bodies; the question then proceeds to whether the New Testament *also* supports the idea of a universal, invisible church (this to me seems so alien to the scriptures already, but for the sake of study, we shall have to address this point). I believe one will see that the answer is clearly, “no, the New Testament does not support the idea of a universal or invisible church.”

2. For exhibit 2, we shall look at the first mentions of the word church in the Bible. The first mentions in the Bible are found in Matthew’s Gospel, coined by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. In all four Gospels, the word *church* is only found in the book of Matthew, and that in chapters 16 and 18.

16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

18:17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

In 16:18, Jesus said *my church* – meaning one. Consequently, to say Jesus built a church that is both *invisible* and at the same time he built a church that is *visible*, is to say our Savior built two types of churches. The church cannot be *both* invisible and visible. What church did Jesus build? Again, the overwhelming evidence in the New Testament is that the churches were visible, local assemblies.

So then, if Jesus used the singular *church*, why do we say *churches*? Well, Paul used that word in its plural form, as did Jesus (Galatians 1; Revelation 2). They spoke in the plural showing these other churches were *more of the same*. Jesus built his church, and that church reproduced to make other churches. Think of it this way: In Genesis God made *man* (singular). He made *man* (singular) in his image. There was *one* man. But that man reproduced. No one with a right mind would contend Adam was invisible and universal, nor would

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they deny that his offspring were men of the same man qualities. Neither would they say when he created man as a visible being, that God later created a man that is invisible. Neither would someone say the church started as a *visible* church and then “morphed” into an *invisible*, universal church. There is no scripture supporting that idea.

As man was created singularly but reproduced, so did Jesus build his church and it reproduced. *Man* became *men* scattered throughout the world, and that Jerusalem church reproduced into many churches scattered throughout the world. And as all men can trace their origin to that first Adam, we can trace the true New Testament churches to its builder and founder Jesus Christ. In contrast, Protestant churches trace their origin to the Roman Catholic (*katholikos*) Church – the mother of harlots.

For someone to make a mannequin (or straw man) and push it upon us calling it a true man, or to call the true man invisible and universal; is bordering on an insult to one’s intelligence. But that is what Protestants do with the church. They make their own church and say it is equal to what God made.

In the second verse in Matthew (18:17) Jesus teaches us to “tell it unto the church.” This further proves the word that Jesus used defined a local assembly, for he said to his disciples to *tell it to the church* – meaning it had to be a local and visible assembly, with at least two or three gathered together. How else could one tell of an issue to this judicial body (one that would bind or loose). And two thousand years later, although in a different place and time, if we have an irreconcilable issue with our brother, we need to have the church judge. Similarly in the world, when you seek a “judge” or desire present your case’s evidence to a “jury,” you may not be speaking of any particular judge or jury; but you are certainly not referring to a universal or invisible judge or jury. Eventually you will stand before a visible, local person or group and plead your cause.

So, in the four Gospels Jesus mentions his church in two places, both in Matthew – once to say he will build it, and then shortly after that it is a judicial body to bind and loose the issues of erring brethren.

Generic Use of Words

And as God sometimes uses the word *man* in a generic sense, he will sometimes use other words in a generic sense. In Ephesians 5:23 God says, “for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church”; but he uses the word husband and wife in its generic sense. God is in no wise claiming there is a universal invisible husband and wife. There are many husbands and many wives.

Some say the universal church was started in Acts chapter 2 at Pentecost (with no scriptural evidence, I may add). But the scriptures clearly state the Lord added to the church in those days. And where was that church? It was located in Jerusalem, the apostles and disciples themselves baptizing the believers. According to I Corinthians 12:28, “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles....” The apostles were the first members of the church, and Jesus chose them, many being baptized of John the Baptist.

A Word Study

In Matthew 16, Jesus used the term “*my church*,” indicating there were other types. The word Jesus chose was not by chance. Jesus did not create this word – it was a word that already had meaning. It was a word describing a thing that was well known to the hearers. His church would not be the only church that exists, but his church is differentiated from all others in that it was one that he himself would build. It is this church in particular that Jesus built that he is speaking of, to the exclusion of all other churches, when he said the gates

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of hell would not prevail against it. Whatever those churches were that existed before and after our Lord's earthly ministry, he was speaking of only one church in particular – *his* church!

So it would benefit the reader to understand this word *church*, and what it meant at the time Jesus used it, and realize that when Jesus chose this word, he chose it with absolute accuracy and inspiration. He must needs use some word his followers were familiar with. He chose the word "*ekklesia*."

Jesus could have used a word such as assembly, synagogue, council, family, body, flock, fold, army, congregation, building, temple, structure; or any one of number of words. But he specifically chose the word *ekklesia*. Why?

What was the origin of this word? Jesus was not the first to use it. What did it represent? I would expect that those who promote a universal or invisible church would not teach this too much in detail. They would simply say it means a "called out assembly," or something as simplistic as this. But allow me, dear reader, to supply you with a more detailed and accurate use and definition of this word when Jesus chose it:

The word *ekklesia* is a political word, being in use 400 years before Jesus was born. Before the Lord used the word, it was not considered a religious word. It was used when summoning an army, or to call out elected and official representatives of a government to meet for official business. Particularly in the Greek empire, the republic would call out the citizen representatives of the various city states to organize a legislative or judicial council, authorized to conduct some official business.

The Greek word comes from two words: "*ek*" meaning "out" and "*kaleo*" meaning "to call." But you can see it goes much farther than this.

As a side note, the translators of Authorized Version used the English word "church" when translating this word in Matthew. I expect other versions use other words. But we must understand that just because modern-day dictionaries and groups define the word *church* differently in many cases, it does not mean that this is what Jesus meant, for Jesus did not write these modern dictionaries. For example, some dictionaries say a church is a house of religious service. Some may use that definition today, but we should not force a modern definition upon the Lord's words. That is not what Jesus meant. So be careful for that.

In addition, I also expect that whatever the translators of the A.V. would had used, the meaning would still have been changed by today. So, say they used the word "council." Today, people would go to "council" on Sunday, rather than church. Driving by a nice Christian building, one would exclaim, "Look at that 'council,'" just as easily and loosely as they use the word church. The power and effect of the words of our Savior have repercussions and the Devil is active to confuse. Regardless of what some people say the word *church* means, we have to discern what the meaning was when Jesus used it.

So, in summary, when the word *church* was first used in the New Testament, it was used by Jesus Christ, defining his local assembly. The law of first mention should carry a lot of weight in exegesis.

3. For exhibit 3, we shall look at the other places the Founder spoke of his church. Other than Matthew chapters 16:18 and 18:17, the only other places the Lord used this word was in the Revelation of Saint John. Read Revelation 1:11:

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto

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Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

The Lord Jesus Christ goes on to mention these churches in chapter 1:20, and uses the word fourteen times in chapters 2 and 3; and then one last time in 22:16:

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

It is no small thing that the first book in the New Testament you have the Savior and Builder mentioning his church, and that it is a local, visible assembly; and then in the last book of the New Testament he mentions his churches over a dozen times – all being local, visible assemblies. To many, this would be sufficient emphasis to show his churches are local and visible assemblies. By taking the words from the mouth of the Savior himself it is easily discerned what his church is.

But there are many places between these two books that mention the church. We find Luke writing of many events involving the churches in his book of Acts. All those are local visible assemblies. We have James mentioning the word one time in James 5:14, obviously a local assembly:

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

Then we have Peter using the word in I Peter 5:13 mentioning the church that is at Babylon – obviously again a local assembly.

Besides the Revelation, the beloved John used the word in only one of his other epistles, and that was his third epistle (verses 6, 9, and 10). By reading the context one can easily see this is a local assembly (he says he wrote unto the church, and how Diotrephes cast certain out of the church). I doubt if the church were universal and made up of all saved, that Diotrephes would be able to cast anyone out of the church.

This leaves the apostle Paul – the servant of God who wrote more than half of the New Testament. Interestingly, many of his epistles were written *to* churches (in Corinth, many in Galatia, in Ephesus, Philippi, and Colossae. He also wrote to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. He wrote to Timothy, the bishop of the church of Ephesus; to Titus, the bishop of the church in Crete; and to Philemon, who had a church in his house. Without a doubt, the majority of Paul's writings show the church is local and visible.

4. Now let us consider the few texts one usually uses to teach there is such a thing as a universal or invisible church – Ephesians and Hebrews. It seems superfluous to me that if Paul used the word *church* some fifty times where there is no doubt he is speaking of a local assembly, that we would have to prove what he meant when he used the same word less than a dozen times elsewhere.

Let us take Hebrews first, as this is simpler to address. Here I show the two places there that Paul uses the word church:

Hebrews 2:1 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

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Paul is quoting Psalms 22:22. In the Old Testament, the verse uses the word *congregation*. Here is a fine example of the Bible defining itself. Old Testament *congregation* is mentioned in the New Testament as *church*. Common sense tells me this use of the *church* means a local assembly – a *congregation*.

The second place in Hebrews is a little more interesting and revealing. Please note the passage below:

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,
23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Hebrews 12:22-24

Please read carefully and repeatedly the passage above. I know many good men have differed on what exactly Paul is talking about here. ***But one thing is certain and obvious: the church that Paul mentions in verse 23 is visible and local.*** That church is visible, and it is located in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is where God, Jesus, and the blood are located. It is still a local and visible assembly.

Now we can argue who exactly this general assembly and church of the firstborn is comprised of; but I will say that to me, it is made up of those who are saved and have passed from this world. As Paul said, absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Here, Paul indeed makes a distinction between the *church of the firstborn* and the *spirits of just men made perfect*. Possibly (and to me, likely), the *church of the firstborn* are those New Testament saints who have trusted Christ and have fallen asleep. These would include the apostles, the disciples found in the book of Acts, and all the saints from the last 2,000 years – and me, if I am not caught up. These names are written in heaven. This is what Jesus told his disciple to rejoice over (Luke 10:20). The way I see it, once I depart from this world my membership will move from Historic Baptist Church in North Kingstown to Mount Sion Baptist Church in heavenly Jerusalem! – both of these churches being local, visible bodies.

The *just men made perfect* would be (in my opinion) those Old Testament saints who were found righteous and taken to heaven. We can trust that Adam, Job, Noah, Moses, Joshua, David, the prophets, and many others are now found in the heavenly Jerusalem.

But this is clear: they are all in the same place. Paul called them a general assembly. That Greek word *paneguris* (pan = all + agora = assembly) indeed means “general assembly,” a festal, public gathering of the whole people to celebrate publicly. It is obviously local and visible. And for one to say that is “everybody who is saved on earth and in heaven,” violates the context and plain meaning of the verse (it does not say that), and goes against common sense: How can we all down here scattered throughout the world, waiting for our heavenly home; and at the same time be up there in one visible assembly celebrating with the Lord Jesus Christ?

Someone would say, are we not all in Christ, seated in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6)? Well, read Ephesians chapter 2 and you will see in context that Paul is not talking about being present in the general assembly in heaven. He is talking about our position in Christ as children of God.

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Well, someone else would say, that Paul said in Philippians 3:20 that our conversation is in heaven. But that conversation is not a presence in a church there, that *conversation* means a political citizenship and being subject to the laws of that kingdom. It is not saying we are members of a universal or invisible church.

So, be careful dear reader. Do not build up a teaching of a universal or invisible church based upon Hebrews 12, especially knowing of all the other evidence to the contrary. Paul is giving us a vision of heavenly Jerusalem and the things we see there. For now, these things are seen and accessed by faith. They are unseen by the human eye, but if you could visit that place now you would see these heavenly things. They are not invisible.

I readily admit there are churches on earth, local bodies of baptized believers. I also readily admit there is a heavenly church, also a local body of redeemed New Testament believers. But let this not be understood to mean we all who are saved are members of a universal or invisible *church*. This is stretching the idea far beyond what the scriptures say.

So, someone walking on this earth is going to have a hard time trying to convince me they are actually a member of that church in heaven. If so, when do they attend? When do they rejoice? How long are the services? How do you get there and back? For someone to believe that, he would have to throw out a lot of foundational truths of the Bible. If we are saved, we will be present with the Lord when we are absent from this body. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 (see especially v. 6-8):

1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

I hope this is sufficient to make it clear that a person down here cannot be part of a general assembly and church in heaven.

In fact, note this verse in 1 Thessalonians 2:14:

For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

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These *churches* (plural) are in Christ Jesus ... but they are in Judea! Paul did not call them a singular church although they were in Christ.

Now let us briefly study the few passages in Ephesians that speak of the church:

Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

No problem here. Jesus is the head of the church. This has no conflict with the church being a local body of baptized believers. This verse proves no universal church.

Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

Again, there is no problem here. God wants the church to have the wisdom of God. This proves no universal church.

Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Again, I see no problem here, nothing teaching that the church is universal or invisible. Jesus said in Matthew 16 that he would build his church and that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. The church of the Lord, *as an institution*, will survive, prevail, and be victorious until the end.

Here, Paul says that the church should glorify her Savior throughout all ages. I am in full support of that. So, from the first church in Jerusalem to the church of the Laodiceans, each and every church should glorify Jesus Christ.

To force this verse to say the church is universal or invisible is not right. Paul is speaking of the church as *the church*. Since he is writing to the Ephesian church, he obviously includes them, but he is not speaking specifically of any one church.

The Old Testament speaks in similar terms at times. Let us take the word *man*. Job said, Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward (Job 5:7). Of what man is he speaking? Of any and all men. He is speaking of man in a generic sense. But no one would use this verse and claim there is a universal, invisible man! Neither would anyone say he is excluding any man.

Notice how Paul similarly used the word *man*: For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man (I Corinthians 11:8). Of what man or what woman is he speaking? None in particular, but any one of all men and women. No one with an honest purpose would contend this man or woman is universal or invisible. I know this sounds ridiculous, but that is how some read the verses in Ephesians.

To further this thought, Paul also uses the word *husband* and *wife* in this fashion. This leads us to the last passage in Ephesians that uses the word church. Read carefully the passage of Ephesians 5:23-32 below:

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

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27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Notice the use of the word church in similar fashion to that of husband and wife. It is a similar relationship. No one reading this passage would claim that Christ and his church are universal or invisible, any more than the husband and wife or universal or invisible.

Please pay close attention to these comments on the above passage:

- A Verse 23: The husband is the head of the wife. What husband? Each and every one. This does not mean the wife is a headless body walking around, and the husband is the head that pops on the wife's body. The word head and body are used in the sense of leadership and ownership. The church is an independent, physical, earthly "body" of baptized believers. Jesus Christ is her head – her leader and authority. He is also the Savior of that body. The wife is an independent, physical, earthly body. Her husband is her head – her leader and authority.
- B Verse 25: Jesus loved the church and gave himself for it. What church? Each and every one, excluding none.
- C Verse 26: Jesus sanctifies and cleanses the church by his word. How could he do that if the church is universal or invisible? He does this through the preaching of the word. And it is necessary to have physical preachers and physical hearers in the church, congregating in certain places and at certain times for this to happen. Look at the pattern in the New Testament. Look at Paul's writings.
- D Verse 29: Jesus nourishes and cherishes his church. This is similar to point C above.
- E Verse 30: As Adam said of Eve that she is "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23), so the church, the bride of Christ, is unified with her Saviour. The church members are members of his body *as a purchased possession*, not as his actual bodily members. The members are likened to a physical body (eyes, hands, feet), but that is a figurative description. Paul is not saying we are Jesus actual eyes and feet.

Think about this. Eve was an independent physical body, but her body belonged to Adam. She was *his* possession. She was so close to him she was *his* bone and flesh. But that does not mean they were Siamese twins, or that Adam was a head with no body of his own. Eve's hands, feet, eyes, and mouth were her members, of her own independent body, but as her body belonged to Adam, he could say her members were his, as they were part of his (Eve's) body. This is not too difficult to understand. One simply needs to understand the relationship of the husband to the wife. And this passage is teaching that the relationship of the husband and

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the wife is the same as Jesus' relationship to his church. The two become one flesh, just as my wife and I are one flesh. But she is currently in a different location. That, however, does not change the relationship. I Corinthians chapter seven explains this further. The body of the wife is her husbands, and vice-versa.

This concludes the passages in Ephesians. Still we see there is no teaching here that the church is universal or invisible. In further study we will look at how the word *body* is used, but we got a good start here.

Lastly, for this section, there are a couple places in Colossians that some may try to pass off as teaching for a universal church. As these are similar to Ephesians, let's look at them briefly.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

Colossians 1:18, 24.

I give the same answer here. The church is a *body* of baptized believers. That *body* of believers has Jesus as the head, and it is his possession. Therefore he is the head of the body, and it is *his* body. Nowhere should we read into this passage that the church is universal or invisible.

As a follow-up, Colossians chapter 4 further uses the word church, and by the same writer. These are obviously local assemblies. I would not expect the writer would tend to change the meaning of the word *church* in the same letter.

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

16 And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

Other than these verses in Hebrews, Ephesians, and Colossians, all other usage of the word *church* in the Bible refer clearly to local assemblies. And we see that in these three books mentioned that the church is also a local assembly, with nothing to substantiate an invisible church idea.

We have just evaluated every use of the word *church* with nothing teaching a church is invisible or universal. But I am open to discuss the subject should anyone see a verse differently.

5. Let us now look closer at the use of the word *Husband* in Ephesians 5:22-33:

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

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26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,
27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle,
or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife
loveth himself.
29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as
the Lord the church:
30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.
31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his
wife, and they two shall be one flesh.
32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself;
and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

(v. 21) The Apostle Paul here compares the relationship of the married couple to the relationship of the church and Christ. First, we see that the wife is supposed to submit to her husband. It is assumed the church is submitted to Christ. I contend that could only be accomplished in a local physical assembly. How else could the church submit to Christ, if that church is made up of all who are saved?

(v. 23) Secondly, as mentioned already, the head of the church is Christ. Similarly the head of the wife is the husband. No one with any sense would say there is a *universal wife* that submits to her husband. Paul is using the word *head* in the sense of leadership, possession (ownership), and responsibility. It is a relationship that is a permanent joining (v. 31). He is not speaking of a literal bodiless head that has been decapitated from its own body and transplanted onto the headless body of a female. This head and body relationship is seen clearly in a godly married couple. If you are married, you understand this concept. If you are a husband, you refer to your mate as “my wife.” She is your (possession) body, and her body is (or should be) fully faithful to you alone. Otherwise, she would be called an adulteress.

The husband, as the head, assumes responsibility for his wife’s learning, providence, happiness, and safety. He supplies her every need, loves her, nourishes her, and his word keeps her clean.

(v. 25) Jesus, not only built his church, but he sacrificed his life for her. I personally believe a husband should protect his wife even unto death. He is to be sacrificed mainly for love, but if not for that, simply because of his duty as a husband. I think of the Titanic disaster, and how many men died. The husbands stayed aboard that sinking ship in order to allow room on the limited life boats – the stronger giving way so that the weaker could be saved – “women and children first!” was the cry.

(v. 26) By the preaching of the word of God the church is sanctified and cleansed. This can only be done as was patterned in the New Testament – God’s preachers teaching and preaching with the power of the Holy Ghost to a local assembly. Remember, the church did not have radio and TV in the first 1900 years of her existence! Few only had Bibles.

(v. 30, 31) The two become one flesh. This is a joining through a covenant. Both the woman and the man were born as babes in a family, but there came a time when they were joined together – when the wife joined her husband. This covenant of marriage is where the wife and husband promised to love, honor and (the wife) to obey. I believe this is why fundamental churches have their covenants with the Lord. They promise to love, honor and to obey the Lord Jesus Christ. This cannot be done as a universal body.

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(v. 32) The marriage relationship of the Savior to the church is a mystery – something that was unknown until revealed. Just because this church relationship is a mystery, it does not automatically follow that the church is universal – that is non-sequitur reasoning.

(v. 33) Lastly, the wife is expected to reverence her husband. I should say also that the church should reverence the Lord Jesus Christ. This, to me, can only be done in the literal sense of the word church.

6. Let us look at the use of the word *body*. In the New Testament we find three uses of the word *body* in respect to the Lord Jesus Christ: First, it was used to define the *physical body* of the Lord as he walked on this earth. This body was scourged and nailed to a cross. Mary anointed this body in Matthew 26:12, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen in Matthew 27:59, and it was this body that was raised from the dead (John 2:19-21).

The second is a spiritual use of the word, represented by the bread of communion (see Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22). As you read John 6:51-63, Jesus specifically says the words (eating his flesh and drinking his blood) are spirit (v. 63):

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Read also I Corinthians 10:16.

The third use of the word body is describing the church as the body of Christ. Paul uses this word to show unity by the similar relationship of the members of a church to the members of a physical body. Read Romans 12:4, 5:

- 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:
- 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

In I Corinthians 10:16, 17, Paul also relates the church body to the communion bread:

- 16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?
- 17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

In chapter 11 of the same book, Paul goes on to teach on the Lord's Supper (or communion), and then he moves on to say in chapter 12 the following instruction on the church:

- 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.
- 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
- 14 For the body is not one member, but many.
- 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

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16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

It is not uncommon for some people to read I Corinthians 12 and assume Paul is showing us there is some universal or invisible church, but the careful reading of the text shows this *cannot* be the case. Allow me to list these reasons:

- A. Notice for as the body is one (v. 12) – Paul is referring to a physical body as the example.
- B. It says, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body” (v. 13). I contend this is *water baptism* that adds to the church. I do not want to expand this study to the use of the word *baptism* in the New Testament, but the Spirit of God should be active in determining who is made a member of a church. That means the church people who accept the new member by baptism, and the individual uniting with the church, are both (or should be) led by the Spirit of God. It is in this manner that God sets “the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him” (v. 18). To teach this is a Spiritual baptism into a universal church would teach either Calvinism (if one equates the universal church with salvation) or a two-stage operation of God in the sense that the Spirit saves, and then the Spirit baptizes into a universal church. You can’t have it both ways. Think about this.

In addition, the members that are being set into this body have Spiritual gifts, which is a major point of the chapter. Paul goes on to say in chapter 14:12 that the Spirit gives these gifts to edify the church:

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

- C. In verse 25, Paul says there should be no schism in the body. If all believers were part of one universal church by God’s design, that means the differences of Methodism, Presbyterianism, Pentecostalism, Fundamentalism, Arminianism, modernism, Antinomianism, Catholicism – and

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every other schism are in the same body of Christ. This to me makes a mockery of what Paul wrote, and causes reproach to the true body of Christ. Not only that, but Paul was writing to a local church when he speaks of no schism. This would be out of the control of the Corinthian body, or any other church, if Paul meant the application to go beyond a local body.

Can an honest man really contend that all the saved people are part of a universal body that has no schism? God tempers the body so that there would be no schisms (v. 24). Did God fail? Read the passage again carefully.

- D. Then, in verse 26, Paul supplies the master-stroke to show this body is local: “And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.” Common sense shows this must be a local body. How else could *all the members* know what is happening to any particular member?

It becomes obvious then, when one reads chapter 12 in its context, that Paul is saying that the local church there in Corinth should have unity and think of themselves as a singular body, belonging to Christ, and each member having the same care one for another.

7. Contrasting the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven – the use in Matthew’s Gospel.

I have heard some say that the body of Christ, the universal church, started at Pentecost in Acts 2 as that was when the Holy Ghost came upon the disciples. This teaching is not correct. There is no scripture supporting this idea.

In John chapter 20 Jesus told his disciples to receive the Holy Ghost when he sent them out. In Acts 2 the Holy Ghost came upon them “baptizing” them in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise in Acts 1:5. The Bible says in Acts 2:4 that they were “filled” with the Holy Ghost.

It says further in Acts 2:41 and 47 that the Lord “added” unto them. The “them” is the disciples in the church. If one would study the use of the word *disciple* in the New Testament, one would see this is a person walking a disciplined life following the Lord. The New Testament disciples are saved and baptized and following the way of Christ. All disciples are members of a church. Not all church members are disciples. Not all saved people are church members.

So let us briefly examine the difference between the two kingdoms. They are both fairly easy to understand, and one can remember their difference by thinking thus: The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, just as God is a spirit; the kingdom of heaven is a physical kingdom, just as heaven is a physical place.

The kingdom of God is not now seen (Luke 17:20, 21) and is to be sought first (Luke 12:31). It is made up of saved people and has no tares among the wheat.

The Kingdom of God one day will be seen (Luke 22:16-30) and is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17). Jesus says in John 3:5: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the kingdom of Heaven *does* have tares among the wheat (Matthew 13:24-30). The phrase *kingdom of heaven* is only found in Matthew’s gospel, although referred to in other places.

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My understanding is that when we see Jesus Christ the kingdom of God will be united in the kingdom of heaven. For now, these two kingdoms have similarities and distinctions. Jesus is King over both.

Now, here is the important thing to note: In the Gospel of Matthew in the two passages where the word *church* is used (chapters 16 and 18), we find the teaching of Jesus continues with a mention of the kingdom of heaven, likening it to the church.

Consequently, an honest man would conclude the church is associated with the kingdom of heaven more so than with the kingdom of God.

To simplify my position, I say that the church is *a physical body of baptized believers who have covenanted together to obey the Lord's commandments*. The church is *in* the kingdom of heaven, and that kingdom is made up of professed disciples. Sister churches are independent of each other, but they both are part of the kingdom of heaven and should both be subject to the laws of the King. Because I enter this kingdom by *professed* obedience to the gospel and baptism (the keys – Matthew 16:19), I can move from one church to another without baptism being required. However, all church membership changes should be done by God's leading and blessing, all parties concerned being in unity. At the same time, every New Testament church should respect and honor sister churches and their judgment of members (binding and loosing).

Because we have professed believers who are lost (tares) in this kingdom, we need to be wise as to who we let into our churches.

The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom made up of only saved persons. It is closely related to the family of God, one recognizing Jesus as King, and the other God as the Father by adoption.

This means that the difference between the *family of God* and the *church* causes confusion to some. Look at it this way: the family of God is made up of all saved. Those who congregate in a local assembly are the household of faith (Galatians 6:10); the church being referred to as the *house of God* (1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 4:17).

8. Origin of the universal invisible church concept.

During the first century A.D. the church in Jerusalem grew after the Lord's ascension by the power of God. In Acts chapter 2 we see three thousand were added to the church. Many of these disciples were scattered throughout Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. Barnabas and Saul worked with the church in Antioch, and they eventually were sent out of that church. During the three missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul, dozens of independent New Testament churches were started. By the close of the New Testament John sends letters to seven churches in Asia.

All these churches were local, independent bodies of baptized believers. These churches multiplied (as Titus was instructed by Paul to ordain elders in every city of Crete). For the next two hundred years independent local assemblies multiplied until they were everywhere.

In the fourth century the Roman government was weakening as a military power and under Constantine Rome positioned herself not only as a political and military empire, but also as a religious power. Constantine realized that through religion he could still control much of his empire. Consequently, he "Christianized" his armies, and made Christianity the state church. He forced all religions to confess him as head of the Church,

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but still allowed them to worship as they pleased. As long as the pagans confessed they were Christian (regardless of their faith and practice) and bowed to Constantine, all was good.

Many good churches also joined this Roman *katholicos* Church. *Katholicos* means universal. This was the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church. Constantine was its first pope (not Peter), and the Church claimed to be universal and physical.

However, true New Testament churches rejected Constantine's edicts and they would not submit to the state or join with it. As a result these true churches were severely persecuted.

This oppression of Rome continued for a thousand years. This was called the Dark Ages. Ignorance and superstition abounded. Faithful copies of the New Testament books were banned and burned. The inquisition prospered and caused many faithful believers to be martyred. Still, true believers in their true churches resisted Rome regardless of the cost.

Rome divided in 1054 in the Great Schism. Thus resulting in the Eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin) branches, with their respective patriarchs in Constantinople and Rome. This schism only further provoked the Roman Church to claim universal authority.

With the 16th century came the Protestant Reformation. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox challenged the authority of the Pope and many people were liberated from the oppressive rule of Rome. They are called *Protestants because* they protested against Rome.

Thank God for the Reformation but understand four important facts of history: 1. Baptists were not part of the Reformation. They continued since Jesus walked the sunny shores of Galilee, since the beginning of the New Testament. They were the ones persecuted during the Dark Ages. They are not Protestant. 2. The Protestants come *out of* Rome – their origin is traced to the Great Whore, not Jesus. 3. These Protestants also persecuted the Baptists. *The reason:* It is the same reason the Catholics had – the Baptists denied that these religions were true New Testament churches. The Baptists rejected their authority and baptism. And for this reason they continued to suffer. 4. These Protestant churches morphed into a variety of non-denominational and non-defining Evangelical Christian churches that many today attend (not necessarily being members), not really knowing the origin of these churches.

But Protestants have two huge problems. First, they do not want to admit the true churches existed and continued under Baptist doctrine from the beginning of the New Testament. Only a few Protestants and Catholics in history were candid enough to confess that it is the Baptists who have continued since the beginning. For those well-known quotes, contact this author or read Carroll's *The Trail of Blood* book. He has done an excellent work documenting and tracing the Baptists from the beginning, through the Dark Ages, to our current place in history. To admit the Baptists are indeed the true churches *invalidate* their existence. They would be admitting their lack of authority.

The second huge problem Protestant have is that they trace their origin to the Roman Catholic Church. They are daughters of Rome. That is where they find their beginning and they are tainted with her doctrine.

When they protested and separated, they claimed rightly that she was not the true church. But then how could they justify their own existence, seeing they came from her? They understood the promise of Jesus Christ that his church would endure to the end, but they would not accept the truth of the Baptists. So, how could these very large problems be reconciled?

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Here we have the origin of the universal, invisible church concept. They were programmed by Rome that the church was universal and *visible* – Roman Catholicism itself. Since they knew that was wrong, they said the church must be universal and *invisible*, made up of those who confess Christ as Savior. That false teaching would give them as answer to their problems. It made no difference as to the origin of their groups as that was unimportant. As long as the church made a profession of faith in Christ, they were in. And they could elevate themselves (or at least try) to the same authority of the true Baptists.

The Protestant teaching went on to say that contrary to what Rome claimed – that *Peter* is the rock on which Jesus built his church – that this rock upon which the Savior built his church was actually the simple *confession* of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. That would let anybody in and give equal validity to their claim as being a church. In fact, they say, since the true church is universal and invisible, it really does not matter too much what the local assemblies believe, teach, do, or claim. Protestant and Evangelicals falsely teach that everyone who is a Christian is automatically a member of the *one true church* (same lingo the Romanists use), and whatever we do down here as a church is *secondary*. Believers, in error, then think they need only to be loyal to Christ; and it is really of little consequence as to what local assembly he attends, or not attend, or is a member of. Baptists say Jesus is that Rock on which his church is built.

Eight Ill Effects of Promoting the Universal (Invisible) Church Fallacy

Now, I shall proceed with the ill effects of promoting a universal church idea. People say it, teachers teach it, churches hold to it, books mention it, and many people believe it. But the truth is not the truth because it is popular or well-received. Often the truth goes contrary to what many people believe. And only by the Holy Bible do we know what absolute truth is. I have attempted to show why the church is a local body of believers. Allow me now to show why this teaching in damaging the cause of Christ. The teaching of the Universal Church Fallacy is damaging to the work of the Lord because:

1. It causes a confusion and false teaching of the truth of God.

Most importantly, the false teaching goes directly against the plain truth that God has given us. I have tried to do the due diligence to show the reader why there is no such thing as an invisible church. I mean, to say the church can be a local visible body and at other times it can be universal and all inclusive of every believer creates confusion. To which are we to be faithful? How do we serve through both? Who are the members? What is the practical benefit of receiving such a false teaching?

2. It by necessity elevates the invisible above over the local church, giving preeminence to a non-existent thing over that for which the Savior gave his life.

By far, an honest man would admit the lion's share of verses in the New Testament that mention the church undoubtedly reference a local assembly. Only a few could be twisted to mean something else, which some men have tried to do. I have shown that those few places are really in reference to a local assembly.

But the natural response to the idea that there is a universal, invisible church is that a believer tends to respect and honor the invisible over the local. Why would anyone be faithful to any particular local body when he is actually part of the greater and grander church? And since all believers are part of this "invisible" church, whatever ministry they claim they are doing is worthy of financial support.

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You can see why the idea is proffered – it is profitable to have no earthly authority over one's doing. A man can always appeal that his work is part of the greater universal church. No need for subjecting one's ministry to a local authoritative body. Who needs validation? Just *say* one is a Christian work and all is well.

3. It invalidates scriptural baptism.

If the New Testament church is only a local body of baptized believers, it behooves the believer to seek out the right church and submit himself scriptural baptism. A simple reading of the New Testament shows baptism is by immersion. It shows it was first performed by a Baptist. It shows later that the disciples of Jesus Christ did the work. And it shows the commandment to baptize was given by Christ to the eleven – the leadership of the church in Jerusalem.

In contrast, if every believer is part of a universal church, it matters not who baptizes. And, if every group has equal standing as part of a universal church, their baptism is just as good as the next. Excuse the pun, but the doctrine of Baptism is *watered-down* when one compares it to the “spiritual baptism into a universal church.” Believing in a universal church means all groups have equal authority to baptize, and all their baptisms should be honored.

But Bible-believing Baptists are the true New Testament churches. It is their baptism only that is scriptural. And a true Baptist church has a trail of water to show her connection to the first Jerusalem church. For scriptural (not believer's) baptism she stands. For this she has been persecuted for two thousand years. Even today, she is scorned for this truth.

4. It validates false religions, making them equal to the true New Testament church.

With so many different Christian groups, how can they all be correct? How can they all have equal standing? If one is as good as the other, if the Pentecostals are just as good as the Nazarenes or the Methodists, why does it matter where a believer attends, or whether he attends at all? And if Baptists are equal to Evangelical groups, why do we remain separate? Why not just discard our difference and come together in unity without any substantial teaching of truth? Going further, why do we even need Baptists? Let's just go with whoever seems best (since Baptists are just as equal to the others), and therefore it is no problem if those Baptists just fade away.

But Bible-believing Baptists are the true New Testament churches. Besides the trail of water there is a trail of blood – the martyrdom of her faithful members for those two thousand years of persecution, of which thing the Savior made mention.

5. It makes local church membership a non-Biblical concept.

For those who know the New Testament well, the only passage that can be used to teach there is such a thing as church membership shown in the scriptures is I Corinthians 12. If this chapter is supposed to be a discourse relating to the universal church, then there is no other teaching in the New Testament that warrants local church membership.

So, universal church teaching goes hand-in-hand with the teaching that there should be no local church membership. Let us all *just attend* wherever and whenever we please. There is no reason to be members

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anywhere or of any one church. This may sound pleasing to some, but not to me. I understand that chapter in I Corinthians to be referring to a local church, and thus teaching local church membership.

So, brethren, let us be honest and consistent. If you accept the universal church as true, you must also admit the New Testament teaches no such thing as a local church membership. We are all just floaters wandering from one group to another with no loyalty to anyone but Christ and his invisible church.

As for me, I will spew this out of my mouth as very distasteful.

And lastly, on this point, if there be no membership, in whose name do we put the billions of dollars of property that are used by the churches? I recently talked to a woman who attended a large congregation that met in a very large building on a very large complex. There was a lot of expensive property and buildings and equipment. She explained the church had no “members,” for that was unscriptural. When I asked who owned the property, she happily answered, “God!” I rephrased the question: “In whose name is the property titled?” She answered that it was in the name of the seven elders who ran the church. I then asked, “And how does one become an elder?” She answered that the elders decide that. What a system! I then proceeded to inform her that our church property and possessions are owned by the membership, and each member has equal say in its disposition. She had no comment.

6. It removes the authority to teach, preach, and support missionary endeavors.

Where do missionaries go for support? Why does it matter what kind of churches they start? It matters not what they believe or teach, for there is no one to approve them or disapprove them.

At the same time, without local church authority, anyone anywhere can claim to be doing the work of God. Any difference in teaching is of no consequence, for we are all members of the same universal church and we should have no contention in the body. With no more apostles to straighten out what the believers are doing, we can just get together and praise and worship God. Let’s not be divisive for that upsets the invisible body!

Following the way of the New Testament, churches are to teach, authorize, send, and support preachers as they go into all the world to preach the gospel.

Similarly, any organization, whether a school, a mission board, a benevolent work, etc.; should be authorized by a New Testament church to do the work. The church ensures the doctrine is correct according to the New Testament and vouchsafes the work. Should there be any faults, it is the sending church that binds and looses.

Without church authority anybody can do anything with impunity and claim it is the Lord’s work. As a result, we have all kinds of organizations who people think are sound enough to do the Lord’s work. These organizations are not churches, but they still teach and perpetuate incorrect doctrine. All this results in a massive amount of non-scriptural works claiming to be serving God or fulfilling the Gospel mandate.

In spite of all this outward activity claiming one thing or another, only one entity – the New Testament church – is authorized by Jesus Christ to carry on his work. That is shown clearly in Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Timothy 3:15; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 1:8, etc.

7. It promotes an unhealthy attitude against the local church and her authority.

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Some believers feel unaccountable for their actions and will not submit to the judgment of the church. Paul instructed the church to withdraw from and have no fellowship with brothers who are disobedient to certain commandments of God. Paul wished certain men were cut off from the churches in Galatia for troubling the churches by teaching perverted gospels.

Paul wanted misbehaving brethren to be ashamed when they would not repent and be restored to fellowship when they did repent.

But with church authority removed, and other churches willing to receive anyone and everyone, why would an erring brother need to repent? This unhealthy behavior is promoted with the idea of a universal church. One can ignore the churches judgments and still be part of the “greater church.” Who in a universal church will bind and loose judgment upon unrepentant brethren?

If the universal church is made up of all believers, then a misbehaving brother could never be separated from “the church.” But if there be no universal church, the brother is alone, with no fellowship he is a part of.

8. It robs laborers of Jesus Christ of their rightful reward because they are not building on the foundation of the apostles.

This, perhaps, is the most critical negative effect of promoting a universal church teaching: the loss of rewards for labors not done through a New Testament church. In 1 Corinthians 3 you find Paul wrote the following:

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Verse 14 is very clear: “If any man's work abide **which he hath built thereupon**, he shall receive a reward” (my emphasis). All these non-church-authorized works have their reward here. The eternal reward goes to those built on the foundation of the Jesus Christ, which I contend is the “church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). The church is the Lord’s body. He is the head of that body. He authorized and sent that body and gave her promises that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her (Matthew 16:18).

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The church is what the Lord built, and so it is required that a laborer of Jesus Christ work through this church. Thus did Paul and all the laborers in the New Testament. And who is better than these?

Saying there is a universal or invisible church will cause some to do their own work independent of a local church, thinking they are being “led by God.” This robs them of the rewards they would ordinarily earn if the work was done rightly through a good church.

John wrote this in 2 John 1:7-10:

7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Look to yourselves, that you lose not the things you have wrought. How? By entertaining false teaching as to the true nature of our Savior. And how can one know what these para-church organizations truly teach and believe? Many of them try not to be too definite in what they claim to believe as this can alienate supporters. Be careful with whom you labor. Bidding God speed to a false prophet also makes you a partaker of his evil deeds.

And, finishing up, look at what our Saviour said to the angel of the church in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:10, 11):

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Do not let any man take your crown. That would be my summation and exhortation to the reader. Be careful to put Jesus first in all things. Honor the church Jesus built and died for. Labor on this earth through that church as a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion.

I hope this paper has been a help to you. I have not yet found a detailed study showing why some say the church is universal or invisible. If I could locate one, I would try to answer it. What I normally find is the simple statement claiming that such a thing is so, with a handful of verses thrown in without context. I would be happy to see a valid paper written on the subject in favor of that view. I should like to see how this false idea is constructed using only scripture. If anyone knows of one, or is willing to prepare one, my contact information can be found through our church website.

May God bless your labors for him in this world.

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An Ending Thought.

My first pastor, Mark Jacobs, now pastoring in Ohio, would ask simple questions that are valid. I thought I would list them here to show how unscriptural an invisible, universal church is.

1. Where does this invisible, universal church assemble? It does not. So, people are members of a church that does not assemble.
2. How do people tithe or give to this invisible, universal church? They do not.
3. How does this invisible, universal church support missions? It does not.
4. Who are the pastors, deacons, and other leaders of this invisible, universal church? There are none.
5. How does this invisible, universal church teach, preach or instruct its members? It does not.
6. How does this invisible, universal church judge its members? It does not.
7. How does one labor in this invisible, universal church? He cannot.

The End.

Appendix F

HAVING A DIVINE LOVE IN PRACTICE

April 4, 2020

We as children of God should have a divine love. Lost people cannot have a divine love because they know not God. We can only have this divine love if we receive this divine love from God. At salvation, we are sealed with the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 1:13) and by his power we can exercise a divine love.

This divine works two ways – vertically and horizontally. Remember the cross

First, we love God. John 14:15 shows us obedience to Jesus is loving him. We love God because he first loved us.

Secondly, we have a love for man that follows God heart. John 3:16. This is not a worldly love. This is God's love working through us as believers. When this love of God works through us, it is called *charity*.

God wants all people to receive his love:

2 Peter 3:9: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Luke 14:22: And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

Divine Love Practiced in World Evangelism

We follow Jesus to understand, experience, and apply this divine love. During his earthly ministry he preached in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and Galilee.

His apostles varied from different types. Many were fisherman (Galilee). One was a tax collector. A couple were zealots. One was a religious pharisee (Paul, Acts 26:5). One was a Levite (Barnabas, Acts 4:36).

We see in Acts 1:8 that our Savior commands the *progression* for world evangelism. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost. We see this executed in the book of Acts.

Notice the church was at Jerusalem (Acts 1). This church was made up Jewish believers.

Acts chapter 2 we see Jews from all places hearing the word of God and many believing the gospel.

Acts 8 the gospel goes to Samaria. We see also an Ethiopian eunuch getting saved (Gentile).

Acts 9 we see an enemy of the gospel getting saved.

Acts 10 we see Cornelius and his Italian brethren getting saved. Peter leads these men to Jesus and says he has learned God is not a respecter of persons.

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He mentioned that those who fear God are accepted by him. Here God opens the door to the Gentiles and from henceforth we see an emphasis of Gentile conversions.

This recalls the progression in Romans 1 through 4.

God reveals himself to all by his creation (Romans 1). God reveals himself in the consciences of men (Romans 2) so that they are without excuse. This is where Cornelius was reached.

God reveals himself next through the word of God (Romans 3). This is where the Ethiopian was reached.

But all must believe in Jesus Christ to be saved (Romans 4).

Having this divine love means obedience to Christ – this love is especially revealed in the work of soul winning; for it is the application of our love for God (obedience) as directed to our fellow man. We should have no respect of persons for whosoever can be saved. This love as shown in soul winning accomplishes both directions of love simultaneously – our love for God shared to those who are unlovable.

We experience and give God's love. We are a conduit of God's love. We are a witness of God's love.

We see this love in the disciples. Paul is a very good example. He was an enemy of God, but after salvation he served God faithfully in soul winning, making three missionary journeys. Reaching Jews and Gentiles alike. He wrote that it is the love of God that constrained him.

Some who are bidden do not come, but yet there is room.

Do you have the heart of God? Do you have the passion of Jesus?

At Simon's house we see Mary with her alabaster box. Jesus taught to whom much is forgiven the same loveth much. To increase your love for Jesus you need to realize and meditate on how sinful you are and how forgiving Jesus is.

We also need to have a love like God – John 3:16. We do not have the love of the world as pride, lust of eyes and flesh; but a love for people of the world. We have a compassion that moves us into action.

Jesus loved his Father and was always obedient. He was ultimately obedient in the cross. He invites us to follow him.

Summary

God's love is ...

- A Pure love – comes from the holy Father
- A Perfect love – complete and without flaw
- A Personal love
- A Powerful love – Romans 1:16
- A Proved love – by his death on the cross
- A Prioritized love

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- A Purifying love
- A Permanent love – I will never leave thee or forsake thee
- A Public love – no impartiality -- whosoever
- A Preached (Constraining) love
- A Patient love

Having a divine love is manifested in seven things as follows:

- Personal salvation
- Personal obedience to Jesus' commandments
- Personal love of the brethren
- Personal love for the lost through personal evangelism
- A love for missions and world evangelism
- Having no respect of persons
- Following Jesus

The End.

Appendix G

VARIOUS NON-SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS (HERESIES)

In our study of the Doctrine of Christ, we have noticed that over the past 2,000 years various heresies have entered Christianity that oppose Christ's Doctrine. We have here listed some of the more familiar ones for the students' reference and further study.

Donatism

Donatism (Latin: Donatismus, Greek: Δονατισμός Donatismos) was a Christian sect within the Roman province of Africa that flourished in the fourth and fifth centuries among Berber Christians.

Donatism was the error taught by Donatus, bishop of Casae Nigrae, that the effectiveness of the sacraments depends on the moral character of the minister.

TRUTH: We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2) and every person who is truly saved is a king and a priest by the work of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1). The Bible does not teach any sacraments, and therefore any teaching regarding the effectiveness of a sacrament is against the New Testament.

Pelagianism

Pelagianism received its name from Pelagius and designates a heresy of the fifth century, which denied original sin as well as Christian grace.

Pelagianism is the belief that original sin did not taint human nature and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without special Divine aid.

TRUTH: Romans 5 teaches that by Adam's transgression all became sinners by nature, choice, practice, and free will. The only way to receive forgiveness is through faith in Jesus Christ.

Gnosticism

Gnosticism (from Ancient Greek: γνωστικός gnostikos, "learned", from γνῶσις gnōsis, knowledge) is a modern term categorizing a collection of ancient religions whose adherents shunned the material world – which they viewed as created by the demiurge – and embraced the spiritual world. Gnostic ideas influenced many ancient religions that teach that gnosis (variously interpreted as knowledge, enlightenment, salvation, emancipation or 'oneness with God') may be reached by practicing philanthropy to the point of personal poverty, sexual abstinence (as far as possible for hearers, entirely for initiates) and diligently searching for wisdom by helping others. However, practices varied among those who were Gnostic.

Gnosticism was a prominent heretical movement of the 2nd-century Christian Church, partly of pre-Christian origin. Gnostic doctrine taught that the world was created and ruled by a lesser divinity, the demiurge, and

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that Christ was an emissary of the remote supreme divine being, esoteric knowledge (gnosis) of whom enabled the redemption of the human spirit.

TRUTH: Salvation is only through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2, John 3, John 14). Man cannot obtain salvation through wisdom (1 Corinthians 1).

Arianism

Arianism, a Christian heresy first proposed early in the 4th century by the Alexandrian presbyter Arius. It affirmed that Christ is not truly divine but a created being. Arius' basic premise was the uniqueness of God, who is alone self-existent and immutable; the Son, who is not self-existent, cannot be God.

Arianism is a nontrinitarian belief that asserts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God but is entirely distinct from and subordinate to the God the Father.

TRUTH: The New Testament teaches plainly Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3). Jesus is the Word (John 1) and is one with the Father (John 10). Jesus is the image of God (John 14; Hebrews 1; 2 Corinthians 4; Colossians 1).

Nestorianism

Nestorianism is a Christological doctrine that emphasizes the disunion between the human and divine natures of Jesus. It was advanced by Nestorius (386–450), Patriarch of Constantinople from 428–431, influenced by Nestorius' studies under Theodore of Mopsuestia at the School of Antioch.

Nestorianism is basically the doctrine that Jesus existed as two persons, the man Jesus and the divine Son of God, rather than as a unified person.

TRUTH: Jesus is all God and all man in one person (John 1). The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Calvinism

Calvinism (also called the Reformed tradition, Reformed Christianity or the Reformed faith) is a major branch of Protestantism that follows the theological tradition and forms of Christian practice of John Calvin and other Reformation-era theologians.

Basically, Calvinism is known by an acronym: T.U.L.I.P.

Total Depravity (also known as Total Inability and Original Sin)

Unconditional Election

Limited Atonement (also known as Particular Atonement)

Irresistible Grace

Perseverance of the Saints (This point is correct if understood as "Once Saved Always Saved," but Calvinists define this differently).

Total Inability or Total Depravity

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Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel. The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is not free, it is in bondage to his evil nature, therefore, he will not - indeed he cannot - choose good over evil in the spiritual realm. Consequently, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring a sinner to Christ - it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives him a new nature. Faith is not something man contributes to salvation but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation - it is God's gift to the sinner, not the sinner's gift to God.

Unconditional Election

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will. His choice of particular sinners was not based on any foreseen response of obedience on their part, such as faith, repentance, etc. On the contrary, God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He selected. These acts are the result, not the cause of God's choice. Election therefore was not determined by or conditioned upon any virtuous quality or act foreseen in man. Those whom God sovereignly elected He brings through the power of the Spirit to a willing acceptance of Christ. Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

Particular Redemption or Limited Atonement

Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them. His death was substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners. In addition to putting away the sins of His people, Christ's redemption secured everything necessary for their salvation, including faith which unites them to Him. The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, therefore guaranteeing their salvation.

The Efficacious Call of the Spirit or Irresistible Grace

In addition to the outward general call to salvation which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation. The internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ. He is not limited in His work of applying salvation by man's will, nor is He dependent upon man's cooperation for success. The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ. God's grace, therefore, is invincible; it never fails to result in the salvation of those to whom it is extended.

TRUTH: The New Testament contradicts every point of Calvinism, except for the last point, if understood that one cannot lose true salvation. Man, though lost, is able by his free will to accept Jesus Christ (Acts 17). Whosoever can be saved (John 3). God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3). Grace can be resisted (Acts 7). God's salvation is a gift, not based on works (Ephesians 2), and therefore cannot be lost by works.

Arminianism

Arminianism is based on theological ideas of the Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609) and his historic supporters known as the Remonstrants. Free-Will or Human Ability

Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. God graciously enables every sinner to repent and believe, but He does not interfere with man's freedom. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. Man's freedom consists of his ability to choose good over evil in spiritual matters; his will is not enslaved to his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with God's Spirit and be regenerated or resist God's grace and

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perish. The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance, but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth. Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.

Conditional Election

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world was based upon His foreseeing that they would respond to His call. He selected only those whom He knew would of themselves freely believe the gospel. Election therefore was determined by or conditioned upon what man would do. The faith which God foresaw and upon which He based His choice was not given to the sinner by God (it was not created by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit) but resulted solely from man's will. It was left entirely up to man as to who would believe and therefore as to who would be elected unto salvation. God chose those whom He knew would, of their own free will, choose Christ. Thus the sinner's choice of Christ, not God's choice of the sinner, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

Universal Redemption or General Atonement

Christ's redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved but did not actually secure the salvation of anyone. Although Christ died for all men and for every man, only those who believe on Him are saved. His death enabled God to pardon sinners on the condition that they believe, but it did not actually put away anyone's sins. Christ's redemption becomes effective only if man chooses to accept it.

The Holy Spirit Can Be Effectually Resisted

The Spirit calls inwardly all those who are called outwardly by the gospel invitation; He does all that He can to bring every sinner to salvation. But inasmuch as man is free, he can successfully resist the Spirit's call. The Spirit cannot regenerate the sinner until he believes; faith (which is man's contribution) precedes and makes possible the new birth. Thus, man's free will limits the Spirit in the application of Christ's saving work. The Holy Spirit can only draw to Christ those who allow Him to have His way with them. Until the sinner responds, the Spirit cannot give life. God's grace, therefore, is not invincible; it can be, and often is, resisted and thwarted by man.

Falling from Grace

Those who believe and are truly saved can lose their salvation by failing to keep up their faith, etc. All Arminians have not been agreed on this point; some have held that believers are eternally secure in Christ - that once a sinner is regenerated, he can never be lost.

TRUTH: Jesus promised those who believe in him would never perish (John 3). Nothing can separate a believer from the love of God (Romans 8). Jesus knows his sheep (John 10), where he says to those that perish "I never knew you" (Matthew 7).

Darwinism

The theory of the evolution of species by natural selection advanced by Charles Darwin. Darwinism is a theory of biological evolution developed by Charles Darwin and others, stating that all species of organisms arise and develop through the natural selection of small, inherited variations that increase the individual's ability to compete, survive, and reproduce. Also called Darwinian theory, it originally included the broad concepts of transmutation of species or of evolution which gained general scientific acceptance after Charles Robert Darwin published *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, including concepts which predated Darwin's theories, but subsequently referred to specific concepts of natural selection, of the Weismann barrier or in genetics of the central dogma of molecular biology. Though the term usually refers strictly to biological evolution,

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creationists have appropriated it to refer to the origin of life, and it has even been applied to concepts of cosmic evolution, both of which have no connection to Darwin's work. It is therefore considered the belief and acceptance of Darwin's and of his predecessors' work - in place of other theories, including divine design and extraterrestrial origins.

TRUTH: Genesis chapter 1 – 3 show God's account of creation. Romans 1 makes it clear that men reject the true God when they reject his creation.

The End.

Appendix H

HERESIES WILL BE MANIFEST

August 3, 2020

18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

1 Corinthians 11:18, 19

There are Free-will Baptists and others who teach a person can lose his salvation. For whatever reason they may invent to prove their point, the false conclusion that it is possible to lose one's salvation goes directly contrary to Jesus saying they "shall never perish" – John 10:28. When having to choose between trusting a heretic or trusting Jesus, I will go with Jesus. This is a study on whether a person can lose his salvation.

Why are heresies manifest? – *so that those who are approved will be known to the ones who know the truth.*

God writes his word so that those who would teach falsely are made known. He writes the Bible in a way so that there are some "confusing" verses that people will use incorrectly. This allows opportunity for people who want to teach a particular erroneous view can find something "close." Truth is not close. Truth is plain and does not have to be manipulated. Remember the rules for proper exegesis:

- The Doctrine of Jesus is always the basis for correct understanding. Beware of taking mis-applied apostolic writings over the words of Jesus.
- We follow Jesus first – his word and his doctrine. He is the author and finisher of our faith.
- The writers of the New Testament taught Jesus' doctrine. They never contradict the Savior.
- We follow Holy Ghost as manifested in agreement with the words of Jesus.
- Context, context, context.
- No disagreement or contradictions among the writers or their own writings.
- God is not the author of confusion.
- Do not add to or take away from God's word.

Predestination, losing your Salvation, or Adding Works

All of these are incorrect. (Read the paper on Gospel in John 3:16.). Do not follow persons who teach

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incorrectly.

- Beware of “Personalities” – Acts 8:9.
- Beware of false prophets – Matthew 7;15.

False Teachers may appear to be Saved, Sincere, and Studious – but they can still be lost and be false workers.

Read the words of Jesus:

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Matthew 7:13-29

Note these points:

- The way is narrow, and few find it
- Beware of false prophets – wolves in sheep's clothing.
- Known by fruits.

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- Good tree and good fruit, or evil tree and evil fruit.
- Not everyone that says Lord will enter.
- He that does the will of God enters.
- “Many” will say, Lord, Lord.
- Prophesied.
- Cast our devils.
- Many wonderful works.
- Ye that work iniquity.
- I *never* knew you.

Be careful of words that do not profit – what is the end result of the teaching? Does it encourage faith and obedience or self-righteousness and pride? Good works show faith. Good fruit shows good trees.

Words without Profit, and Faith without Works:

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 2:16-26

Other passages for consideration.

- My sheep hear my voice – John 10:27-30
- Gifts and calling of God without repentance – Romans 11:29 – read context Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise – Ephesians 1:13
- The earnest of our inheritance
- Prodigal son – did he come back? – Luke 15 Hebrews 6 to be discussed.

Some Passages People use to Teach Salvation can be Lost:

The Book of Life

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Revelation – not blot out of book of life – Revelation 3:5.

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)

All that worship the beast will take the mark, those that do not are killed – 13:15, 16.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Revelation 17:8

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:12, 15

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21:23-27

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Revelation 22:17-20

Some Commentators:

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When it said here that "God would take away his part out of the book of life," the meaning is not that his name had been written in that book, but that he would take away the part which he might have had, or which he professed to have in that book. (Barnes)

(NSD) Reading the verse for what it says, "**God shall take away his part out of the book of life,**" is simple enough. *Do not add to it...* Some read it as "*God shall blot his name out of the book of life.*" – Not true. Some read, "*God shall take away his salvation,*" or, "*God shall take away his name,*" or "*He shall lose his salvation.*" None of which are true; and the verse does not say this.

If God has reserved **a part** in his book for every person – for God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9), and that when a person truly repents and receives Christ, **his name is added in that space**; I see no problem with the verse or with God taking away **the part** in the book of a person who tampers with God's word.

This may sound as though a man seals his fate forever if he messes with God's word – and we know of many who have. But, considering this is at the end of revelation, and that God searches the book for the man's name – Revelation 20:12-15 – it is possible (and likely) that God waits until the end to update the book and remove the parts of those guilty of tampering with God's word.

This would tell me God still allows a man to repent and receive Christ even if he is a Bible-corrector – for God wants all men to repent.

Furthermore, we should not lose sight of the main teaching: Those who add to or take away from God's word are considered lost – for it an evil fruit done by men who are corrupt trees – Matthew 7:13-29.

The Greek word used for "part" is μέρος ("meros") meaning part, share, or portion, as a part of a whole. This word is translated in Matthew 2:22 "into the **parts** of Galilee." In Luke 15:12, it is translated, "give me the **portion** of goods. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no **part** with me," in John 13:8. This helps to understand why the one who adds to or takes away has **his part** taken away from the book of life.

The Mark of the Beast

The mark of the Beast is an evil work and received by those who worship the beast. We worship God. Should one be so weak or fearful (lack of faith) to worship evil, God can justly judge that one as a lost person. Read Revelation 13:8.

Hebrews 6 – Paul Writing to Jews

In John 12:42, the writer gives us some insight into the nature of religious Jews: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:"

Jews (and other men) may have trouble confessing Christ. Jesus said in Matthew 10:31: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Jesus is provoking us to be bold in the faith. See also Luke 12:8; John 9:22; 12:42.

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Paul wrote to the Hebrews so that they would learn of Christ and be saved. His audience was Hebrews who professed Christ, but not all are truly saved. We know this is true with any large audience.

In chapter 5:10-14 (before we get to chapter 6), Paul writes:

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.
11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.
12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.
13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Paul is informing the Hebrews of their need to be mature and to learn the word of God through “use.” They need to be doers of the word in order to grow,

Then, in chapter 6, Paul informs them of the “*principles of the doctrine of Christ.*” He says these should be the foundation and that we should move on from this having learned it. Read the beginning of the chapter carefully:

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.
3 And this will we do, if God permit.
4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.
7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:
8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.
9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

These foundational six things are basic:

- repentance from dead works
- faith toward God
- doctrine of baptisms
- laying on of hands
- resurrection of the dead

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- eternal judgment.

This is what I call the Christian life in a “nutshell.” However, once one learns these things, there is nothing else that a “backslider” can be taught that would motivate repentance. If a “backslider” knows these things, – i.e., been enlightened – and is still unrepentant, there is nothing left to say.

If he does not know these things, then there is an opportunity to teach him these things should he receive them.

In verses 4 and 5, we can agree these are people who have been saved – *made partakers of the Holy Ghost* – although some may contend these people are not saved but people exposed to gospel preaching, i.e. “tasted.”

Either way, it does not teach one can lose his salvation, as we shall see. And here in verse 6 is the “bone of contention”:

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Paul says, “For it is impossible (v. 4) ... to renew them again unto repentance.

Nowhere in the verse does passage say, “they lose their salvation.” Neither does it say, they cannot be saved.” Neither does it say they cannot be saved.

The plain words in the verse say, “renew them again unto repentance.”

We are saved when we truly repent and believe the gospel. Then there are times we repent as believers, especially when we sin and reap the consequences. But if someone who is truly saved refuses to repent, he is positioning himself for chastisement (Hebrews 12:6). This passage nowhere teaches a believer is damned to hell or that he loses his salvation because he refuses to repent.

Somebody is reading into the text to say “fall away” means losing your salvation. I cannot accept this leap in logic.

True, a Christian shames Christ when he falls away. And, pretty much, he will have to come to himself as did the prodigal in Luke 15. However, although it is impossible *for me* to renew him again unto repentance (not salvation), I cannot say he may not repent if God intervenes.

For if this chapter means what some force it to say – that once a believer backslides and loses his salvation, there is no hope he can be saved again (what strange doctrine!), this means Peter was lost forever after his denial of Christ, that the prodigal is wasting his time returning home, that Demas is in hell, and that every message preached in the last 2,000 years try to provoke backsliders to get right with God is a waste of time. Furthermore, any person who gives testimony that he was backslidden and came back to Christ is either lying or was never saved to begin with.

Then there is a question as to *the degree* to which a person can fall away and still not lose his salvation. This is not defined in scripture so it would be left to God. For me, I shall live by the promise of Christ, which says, **“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”** – John 10:28.

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Secondly, if we say the people in v. 4 of whom Paul speaks are not saved, but who have been exposed to the gospel and the things of God, and simply profess faith in Christ; if they fall away, then they must still repent on their own to be saved.

This understanding is possible (although this author takes the position that Paul is speaking of a saved man). For, notice, being enlightened can mean simply being exposed to the gospel of Jesus, not necessarily receiving it – see Matthew 5:16; Luke 2:32; John 1:9. If one has tasted of the heavenly gift, does this mean he is saved? Jesus, who is the heavenly gift (John 3:16), said we must eat his flesh and drink his blood to have eternal life (John 6:54-56), not merely taste (see Matthew 27:34).

They were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. Partaking means taking part. Literally, this means being a partner or companion in the work of the Holy Ghost. Paul did not use the word sealed as he did in Ephesians 1:13; for that would mean the Spirit is the earnest (i.e., guarantee) of their salvation. If one is exposed to the work of the Holy Ghost by hearing the gospel or Bible preaching, has he partaken? If one is a Hebrew or a church member who has been thoroughly involved in the work of the gospel ministry (even without being saved), and has seen souls saved and lives changed; is he a partaker of the Holy Ghost?

“And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come” – could this be similar to the tasting above? That is, they have heard the word preached and know of the end times.

If Paul is referring to lost people who profess faith only without truly being saved, then the words of our Savior in Luke 8:13 would apply directly:

They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

For these of whom the Savior spoke believe superficially but they are not truly saved. Their faith is not saving faith. They “fall away” as Paul mentioned in verse 6.

And, if we understand the parable that Jesus spoke, can we not also expect that to renew such ones again to repentance is impossible? Would they not have to do that on their own?

As mentioned, this author sides with the those who say Paul speaks of saved people; but, considering the language Paul uses, could he not be referring to both saved and lost people who have professed faith in Jesus and have had sufficient time learning the things of God. The reader will note there is no mention of these people doing good works – for they have simply been exposed to spiritual things. The truth as to whether they are saved or lost would be defined by inspecting their fruit.

This, interestingly enough, is what Paul follows with.

So, regardless of whether those in verse 4 of whom Paul speaks are saved or lost (or both combined), we see they cannot be renewed to repentance. This does not say they cannot be saved. It says they cannot be renewed – we cannot renew them, for they must come to repentance themselves.

Continuing with the following verses 7-9, Paul

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

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8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

This passage that Paul writes is a **general warning** based on the truth of God in respect to obedience and disobedience. To use verse 8 and apply it unequivocally and directly to those who have “fallen way” is another leap of logic and is not reasonable based on context.

Notice, Paul reminds the readers:

- God has set natural laws of blessing and cursing (v. 7, 8)
- God blesses those that bring forth herbs (good fruit) – v. 7
- God rejects those that bear thorns and briers – v. 8
- He that bears thorns and briers is *nigh unto cursing* – v. 8 (but not yet cursed)
- The end of him that bears thorns and briers is to be burned – v. 8
- Paul is persuaded of better things of these Hebrew – the things that accompany salvation (v. 9)
- Though we speak thus – (v. 9) – again, this alludes to a general warning for professors to check their fruits.

Paul writes similarly in Galatians 6:4-10:

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Again, Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13:5, 6:

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

As is typical of the apostle Paul (and Jesus Christ himself – Matthew 7), he warns that a man must judge himself. Reading Hebrews chapter 6 with this understanding will help. Paul in his writings never assumes all are saved and uses works or fruit as a confirmation of true salvation:

- 1 Corinthians 15:2
- Galatians 5:16-25
- Romans 8:1-14

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- 1 Corinthians 6:9-13
- Romans 11:18-24
- Etc.

Paul also speaks of the security of the believer in other books, so he would not teach otherwise in Hebrews. Otherwise, we would have to conclude the apostle or the Holy Ghost, or both, are confused and contrary to one another. This we cannot accept. Notice what Paul wrote elsewhere:

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38, 39

For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

2 Timothy 1:12

Paul also reiterates the security of the believer in Hebrews:

Hebrews 13:5: “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

Hebrews 10:38, 39: “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

Hebrews 7:24, 25: “But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

Jesus says something similar to Hebrews 6:7, 8 in John 15:1-7:

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done

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unto you.

Conclusion:

We must always remember the teaching of our Savior that a good tree cannot bear evil fruit. If we see a place where someone is cast into perdition due to evil works, it is because they are not a good tree.

We also know *many* will profess Christ who are false prophets. We shall know them by their fruits. We must beware of judging merely by words, for words are cheap and can be deceptive.

Titus 1:16: “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”

Lastly, what is our response to people who teach a person can lose his salvation? If a brother is in error, we pray for him that God will show him the truth. If a false prophet, pray he will be saved. Either way, we avoid those who teach contrary and we do not bid them God speed.

The End.

Appendix I

PRACTICAL WISDOM TO JUDGING RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

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Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

John 7:24

Judging another human being by your thoughts or actions is natural to man. Being based in pride, men often look on others with either envy or disdain. We tend to set some men on pedestals, thinking they are the paragon of some particularly desirable attribute; or we look down our nose at them thinking we are so much better. Men have a natural tendency to glory in their wisdom, strength, or riches. Hear what Jeremiah 9 says:

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 9:23, 24

Most of us are familiar with, and take heed to, the warning in Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”

Additionally, James 4:6 says, “...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”

This pride-inspired judgment of our neighbors shows up regularly in religion. I think of the hierarchical system of the Roman Catholic beast; with their popes, cardinals, bishops, arch-bishops, priests, etc., etc. And that system is not the only one. The Jewish religion has had their share of competing Rabbis. The Sunni and Shiite groups contend constantly. Every mainline religious denomination has been plagued with pride and unrighteous judging, more commonly understood as respect of persons. Independent Baptists have not been immune. We are a guilty as the others. We may not have popes and cardinals, but we have our doctors and editors and certain camps. Just open to the center page of any Baptist periodical and you will see the glorying of men in its most obvious form

The perfect Lord Jesus Christ warned us of this prideful-judgmental respect of persons when he gave us his parable of the Pharisee and the publican. Please read the following from Luke 18:

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

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13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Luke 18:9-14

The bad fruit of pride is manifested most easily and distastefully when a person judges a fellow brother. But there is also the human fault of judging God wrongfully – or charging God foolishly. This happens when a man complains or gives the impression that something that happened to him is “bad.”

Take a lesson from Job, after he received the hard news of his losses:

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Job 1:20-22

As believers, we ought to be careful to not judge too quickly. We generally lack all the facts to make a righteous judgment. Assumptions are made, and those assumptions are almost always based in evil thoughts. As humans, we are by nature negative and critical. It takes much effort and discipline to force ourselves to be positive and encouraging – looking for the good rather than looking for the evil.

Charity believeth and hopeth all things (1 Corinthians 13:7). With love, you have a tendency to think and believe the best of people.

Paul said, “judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness... (1 Corinthians 4:5).

You see, outside of using properly the word of God, we are not very good judges. A family gets a flat tire right before their trip, and they think it is “bad.” But do they know that short delay possibly saved them a wreck where their children were injured?

And when Brother Jones got a new job, we think it is “good,” until we learn that job exposes him to ungodly things and keeps him out of worship services.

We think of the Apostle Paul. He had a thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7), the messenger of Satan to buffet him – about which many believers today would constantly complain. Most believers would say that was bad. But God understood the benefit in Paul’s enduring the grief – it kept him usable before the Lord, and prevented him from being exalted above measure.

I think of how our brother Paul spent so much time in bonds. I should think he would have been much more “productive” if he were to travel freely about the kingdom, preaching the kingdom of God. But God is in control. Because of his incarcerations he was able to write numerous epistles. These prison epistles are a great

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blessing to many millions of Christians today, and have been over the centuries. What I may think is bad, can actually be good. And what I may think is good, can actually be bad.

And, I would propose to the reader that as you meditate on that thought, you will realize many things in your life that at first you thought was good turned out to be bad. And many a “perceived curse” turned out to be a blessing.

This reminds me of the comical routine by Hee-Haw’s Archie Campbell, called, *That’s good, That’s bad*.

I have it shown here for those who are not familiar with the routine:

Script of Archie Campbell’s *That’s Good, That’s Bad* Routine

Archie: Hey I guess you heard about my terrible misfortune. Roy: No, what happened?
Archie: Yeah, my great uncle died. Roy: Oh that’s bad!
Archie: No, that’s good!
Roy: How’s come?
Archie: Well, when he died, he left me 50,000 dollars. Roy: Oh that’s good!
Archie: No, that’s bad!
Roy: How come?
Archie: When the Internal Revenue got thru with it, all I had left was 25,000 dollars. Roy: Oh that’s bad
Archie: No, that’s good.
Roy: How come?
Archie: Well, I bought me an airplane and learned to fly. Roy: Well, that’s good.
Archie: No, that’s bad.
Roy: How come?
Archie: Well, I was flying upside down the other day and I fell outta the dern thing. Roy: Well, that’s bad.
Archie: No, that’s good.
Roy: How come?
Archie: Well, when I looked down under me and there was a great big ole haystack. Roy: Well, that’s good.
Archie: No, that’s bad.
Roy: How come?
Archie: Well, I got a little closer and I saw a pitchfork aimed right at me. Roy: Well, that’s bad.
Archie: No, that’s good Roy: How come?
Archie: I missed the pitchfork. Roy: Well, that’s good.
Archie: No, that’s bad.
Roy: How come?
Archie: I missed the haystack, too. Roy: Well, that’s bad.
Archie: No, that’s good.
Roy: How come?
Archie: Well, I bounced around a few minutes and an ambulance come and took me to a hospital.
Roy: Well, that’s good. Archie: No, that’s bad. Roy: How come?
Archie: Well, I was in the hospital there for a while and I took a turn for the nurse.
Roy: That’s bad.
Archie: No, that’s good.
Roy: How come?

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Archie: Well, my wife came in one day and caught me kissing this nurse. Roy: Oh that's bad
Archie: No, that's good. She said if that was the way I was gonna act I could have that pretty nurse,
she was gonna pack her clothes and go back home to mamma.
Roy: Oh that's good.
Archie: You're dern right that's good.

This author does not agree with Roy and Archie's final judgment, but the routine gives a pretty good illustration as to how we can think something is good when it is not, or we think it is bad and it is not.

Actually, if you love God, you have this promise:

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28

This verse does not say that *all things are good*, but that *all things work together for good*, to them that love God.

I heard a preacher put it this way, using an illustration of baking a cake:

- Raw eggs – they do not taste that good
- Raw flour – that does not taste too good
- Sugar – that tastes good in small amounts
- Salt – that tastes good in small amounts
- Yeast – that does not taste good
- Baking powder – that does not taste good
- Vanilla – that tastes good in very small amounts

Individually, these things are really not desirable to eat. However, when mixed well in the right amounts and put in heat, they make a very tasty cake.

God works in the same manner in our lives. Many individual things may not be tasteful, but they are necessary and will work with the other things for good in the life of a believer who loves God. And that heat that God applies in trials “bakes in” wonderful and usable abilities in the child of God.

We must be careful to not judge too rashly or too quickly, whether the things that happen to us are good or bad. Only when we use God's word carefully and clearly can we judge righteously. And regardless of whether they appear good or bad we should remember to be thankful to God (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Read the passage in John 7:23, 24:

23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?
24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

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In this passage certain Jews condemned the Lord – to the point of being angry – that he had healed a man on the Sabbath. I am sure they thought they were right and that they had a good understanding of the word of God – but they did not.

The Savior said clearly in verse 24: “judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

Here is the beginning of bad judgment: Judging according to the appearance. This is most commonly seen today by the reaction of the common people to the broadcasts of the news networks. They react so easily and quickly simply based on what the video monitor says. They normally do not research all the facts. They just react and judge. What a danger this is. They get “programmed” by the “program.” Most people are so easily influenced to think according to the world.

But we must go beyond the appearance and truly judge righteously.

Think of a few examples in scripture:

- God blessed the Hebrew midwives for lying and disobeying pharaoh’s decree (Exodus 1:15-21).
- David’s response to Goliath’s challenge ended in the lad killing the giant (1 Samuel 17).
- The Lord’s temptation in the wilderness proved his impeccability (Mark 4).
- Paul’s imprisonment in Philippi ended in the jailor being saved (Acts 16).
- Paul’s thorn in the flesh prevented his exaltation above measure (2 Corinthians 12).
- The crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ provided salvation for all.

Additionally, the Lord warned against “wolves in sheep’s clothing.” They look one way on the outside, but they are not as they appear. We know a tree by its fruit, but there was a fig tree that looked good, but the Lord found no fruit on it.

You do not have to live long on this earth before you realize there are many men who look good on the outside, but they are wicked on the inside (certain religious leaders, politicians, entertainers, etc.). And conversely, many a plain man has proved to be a saint, and a man of no reputation has been shown to be very wise.

Jesus said to “judge righteous judgment”

What does righteous judgment involve? It is *not* judging just because you “know the bible.” It is not judging carnally. It is being careful how you judge, first considering yourself, knowing you will be judged by the same standard. It involves judging *yourself first*, before judging others. Jesus commanded this in Matthew 7:1-5:

- 1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.
- 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.
- 3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?
- 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?
- 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.

What does righteous judgment involve? It involves judging *with mercy*. Jesus further commanded in Luke

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6:36-38:

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.
37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:
38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

What does righteous judgment involve? It involves judging *knowing* you will be judged according to truth by the same rule. Paul wrote in Romans 2:1-3:

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.
2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.
3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

Practical Wisdom on How to Judge Rightly

Here, then, are some practical lessons the New Testament gives to show us how to judge righteous judgment:

1. Judge not according to the appearance (John 7:24).

We too often judge a person by the clothes he wears, the speech he uses, or the manners he bears. It is very difficult for people to get past this. [But, certainly, a child is known by his doings (Proverbs 20:11). A good tree bears good fruit – an evil tree cannot bear good fruit.]

Consider that the prodigal, however poorly he was dressed, he was still his father's son (Luke 15:20). And Jesus, although he appeared to be a carpenter's son, he was indeed the Son of God (Matthew 13:55).

Many an evil man looked good and spoke smooth words. Many a false prophet deceived the simple. Paul said even Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

John the Baptist, though arrayed in camel's hair and leather, was said of Jesus that there was none greater among those born of women (Matthew 3:4).

It was said of the great Apostle Paul, that his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible (2 Corinthians 10:10); but who of sinners was a greater servant?

Now think of the pomp and splendor of popes and cardinals, and kings and princes. But how many of these are bearers of the True Light? They magnify themselves as Simon having the power of God by making a fair show in the flesh (Galatians 6:12); but are their hearts right with God (Acts 8:9-23)?

Yes, brethren, appearance is deceiving. And however hard it is, we must look upon a man's fruit and works

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(Matthew 7:16-20); not his outward appearance. Only God knows the heart (1 Samuel 16:7), but we see a man's faith by his works (James 2:18).

God is very clear as to how we are to treat people who come into our assemblies:

- 1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.
- 2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;
- 3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:
- 4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?
- 5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?
- 6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?
- 7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?
- 8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:
- 9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

James 2:1-9

Any respect to persons based on appearance makes a person a judge of evil thoughts. Any respect to persons is sin.

So, why is it that certain religious figures emphasize their clothing so much, when so many men of God in the Bible wore humble clothing? Consider these examples: Elisha refused the raiment offered by Naaman (2 Kings 5). The rich man, although clothed in purple and fine linen, ended up in hell (Luke 16:22, 23). Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, died of worms surrounded by worshippers, because he gave not God the glory (Acts 12:23). Achan and all he had were stoned for his coveting gold and a Babylonian garment (Joshua 7).

Personally, I am not impressed with fancy suits, backward collars, royal robes, head gear, vestments, or with the broad phylacteries and enlarged garments (Matthew 23:5) certain religious personalities wear. I prefer the adornment of the hidden man of the heart (1 Peter 3:1-6) over holy garb. My spirituality is not worn around my neck or work on my back. I am sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise when I believed (Ephesians 1:13). I do not want man to think of me "above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me" (2 Corinthians 12:6). Neither should a believer think of men above that which is written or be puffed up for one against another (1 Corinthians 4:6).

And a man can defend his fancy suit-wearing church saying it gives God the best, but God looks on the heart. And environments like that become hotbeds for respect of persons, and judges of evil thoughts.

Should you give God your best? Yes. But I like what one preacher said: "God does not want *your best*: He wants *your all*."

(Now, brethren, I wear a suit and tie when it is expected, but I do not care to be identified with that style of

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clothing.)

And often, with the fancy religious garb comes also the special seating, the reserved tables, and the upper rooms. This soon devolves to the Nicolaitan doctrine – a respect of persons – which thing Jesus hates (Revelation 2:15).

We ought to meek and humble as our Savior (Matthew 11:29). We ought to seek and save that which is lost (Luke 19:10). We ought not to be ashamed to bear the reproach of Christ (Hebrews 13:13). We ought to be made all things to all men so that we might save some (1 Corinthians 9:22). And what certain religious people think is a condemnation of the Lord, I think it is a most wonderful attribute:

And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

Luke 15:2

2. Judge yourself first (1 Corinthians 11:28-32; Matthew 7:1-5); or, learn compassion.

Our current day Christianity would benefit immensely if God's children would judge themselves before judging others.

Hypocrisy is alive and well in this world. We see it plainly when a person judges another of a thing of which he is even more guilty.

It is the old condemnation of not removing the beam in one's own eye, but trying to remove a mote from his neighbor's eye.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Matthew 7:3-5

There is even an older proverb: "Physician, heal thyself" (Luke 4:23).

Psychologists use the word *projecting* when a person, trying to lighten the guilt of a particular personal vice, points out that same fault in others. That hypocrite has a beam in his eye, while his neighbor has but a mote in his. And, instead of working to remove his own beam, he assumes he can see clearly enough to take the mote out of his neighbor's eye.

That, my brethren, is not righteous judgment.

And once a person realizes he likely is *more* guilty than his brother, and he is *more* in debt to his master than is his brother; he will then have the necessary compassion and understanding to help his brother.

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This gives the judge compassion. This makes his understanding real. And judging with compassion means you will be judged with compassion.

As we look on others less blessed, or in greater troubles; let's remember the old adage: "There, but for the grace of God, go I." Or, even more accurately; "for all have sinned..." (Romans 3:13).

A believer ought to mature to the point where he can judge for himself what is evil and good in his own life (Hebrews 5:12-14). If he does not maintain a high standard for himself, he ought not to impose a higher standard on others. If he is merciful with his own sin, he ought to be merciful with the sins of others.

And since I did not "*fall off the turnip truck yesterday*," I am not impressed by certain brethren who try to project this image that they are faultless and so holy that they are God's judge. Away with that! Let me follow that man around a few days and we will see how holy he is. This holiness and sanctification pursuit is such that as one indeed cleans up his life, he finds he is even more unholy before the holy God. True holiness leads to humility and greater eschewing of evil in one's own life. Carnality leads to judging others.

The Apostle Paul, who I would say is one of the most sanctified Christians who ever lived, had this opinion of himself:

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.
15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.
16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.
17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.
18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.
19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.
20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.
21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.
22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:
23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?
25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 7:14-25

This is the spiritual man's opinion of himself. I should like to have those judgmental Christians compare their personal testimony to Paul's. Let's see who is better.

Paul revealed a promise to believers when examining themselves for the Lord's Supper. Read 1 Corinthians 11:29-32:

29 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
30 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.
31 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would

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judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

What a promise: If we judge ourselves, we should not be judged. That is what I want. I should rather like to be judged by me rather than by the Lord. I am glad God gave us this ability and grace.

3. Know that people who have more forgiven tend to love Jesus more.

I understand from scriptures some people need a physician more than do others. But we all need salvation through Jesus Christ. And there are some people who were so deep in sin that they *really rejoice* when they are saved and forgiven of all their sins.

Such was the case with Mary. Read what Jesus said in Luke 7:41-43:

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

Simon rightly judged when he noted the greater sinner has greater love for the Savior. Although not shown in the passage, I believe Simon realized he had been unjust in his judgment of Mary.

I want people to love my Saviour. I know Jesus saves sinners. I know no person is too far in sin that he cannot be saved. I know my Saviour rejoices over one sinner that repents (Luke 15:6).

When we see a person with sin, we should know Jesus *can* and *will* forgive that sin. We should encourage, not judge, that person. And we will greatly bless our Lord in so doing.

With his own words, Jesus said this in John 3:17:

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

A second side to this thought is this: That if you as a believer think on how much the Savior forgave you, and how bad you were, and how many of your sins Jesus forgave, and how compassionate the Savior was with you; then you will have the right judgment toward other sinners. This goes along with the previous point; however, this takes that lesson to degrees.

You cannot love God without loving your brother. And you show God your love for him by loving your brother. And no one can rightly love without having the love of God. And what greater way to gain love than to remember how much Jesus has forgiven you. Remember how bad you were? Remember how unlovable you were? Remember how lost and undone you were? Remember the love of Jesus and how much he gave for you when he was crucified. Remember how much you love and appreciate him. Now, look at your brother

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with the heart of Jesus Christ and love him as Jesus does. Be not like the Pharisees and scribes who were ready to stone the adulteress (John 8:1-11). Rather, be like the Saviour and say, “neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more.”

The well-known saying, “Hate sin, but love the sinner,” can be updated to say, “My hate for what sin does to a sinner, drives me to have compassion on the sinner.”

That, my brethren, is the way to judge rightly.

4. Do not judge after the flesh (or carnally; but, rather, judge spiritually).

Jesus said this to the Pharisees in John 8:

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

John 8:15, 16

Judging after the flesh is a carnal, selfish, self-centered, judgment, meant for a personal agenda or gain, or with respect of persons. This is judging with the thought of one’s own benefit coming first. This type of judgment leaves God out of the equation. It is judging without spiritual discernment.

Even the least esteemed in the church ought to have spiritual judgment. Read this passage from 1 Corinthians 6:

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8

One can also say the spiritual judgment is judging with the mind of Christ. When judging, we should use the word of God in tandem with the Spirit of God, comparing things spiritual with spiritual. It is judging with the wisdom of God.

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Read what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:7-16

The book of Proverbs has much wisdom to say comparing carnal and spiritual (righteous) judgment. I have presented a few passages from that book to help the reader understand this kind of righteous judgment:

2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

Proverbs 21:2

25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Proverbs 16:25

17 He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

Proverbs 18:17

1 A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

Proverbs 11:1

23 A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

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Proverbs 17:23

5 It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

Proverbs 18:5

23 These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

Proverbs 24:23

Judging after the flesh (or carnal judgment) happens when one cares more for his own benefit, rather than suffering loss for the cause of what is right. Removing one's self from the equation means taking away that personal interest, and judging impartially, even though it may affect your own pocketbook or reputation.

A righteous judge in the courts of America will recuse himself from a case if there is even an appearance or hint of partiality or personal interest in a case. We say that is good. But as Christians, many times we have to make a judgment anyway. We do not have the option of recusing ourselves. But what God would require is that we disregard *our* interests and put the word of God and his righteousness first and foremost.

Allow me to give an example of judging after the flesh that is too common in our fundamental churches:

A church has a variety of members who are related by family. One of these members commits a sin and will not repent. The pastor, after following the steps as defined by the Savior in Matthew 18, makes the effort to provoke the sinning brother to repent; but the sinning brother will not repent. The pastor, following the Lord's commandment, tells it to the church, and the church righteously judges to separate the brother until he repents (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:7-13).

However, in the church vote to *dis-fellowship* the offending brother, a number of members who are related to the unrepentant brother vote against the separation. They chose to love a brother or sister more than Christ (Matthew 10:37). This is carnal judgment. This is judging according to the flesh. It has respect of persons. It ignores "thus saith the Lord."

We ought to choose righteous judgment irrespective of who it is being judged. We ought to have a just balance. If a family member is guilty of fornication or some other sin, the church is commanded to judge, and we ought to do that which is right and judge according to the word of God.

Too many times Christians judge after the flesh. But this is not righteous judgment.

5. Judge not according to one's own will, but according to God's will.

This is what Jesus said in John 5:30:

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

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This judgment is similar to the previous point, but this point brings in another aspect of unrighteous judgment: judging according to one's own will. In contrast, righteous judgment says we should judge according to *God's* will.

To know the will of God, one must present himself a living sacrifice, and have a transformed life, conformed to Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29), by the renewing of the mind. Paul wrote this in Romans 12:

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1, 2

When a believer knows the will of God, revealed first by the commandments of Jesus Christ, and then by a filling and leadership of the Holy Spirit; he can judge that righteous judgment. This judgment is a judgment in accordance with the will of God.

Many times the truth of a matter is elusive, not easily discerned, and such that we can only know the right way to judge by seeking God's will.

James gave us a promise:

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

James 1:5-8

Judging according to the will of God means you have received God's wisdom in the matter.

Young people should do this judgment when determining who is the right person for marriage. Rather than determining a mate based on questions like these: Is she pretty? Is he rich? Does he say nice things to me? Does she think I am great? Does he think I am pretty?

Judging according to God's will, would ask questions like these: Is he saved and living a sanctified life? Do my parents approve of her? Will he make a good father and husband? Can we serve God better together? Will he be faithful to God and his wife? Will she obey her husband? Does God approve? Does my pastor approve?

Allow me to give another example. When deciding which church is right for one to serve in, rather than ask questions like these: Is the building nice? Do I like the people? Is the pastor easy to listen to? Are their activities

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for the kids? Will it help my career? – a person should ask these questions based on the will of God: Is this where God wants me? Will this church provoke me to be more like Jesus Christ? Can I serve God faithfully in this church? Is this church willing to follow the word of God?

I would that all believers had this righteous judgment.

6. Using Jesus' word to Judge.

Jesus said this in John chapter 12:

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

John 12:28

One of the most critical things a believer can do to have righteous judgment is to knowing he will be judged by Jesus' word in the last day. Consequently, it behooves the believer to follow, obey, and make preminent the word of Jesus Christ in his live.

If we are to be judged by Jesus' word, we ought also to judge by Jesus' word. We are to follow him. We are to be conformed to his image. We are to be *like* Christ. And if he judges by his word, we ought to judge by his word.

You see, it is easy to say, I will judge "an eye for an eye." And thinking one is justified as he used the word of God. But Jesus would say, turn the other cheek.

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:
39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.
40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.
41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

Matthew 5:38-41

It is easy to say, I will follow the law in judgment; but Jesus said be merciful, loving your enemies:

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.
37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

Luke 6:35-37

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As Jesus, we are not here to condemn the world. We are here to preach the salvation of Jesus Christ.

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 3:15-19

The time for judgment will come. And when that comes, the one who built his house on Jesus' word will stand.

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Acts 17:31

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Matthew 7:24-29

Jesus is the Word of God, and in righteousness he will smite the nations, using his word as a sword.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of

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God.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Revelation 19:11-16

Esteem highly the words of our Savior. They are perfect in judgment. With them you will not fail. Consider seriously what our Savior said when you are judging. With them you will have righteous judgment.

7. Judge nothing before the time.

The Apostle Paul wrote this to the Corinthians:

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

This point follows the previous point in thought. When Jesus comes and judges his saints, he will judge in truth and righteousness. He is not an unjust judge. He cannot be bribed. He cannot be threatened. He cannot be deceived. He has full knowledge of all that we do, and he knows the reasons we do what we do. His word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

What we do for vainglory, he knows. What we do for self-gain, he knows. If we do our works to be seen of men, we have our reward (Matthew 6:1-18).

Sometimes in our Christian life it is necessary to forebear judgment. We are not able to judge rightly, and it is not our place to judge; therefore, we leave it to the Lord to judge.

We cannot see inside a man's heart and know his motives for what he does. Many that are first will be last. And many that are last shall be first (Matthew 19:30).

And in reverse, we ought to live our lives knowing it is Jesus who will judge our lives. We are not judged by

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any man: only the Lord. And when the Lord judges us in that day, all things will be made manifest. Whether we have laid up treasures in heave of gold, silver, and precious stones; or whether we have only wood, hay, and stubble that perishes in the fire; all will be revealed (1 Corinthians 3:13).

So then, if a brother or sister does some work for the Lord which appears righteous, we ought to bid him God speed. Since we cannot know the true motives, we should in charity believe the best of him. We should encourage and bless the good fruit that come from God's children.

8. Judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way.

This point follows logically the previous point. As there are times to judge, and times to refrain from judging; there are times when we judge the ill-effects of judging.

These are times when judging is wrong and will hinder a brother's faith or purpose in the Lord. Our liberty in Christ must be respected by other brethren, and each one of us is obligated to respect his brother's liberty. We do not all think the same way. We all have different backgrounds, experiences, fears, desires, and hopes. Some brethren have weak consciences; some do not. Some are easily stumbled; some are not.

Righteous judgment extends also to the point of judging whether your actions hurt or hinder a brother in Lord. Here is what our brother Paul wrote in Romans:

- 1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.
- 2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.
- 3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.
- 4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.
- 5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.
- 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.
- 7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.
- 8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.
- 9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.
- 10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
- 11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.
- 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.
- 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Romans 14:1-13

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When it comes to liberty and matters of conscience, we are wise to tread carefully, not despising or judging a brother who happens to do things differently. We ought to judge righteously how and what we do or say affects our brother in the Lord. I should not judge him, nor should I set him at naught. I should judge *my own* actions and how he will receive them.

Some people like certain things certain ways. Other people like certain things a different way. We are all different. If a brother likes a nice, pretty house, and keeps his stuff in good condition; I ought to respect that and not judge him saying how all these things are temporal and not worthy of such care. If a man lives in a rough house (Proverbs 14:4), I ought not to judge him because of that. We cannot all afford earthly mansions.

As Paul mentioned clearly, our brother is the Lord's servant, and as such, he is accountable to the Lord. It is not my place to judge another man's servant. And for clarification, this is judgment in respect to matters of conscience, not clear-cut sin. For in matters of sin we have a responsibility to judge as a church.

Each believer will give an account of himself to God. Every believer will have to answer for all that he did wherein his brother was offended, stumbled, made to fall, or corrupted. This is a grave responsibility. The tendency of mature Christians is to respect a brother's liberty in Christ.

Be careful of what you as an individual believer define as sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, not the transgression of your particular convictions (1 John 3:4). And to preach against, enforce a judgment, or condemn a particular a practice by a brother saying it is sin, when indeed it is not; you are not judging rightly.

As one man said, the definition of a liberal is a brother with *one less* conviction than you have. The definition of a legalist is a brother with *one more* conviction than you have. How foolish those definitions are.

I am a particularly narrow-minded believer. I am also a pastor. And I have standards I impose upon myself and my family, and I have different standards that I impose upon the church. Our church is made up of people with different levels of maturity. Many are newly saved, and we have to progress at a pace that they are able to receive.

We all have consciences, and each conscience allows or condemns particular things.

I do not want my children chewing gum, but I do not impose that rule on the church. What they do is their business. Likewise, I do not want my family eating poorly, doing certain things, and associating with certain groups. But our other members have their liberty and convictions.

I, personally, do not waste time putting up a Baal bush (Christmas tree), wearing a cross around my neck, wearing flashy suits, attending ball games, or worrying about whether my beard is acceptable to the church.

But some of our members *may* like the Christmas decorations (along with all the other holidays), or wear Christian jewelry, or like fancy clothes, or attending ball games, or like to be clean shaven. But it is not my place to impose my personal standards on my brethren – especially designating their “transgressing” my personal standard as sin. And if I visit their house, and they have a ball game on the TV, or if they have a Christmas decoration (or give me a gift); I shall not condemn them, judge them, or discourage them with my standard. To do so is unrighteous judgment. I have my liberty – they have theirs.

None of us lives to himself. We have to get along and build up one another, not tear down. God encourages; the devil discourages. If you say it is sin – show me chapter and verse.

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In verse 19 of the same chapter, Paul said this:

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul wrote this on the same subject:

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: 26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

1 Corinthians 10:23-29

So, you have liberty, but that liberty does not extend to stumbling others or to provide an occasion for the flesh (Galatians 5:13).

And, as Paul argued in verse 29, as you would not appreciate someone judging you for your liberty, you should have the same mind toward your brother. That is a good standard – do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

We are to seek our brother's edification, before our own. This is righteous judgment.

9. Do not speak evil of others.

James wrote this passage in his epistle:

Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

James 4:11, 12

This is a simple and straightforward commandment to keep a brother on the proper path to judging righteous judgment. If you control your mouth, it will help to keep the mind in check.

Notice how plain the word of God is on this subject:

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Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,
To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

Titus 3:1, 2

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

2 Peter 2:10

Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

Acts 23:5

Plainly and simply, if you keep you refrain from evil speaking of people, you will not judge wrongly.

10. Do not judge others because you have particular traditions.

It amazes me still after many years in the ministry how many good brethren, including pastors and evangelist, tend to hold on to traditions that have no scriptural foundation.

I hope every believer knows the church is a body of baptized believers, not a building. I hope every believer knows Sunday is not a holy day; neither is Christmas, Easter, or Thanksgiving. I hope every believer knows a particular style of dress is not mandated in scripture, only modesty and such that represents our sex (for a man ought not wear women's things, and vice-versa).

The traditions in the bible *that Paul taught* ought to be observed (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6). But too often the traditions that are in our churches tend to make of none effect the word of God (Matthew 15:6; Mark 7:13).

A Christian ought to beware lest he be spoiled by this kind of tradition. We are complete in Christ. We have no need of works to walk in fellowship with God. Please read carefully what Paul said in Colossians:

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the

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operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Colossians 2:6-17

Verse 16 instructs the believer in Christ to not react to pressure to observe certain traditions. Being free in Christ positions the believer so he is not obligated to rituals and certain ecclesiastical rules imposed by whomever. He is accepted in the beloved, not by any particular ritual.

And since that “judgment” from traditionalists is not to be yielded to; we ought to be mindful not to be the ones doing the judging. That means, just because you follow a certain tradition, do not judge another believer because he does not have the same view as you do.

This judging can become a “two-way” street, both reciprocating the judgment; but God has called us to peace. We are not all “cookie-cutter Christians.” We have diversities of gifts. We are each one different in his own particular way. Additionally, God is working on each one of us in that thing that he purposes. He is the potter, we are the clay. We shall not judge another man’s servant because he does not “cross his tee” like we do.

Therefore, in respect to religious ordinances and traditions that are not clearly mandated by our Lord’s doctrine; it behooves us to refrain from judging a brother who does not follow.

And making proselytes to your particular way may happen, but you will be judged by Jesus Christ if you imply that certain personal traditions are mandated by the Lord himself.

In teaching our church and my family, I try to make the distinction between the things that we do (as particular traditions) and the commandments of God. Over the years I find more and more how much *Roman leaven* has entered into our good fundamentalist churches. Who said pews should point one direction? Who said we should use pews at all? Who said we should have a Sunday school hour (and we do)? Who said what days are the days we assemble as a church? Who said drums are bad (and we don’t use them)? Who said we ought to use fiberglass baptisteries? Who said we need our own building? Who said offering plates are preferred over a treasury box? Who said we should use little cups for the Lord’s Supper?

Sure, I like the way we do some things. But I also know much of it has no biblical basis. And God forbid I should judge a brother because he does something differently. He answers to his Lord, not me.

11. The New Testament makes it clear when a brother or church should judge.

There are times when we are commanded to judge. And on these occasions, not only should we be faithful to

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judge; but we need to judge righteous judgment.

This is when the believers, with the mind *and heart* of Christ judge a sinning brother. The purpose of this judgment is not to condemn, injure, repay, or abuse. The purpose of this judgment is so the sinning brother's sin is manifest, and by this he is provoked to repent, be forgiven, and be received into fellowship. The goal is for the brother to repent, be forgiven, and be restored.

The exact process for this type of judgment in personal matters is defined by our Savior. And, if it is followed, the church may never even become involved.

But there are some offences that *must* be judged by the church, which we shall discuss a little later.

Let us read first what our Savior commanded in the event that brother sins against another brother:

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Matthew 18:15-22

You will see the trespass is to be kept private at first. It amazes me how many believers tell everyone else about what a brother did to offend them, but rarely do they take it up with the brother in private. Speaking evil of a brother is sin, gossip, and contrary to what the word says. Jesus commanded the right process, and it ought to be followed. This is righteous judgment.

So, if a brother offends another, the offended one talks to his brother in private. Hopefully, his brother will repent. I think this is the usual case if the offended brother handles things rightly.

Paul said this in Galatians:

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Galatians 6:1-3

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The offended brother is to have a spirit of meekness and humility when confronting his brother. This will do much to provoke his brother to repent. And if he does not, the offended brother cannot be thought to be at fault, for he did not provoke his brother wrongly.

Only when the offender refuses to repent does the confrontation escalate. Next, to another private meeting with one or two witnesses; and if that does not work, then it is to be brought before the church. However, at every stage, a spirit of meekness, love, and a desire to see the brother repent is to be expressed.

At the point where the church hears the issue, this is the last phase. The church is not a creator of penance, an enforcer of discipline, or a minister of some physical punishment. The church's judgment extends to dis-fellowship only, with the hopes the brother will be ashamed and return with a spirit of repentance.

Now, for part two: The church has certain sins it *must* judge as a church. I wholeheartedly disagree with the statement I heard that, "sins done in secret are to be judged in secret, and sins done in public are to be judged publically." There is no scriptural mandate for this rule. Rather, if a sin is personal, the offended brother handles it until (and if) the church needs to be involved. And part two: If a sin is against the body (the church) it needs to be judged by the church.

And these six sins against the church are specifically called out in the New Testament. A church does not have the liberty to add to the list, or to take away from the list. The church is commanded to judge these sins among her members.

The passage in 1 Corinthians 5 supplies the list that church is obligated to judge. This judgment, again, only extends to dis-fellowship of the offending brother. Read 1 Corinthians 5:

- 1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.
- 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.
- 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,
- 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
- 6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?
- 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:
- 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.
- 9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:
- 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.
- 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.
- 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

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13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

Verse 11 supplies the list of offences:

- Fornication
- Covetousness
- Idolatry
- Railing
- Drunkenness
- Extortion

The church needs to judge these things to keep the leaven out. For if they tolerate a little of it, soon the whole church will be full of it. These sins are an offence to the Saviour and he requires his churches to be faithful to judge these matters. A church that will not judge these things has carnal judgment or respect of persons. But is does not have righteous judgment.

Now, I am not going to elaborate on each one of these sins. But I should like to comment a little on them. First, most of these sins are done privately. They are not usually done within the public's purview. Regardless, though, they are to be judged as soon as they are known. Sometimes, because they are done in secret only a few know. It is incumbent upon righteous believers to deal with these things, not to ignore them.

Second, the judgment is to be made against a person who is called a brother. The church's scope does not extend to the lost. One can debate whether this is limited to a church member on just any believer. From the statement, I believe it extends to any person who is called a brother, *and* who has a practice of fellowshiping with a church. So, if a church hears of a brother from another church who has been judged, they should respect that church's judgment and not fellowship with the offender. If an offender attends a particular church (but he is not a member), he should be judged still. This is because the potential for fellowship is there.

The fact of membership is not as critical as to whether the believer is interacting with other believers. As leaven, the sins mentioned have a tendency to spread and pervert judgment. For this reason any brother who is *exposed regularly* to the church ought to be judged if he is guilty.

Third, too often these things are not judged by the churches, because they are uncomfortable. But forbearing judgment on these things does no one any good – especially the offending brother. Allowing him little or no shame in the matter, or having him avoid public (i.e., church) discipline; only convinces him and others who know that there is no severe penalty for such things.

Paul instructed Timothy, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear (1 Timothy 5:20).

Fourth, this is to be done without respect for persons: whether a family member or a person of authority, the judgment should be the same.

Fifth, I have written a paper on this subject that describes in detail how this is done (see paper entitled *CHURCH DISCIPLINE* on our church website www.HistoricBaptist.org).

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As a final note, the church is also expected (and commanded) to judge certain disagreements between its members. This is what the apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:

- 1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?
- 2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
- 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?
- 4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.
- 5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?
- 6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.
- 7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?
- 8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

1 Corinthians 6:1-8

So, from the foregoing, we see that any person (specifically, the least esteemed) in the church ought to be able to judge in respect to those issues over which the lost go to a worldly court. There should be no need of civil court if both parties are saved. The church should be able to judge in those matters.

Personally, I have not had to be involved of anything like this. Our members strive for unity and tend to be merciful one to another.

However, I should like to make clear that there will likely be many times a believer has to go to a worldly court when initiating or responding to a law suit where unbelievers are involved. I believe this is reasonable and to be expected. Pastors, especially, make waves in communities and tend to provoke the ungodly. The apostle Paul found himself in civil trouble more than a few times. The other apostles were brought before councils and courts and judges. However, this is different than personal matters between church members.

Lastly, on this thought, when a church member is involved in an unequivocal criminal act, I believe the church should not dismiss the cause. If it indeed is criminal, the church ought to involve the civil authorities and cooperate to the full extent of the law to prosecute the sinner.

I think of the numerous scandals involving Roman priests and boys -- scandals that the Roman bishops and popes tend to cover up. What a shame. How many are there that we don't hear about? If anything like this comes to pass in a New Testament church, the offender ought to be prosecuted with the full support of the church.

12. Jesus Christ, the Righteous Judge, will have the final word.

In Matthew 18 when reading about the church's judgment, Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This means he stands in judgment agreeing with the church. The Lord also said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This means whatever judgment a church makes; the Lord is in

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agreement.

This is powerful authority that the church has. It has to be exercised carefully, lovingly, and with the right purpose. The church needs to be careful to follow the instruction of the Lord in how it judges, meaning, they ought to judge righteous judgment.

And when this current dispensation ends, Jesus Christ – the faithful witness – will judge all according to righteousness. Nothing will escape his all-seeing eyes. He will take care of all things and recompense perfect justice.

We need to remember this. Many times it seems the judgment we receive of others is unfair. We need to have the attitude of Paul when we know the judgment of others is wrong:

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.
For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

1 Corinthians 4:1, 2

The time will come when the truth will all be exposed. There will be no secrets:

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Romans 2:16

The Lord is a righteous judge, and he will do the judging. Remember these verses, and be content that in the end, God will judge:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:8

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

Hebrews 10:30

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Hebrews 13:4

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17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

1 Peter 1:17

So, in conclusion, judging righteous judgment is something Jesus commanded us to do. My hope is that this study on the subject is helpful to all who read it.

May God bless you and your labor for his kingdom.

The End.

Appendix J

**NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH DNA –
A THREEFOLD CORD IS NOT QUICKLY BROKEN.**

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DNA – THE BUILDING BLOCK OF LIFE ITSELF.

DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) is the basic nucleic acid in all living organisms. It contains the genetic programming for all perfect development and functioning of life.

This genetic information (called genes) is essential for life and reproduction. DNA is found in the cells and organized into structures called chromosomes. Every cell in a living body contains the same DNA for that body.

DNA structures consist of two long nucleotides – the double helix – with interconnecting backbones. DNA information is read and understood by genetic code. DNA can be twisted tighter or looser like a rope in a process called DNA super-coiling.

DNA can also replicate itself – it is *itself* the pattern for reproducing or copying itself. When cells divide, each new cell has *an exact copy* of the DNA present in the old cell. DNA is absolutely necessary for life to reproduce.

Additionally, forensic scientists use DNA to match individuals to certain bodily fluids. This is referred to as genetic fingerprinting. DNA is used to prove *paternity* – who is whose father or mother.

DNA shows undeniably that God's intelligence is programmed into the cells of all life.

CONSIDERING THE DNA OF A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

Using *Biblical Forensics*, consider the building blocks of our Savior's seed (the Word), and how Jesus Christ started and gave life to the New Testament church. Consider the *DNA* of the New Testament church. That DNA defines what the church is, how it reproduces, who its creator is, and why it exists.

Normal DNA consists of two long strands with interconnecting backbones. For this study, let us consider the DNA of a true church to have *three strands*; or three unbreakable cords. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 4:12:

... A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

For a long time I have taught how to identify the critical and essential elements that make up a New Testament church. Using the New Testament as our *genetic code*, we can search out to read what is the church DNA. So, what are these three cords?

First, I can say that holiness and perfect doctrine *is not* a requirement for a church to be a church – consider the Corinthian and Laodicean churches. Now, God wants his church to holy and perfect, but that is a work in process.

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We also understand that a pastor is not an essential element, for many churches today have no one filling the pulpit, yet they do not cease from being a church.

We can then say that lacking a New Testament or Bible does not preclude a body from being a church. Many first century churches had no written word. Even today in some places, churches have no Bible, or even someone literate enough to read a Bible. I have seen many of these in Central America.

THE BASICS.

At this point, I admit that anyone can make their own list of what they think are the necessary elements for church to be scriptural: one person could say one thing, and someone else can say another. One person could have only one thing, and another person could have a list of twenty. Hopefully, the reader will agree that my list is most reasonable. The reader will see these three cords are aligned with the three elements of the Great Commission.

Allow me first to identify some New Testament truths:

- 1 Jesus Christ himself built the church between Matthew 16 and Matthew 18. For in these two chapters the word *church* is found; but found nowhere else in the four Gospels. It is a simple to study see when the church was started.
- 2 Jesus built the church during his earthly ministry, and gave authority to it in Matthew 18, confirming what was bound or loosed on earth by the church in judgment, is likewise bound or loosed in heaven. And where two or three are gathered to execute this binding or loosing, Jesus is in the midst. The apostles were its members; they were ordained, sent out, baptized converts, followed Jesus, fished for men, partook of the Lord's Supper, and even had a dishonest treasurer.
- 3 To the church Christ gave what we refer to as the "Great Commission," in Matthew 28:18-20. This was to be fulfilled through the church leadership (at that time, the "eleven"). The Great Commission confirmed that the apostles' work – which work they were already familiar – should continue in the Saviour's physical absence.
- 4 The Lord empowered the church with the gift of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2 (although the Holy Ghost was given to some of the disciples shortly after the resurrection in John 20:22). The church was told to tarry in Jerusalem until the promise would come.
- 5 The Lord added to church in Acts chapter 2. Those that were added were saved and baptized.
- 6 We find the Jerusalem church was scattered throughout Judea and Samaria in Acts chapter 8. Disciples went everywhere preaching the word. These disciples led others to the Lord, and many other churches "sprang up" in a sense.
- 7 The Antiochian church sent out Barnabas and Saul, and the church was also the base for their "missionary journeys." That church, faithful to the Holy Ghost leading, separated the two apostles to the work God called them to. Here, the precedent is set – God calling, church sending.
- 8 In 1 Corinthians 3:10 we read Jesus is the foundation (i.e., the Rock) on which the church is built,

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and we are to build upon that same foundation. It is the same foundation of the apostles, and Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:20). At this time, the foundation remains unchanged. We are still building on it, even after 2,000 years.

- 9 The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). The church “supports” and “holds up” the truth of Jesus Christ, the gospel, and the word of God. God set his truth on this pillar and ground, founded on Jesus Christ himself.
- 10 The church is likened to the kingdom of heaven (read Matthew chapters 16 and 18). And that to Peter was given the keys of this kingdom (Matthew 16:19).
- 11 Paul espoused the church to Christ as a chaste virgin (2 Corinthians 11:2) and taught that Christ is the head of the church as the husband is the head of the wife (Ephesians 5:23). The church is called the bride (Revelation 21:9, etc.).
- 12 The *Creator* of the church himself promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, first; and second, that he will be with the church till the end of the world (Matthew 18, Matthew 28). The church will indeed endure through all adversity. For some who disrespect the “unbroken chain” principle, how do they explain their gaps in light of Jesus’ promises?

SIMPLY PUT.

Now, considering these things, and as I was taught in seminary, a simple definition of the church is this:

A New Testament church is a Body of *baptized believers* who have *covenanted* together to carry out the Commandments of Jesus Christ.

We were made to memorize this simple definition. Although it is simple, it defines accurately what two thousand years of study and practice has proved. In this paper, we will look at these three cords (believers, baptism, and covenant), and with it show how the perpetuity of the church not only is fact and a promise, but that there *must be* that “unbroken chain” of churches if it is to fulfill the promises and pattern shown in the New Testament.

The church is not simply a body of believers, nor a body of baptized believers: there must also be present the covenant. So allow me to elaborate on these three things – believers, baptism, and covenant.

Believers – *The necessity of the Gospel.*

1 Corinthians 15 defines the gospel as the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. One must believe (or obey) the gospel to be saved. With heart man believeth, and with the mouth confession is made (Romans 10).

When someone truly believes, it is a work of faith; and the gift of God makes that believer “saved” and a child of God through faith (Ephesians 2). The blood of Jesus Christ is applied to the soul washing that person completely from sin, justifying him in the sight of God (Romans 5:9). The believer is now “born again (John 3). He is part of the family of God. He has the promise of everlasting Life (John 3:16).

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Without the Gospel, there is no life. Without the Gospel we are yet in our sins. Without the Gospel there is no hope. The Gospel of Salvation is that which we *first teach* to all nations (Matthew 28; Mark 16). Without this Gospel, there is no life in us or in the church. There is no Holy Ghost. There is no Great Commission. There is no salvation. The work of Jesus Christ on the cross is of no effect. Without the Gospel, there is no *purpose* for the New Testament church. And, whoever preaches any other Gospel than what Paul gave us, that person is accursed (Galatians 1).

Without controversy, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a fundamental strand of the New Testament church's DNA.

Baptism – *The necessity of Authority.*

There was a man sent from God... This is how John chapter 1 describes John the Baptist. To him came the Savior to be baptized – to fulfill all righteousness. The commandment to baptize believers is fundamental to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

Jesus had his disciple do the work of baptizing in John chapter 4. Peter answered the Jews in Acts 2:38:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We Baptists know that it is not the plunging in water that saves, but obedience to the gospel – we are first to say that baptism does not save. But we are also called *Baptists*. We are called such because of our zeal to fulfill the commission our Savior gave us. We do not waver on this thing.

Now, baptism must be scriptural to be valid. And no true church would accept anything but scriptural baptism. I am not speaking of *believer's immersion*, for this only has two elements – the believer and the immersion. It lacks two more elements to be valid: a scriptural *administrator* and a scriptural *action*. One requires the *baptizer* to have been authorized by a New Testament church, the other requires that the candidate be added to a New Testament church.

Just as John himself was sent by God, so any baptizer today must be sent by an authorizing body. And that *authority* comes from the *commandment* – and that commandment was *given to the church* (Matthew 28:18-20).

And just as no true church would ever accept an immersion as *scriptural baptism* if done by Mormons, or some college, or some heretical or lost person; neither should it accept as scriptural baptism any immersion done by anything but a New Testament church. For any immersion done without authority makes it by definition *invalid*.

This “cord” is not easily broken. Search the New Testament and show me any place where a baptizer was not first baptized himself by an authorized baptizer. You will not find it. And though some brethren have quoted *men's writings* to prove any immersion is valid, I shall go by the New Testament only. And what I find there is plain: there is an unbroken chain of baptizers from John onward.

Without this unbroken chain of baptizers there is no valid baptism (no exception, Roger Williams). And without valid baptism there can be no Great Commission. And without the Great Commission we have no church reproduction – and the church ceases to exist. But our Savior promised to be with us until the end (Matthew 28:18-20), and the work indeed carries on.

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Now, this work is carried on through authorized men, sent forth to teach and to baptize. John was sent. Jesus was sent. The twelve were sent. The seventy were sent, Barnabas, and Saul were sent (Acts 13:1-3). Timothy and Titus were sent. Paul said, “And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Romans 10:15). This “sending” was done symbolically through the laying on of hands by the presbytery. The gift of God was evident in him, and this man was authorized by the church to go forth in obedience to the Great Commission. He, being saved and baptized, and in addition being found faithful as a disciple of Jesus Christ; has proved to be able to preach the true gospel, baptize believers, and teach these believers to observe the commandments of Jesus Christ. He has been “ordained” and sent out according to the New Testament pattern.

As this man is sent forth with authority to preach and baptize, he in effect will organize such baptized believers into bodies who have made a covenant with Jesus Christ. And though we may find a variety of groups of believers who have organized themselves into some kind of body, only those with valid baptism can reproduce valid baptism. For every seed reproduces after itself – and it can only reproduce itself. This is further evidence of that unbroken chain of church perpetuity.

Covenant – *the necessity of making Jesus Christ the Head of the body.*

As the husband is the head of the wife, so Jesus is the Head of the church. This is the divine covenant of marriage. In this covenant the bride promises to love, honor and obey her husband, keeping only to him.

Malachi chapter 2 calls the wife a *companion*. It says she is the wife of a *covenant*, and together, the husband and wife should bring forth *godly seed (children)*. This is God’s purpose for marriage.

In the same sense, the church formally receives her Lord and Head, promises to obey him, keeping herself only to him. All her worldly goods she to him endows. She is chaste and faithful to him. She is the receiver of his seed – the word of God. She is a pillar and the ground of this seed of truth. To her it was given, and she reproduces godly seed.

In turn, the Head cares for the wife. He cherishes and nourishes her, washing her by the water of his word. She has his protection, his promises, and his perfect love. He will remain faithful to her until the very end. He guides her, comforts her, blesses her, and gives her purpose. He has prepared a place for her and promises to come for her to take her to that place – and she says “come.”

What a lovely picture. *What a contrast to the mother of harlots (Revelation 17), what we understand to be the false Romish church!*

Recently (and I mean in the last few hundred years) churches have made written covenants and placed them in their records and on the walls of their buildings; but this is a matter of preference. As weddings are performed in a multitude of ways depending on time and place and people; churches since the first century have made Jesus their Lord and King in various ways – but always one can see the utmost devotion of the church to the King of Kings. She has no other master. She will obey God rather than men. She is not a product of the State. She says she ought to obey God rather than men.

And now, every place on this earth, one is apt to find a body of baptized believers who meet and carry out the commandments of Jesus Christ – a New Testament church. For simply being a group of saved and baptized people congregating (I have seen that at fellowships and youth camps) is insufficient to make that group a New Testament church – there must be a decisive, sober, commitment to the Saviour to obey him

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and teach to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded.

This is the New Testament church's DNA – it was placed in her by Jesus Christ himself. The church reproduces faithfully what Christ commanded and promised. And for two thousand years, she has survived, flourished, and been victorious in an alien world. Although a stranger and a pilgrim, she remains true to her Husband – she waits patiently for him to catch her away.

CONCLUSION.

Everything reproduces after its kind. Every living thing has its own seed. The church Jesus started likewise has continued to reproduce itself until the present time. This is the pattern of reproduction was set in place from the beginning – people reproduce people, a kind of fruit reproduces after its kind, horses reproduce horses, dogs reproduce dogs, pelicans reproduce pelicans, etc., etc. Likewise, in spiritual things, good manuscripts reproduce good translations, saved people get others saved, scripturally baptized believers in turn baptize likewise, ordain men in turn ordain others, churches reproduce after their kind, preachers reproduce preachers of like doctrine (2 Timothy 2:2), solid Baptist churches reproduce solid Baptist churches, and liberal-modernist “churches” reproduce the like.

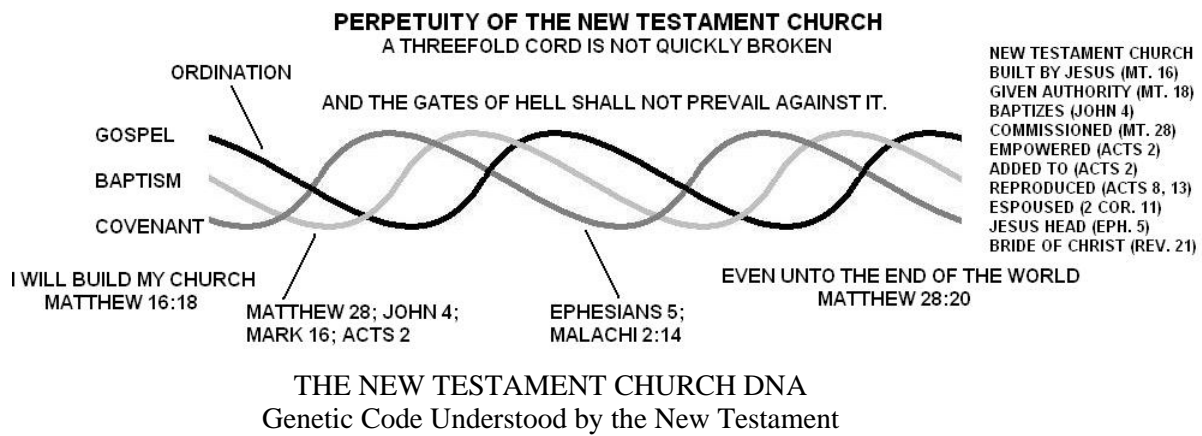
No false church can reproduce otherwise – this is why any group that came into being from the Protestant Reformation is a child of Rome, and one of daughters of the mother. Good families that uphold and defend family values, abhor fornication and adultery, eschew evil; will likely produce families with the same values. In contrast, “families” that have little restraint of the flesh, who encourage or allow fornication, adultery, and drunkenness and the like, who are critical of that which is good; will likely reproduce the same.

Moses gave God's commandment that Israel should not take the name of God in vain. In a sense, God is teaching that the “Father's Name” is to be respected among the people. What we do or do not do is a reflection of who raised us. Personally, I have standards for my family. They *cannot* do certain things, and they are *to do* certain things. Not only is *our* family name at stake, but more importantly the Father's name is at stake.

A common understanding around the house is, “*the Desent's don't do those things.*” Do not take your name (or mine) in vain. We have a good report to maintain.

New Testament churches (usually known as “Baptist” – although that name has been used wrongly by some) bear the name of their Creator. As being “bone of his bone,” the church can easily bring reproach to the Savior if she behaves herself unseemly. She has a duty to bear “Godly seed” to her Husband. She has a duty to keep herself chaste. Her price is far above rubies to the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us who bear the name of our Savior be mindful. Let us be as virgins waiting for the bridegroom to come. Let us have our lamps burning bright, and our robes shining bright, and our King's in constant sight. Let us consider the righteous, holy, and perfect DNA we have been given by the blood of the Lamb. And, until he comes, be found faithful.

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Appendix K

SEVEN KEYS TO HAVING VICTORY OVER THE WICKED ONE

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God’s creation has a great adversary – Satan himself. Satan and his devils are busy trying to destroy the work of God and the object of God’s love. What God loves, the Satan hates; and God loves the world. Satan, who is also called the devil, cannot create anything good. He cannot cause good to come to pass. He can only pervert that which is right. He, as a great imitator and corrupter, can only confuse with alternate, fake systems that parallel in a wicked way the just systems of God. So, for everything God has created, expect to find a perversion of it. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy (John 10:10).

God’s people can fall victim to Satan’s devices. He is the author of confusion (among other things). The devil is a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies (John 8:44). Through deception and temptation he causes God’s people to err. This satanic work provokes God to judge his people when they sin. This is also called Balaam’s doctrine. The devil takes advantages of our weaknesses if we do not rely on God’s grace.

Here is a brief list of the perverted systems paralleling God’s systems:

| God’s Way ----- | Devil’s Perversion ----- |
|--|--|
| The Savior Jesus Christ | False christs and anti-christs |
| Gospel of Salvation | False and perverted gospels |
| Salvation by Grace through faith | Salvation be works, religion, or suffering |
| The Holy Bible (in English, the KJV 1611) | Other false and modernist versions |
| True New Testament churches | Romanist, Protestant, and cults churches |
| True Gospel Preachers | False prophets |
| Truth | Lies |
| Hope | Despair |
| Faith | Fear |
| Love | Hate, Lust |
| Humility | Pride |
| Children | Abortion |
| Creation | Evolution |
| Healing by Prayer, Faith, Oil | Treatment by Sorcery, Medicine, Cutting |
| Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs | Contemporary and popular music |
| Holiness and Sanctification | Riotous living, Fleshly living |
| Walk in the Spirit | Walk in the Flesh |
| Serve God | Serve Mammon |
| Marriage and monogamy | Adultery, fornication, and polygamy |
| Monotheism | Polytheism |
| Jesus’ Sacrifice being the only way to God | Any religion leads to God |
| Education based on the Bible | Humanistic education |
| Worship of God | Entertainment |
| Obedience | Disobedience, rebellion, self-will |

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| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Fear of the Lord | Atheism |
| Prayer | Mysticism and Occult Meditation |
| Liberty | Bondage |
| Righteousness | Sin |
| Prosperity in Godly things | Worldly prosperity only |
| Righteous training and discipline | Abuse |
| Leadership | Oppression |
| Love thy neighbor | Love self, selfishness |
| Thankfulness to God | Murmuring, complaining |

Simply put, whatever God has provided, the devil will imitate and corrupt

But Mankind also has the Great Advocate – Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us so that we might be saved. Along with this great salvation, the Lord also gave us all things that pertain to life and godliness. One of the things we have through Christ is the promise of victory over the devil.

Read how Jesus gave his disciples victory of the devil:

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Luke 10:17-20

But Jesus told us not to rejoice in this victorious power, for there is a greater reason to rejoice: because our names are written in heaven.

Being a child of God is a much greater reason to rejoice than simply having power over the enemy. Jesus said, Ye must be born again. For this cause Jesus came and died and resurrected. Without salvation, a person's gain in this world is without profit – it is vanity compared to the value of his soul. Imagine if we only had victory in this world, but no salvation. In the end we would be in the lake of fire with the devil for eternity; having victory now, but no victory for eternity. This is one reason why having our names written in heaven is a much greater reason to rejoice.

In the following passage you will see that challenging the devil should not be done without the power of God. You will also see that a child of God needs to be on-guard at all times, being careful that the devil does not take his armor.

14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

16 And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that

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I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. 24 24

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

Luke 11:14-26

There was a group of men who tried to cast our devils without the power of God. Look what happened:

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Acts 19:13-16

Just because someone claims to be an exorcist does not mean he truly has the power of God. There are charlatans and deceivers in this world. *God's people* have *God's power* and know how to use it rightly. It is the Gospel that is the power of God (Romans 1:16): through salvation every soul in bondage can be liberated from the power of Satan. This is the first and greatest power we have as the children of God.

As a defensive measure, the devil tries to keep those who are lost in darkness (2 Corinthians 4:4). The lost are deceived. And if the devil can keep them in this state until death, he has them forever. While in darkness the lost have succumbed to the wiles of the wicked one. Through pride, those who will not believe blind themselves. The lost *think* they are right, but they have not the Light. They persist in a lost state because they are deceived in thinking they are right, and for some reason (in their own mind) reject the free gift. This free gift of salvation is a no- risk offer and, on the other side, it is a commandment to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who do not obey the Gospel will endure severe consequences at the judgment.

Without the power of the Gospel, those who are lost have no light. Our responsibility as believers is to bring the Light of Jesus to them so that they might be saved. This salvation *is* the victory, praise God! And while it would seem that all would receive salvation, it is expected that some would rather choose darkness than light, because their deeds are evil (John 3:16-18). They will not come to the light lest their works be reproved.

But we who are saved love the Light. We are attracted to the Light. We want the Light of Jesus to shine in

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our lives. Receiving Jesus Christ is *the victory* in the grand scheme of things. No matter what, we have been translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13) – delivered from the power of darkness.

Then by holy living (keeping yourself from sin), a child of God is “*untouchable*.” Look at this promise in 1 John 5:18:

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

That is what I want. I do not want to give an occasion to the devil to get his “foot in the door.” I know any sin I practice is a handle for him to hold onto. And I should expect no mercy from him. I want an hedge around myself and my family, so that only through God can the devil have access to me and mine (Job chapter 1).

With this in mind, let us look at the seven keys to having total victory over the devil.

1 ***Know you have the Victory through Jesus Christ***

Deception, wiles, and fear are the major tools of the devil to keep a child of God in defeat and doubt.

For the lost, he uses darkness (2 Corinthians 4:4) lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine unto them. As the prince and the power of the air (Ephesians 2:1-10), he keeps the lost in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, with a spirit of disobedience. Satan keeps the lost blinded to the gospel and the goodness of God, knowing that the goodness of God leads us to repentance (Romans 2).

If you are saved, Satan will try to keep you *blinded to the goodness of God*. But know that all things work together for good to them that love God. There is no “bad news” if you are saved. Most of us know Romans 8:28:

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose

As mentioned in other places, when a child of God accepts what comes his way as *good* – and is *thankful* to God – he will then see *the power* of God in his life. Contrarily, if a child of God murmurs and complains, he will simply wander in circles until he does see the goodness.

The devil will also use fear in your life to immobilize you. Fear paralyzes. Fear creates negativity. Fear is contagious. Fear is the *opposite* of faith. Fear comes when an opportunity to step out by faith is at the door. Remember how only two of the twelve Canaan spies brought back a good (victorious) report? The other ten were fearful, basing their thoughts and words on what they *perceived* rather than on the *promises* and *power* of God.

Again, know that fear is the opposite of faith. Faith please God, fear pleases the devil. Doubt is the graveyard of faith. The devil will try to get you to doubt. If he can get you to doubt (yea, hath God said...?), he knows the rest of the work is easy.

Here is the right answer: know and be fully persuaded that you have the victory through Jesus Christ. 1

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Corinthians 15:57: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

How do you know when you fear? *You believe evil thing will happen, rather than good things will happen.*

But faith is believing and expecting good things will happen – that all things work together for good. Faith is being fully persuaded that what God has promised he will fulfill. This calibration of the mind to align it with the word of God puts you on the path to becoming an undefeatable opponent to Satan. Faith in Jesus Christ is the victory that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4).

As a final note on this point, human nature makes us react to trials in a way opposite to what God would have us to. The natural reaction is to complain and seek a way around the pain. We look for solutions and we scramble to relieve the grief. When we encounter a problem, we want to step back, go over, go around, or run through as fast as possible. We have a natural need to experience peace and comfort. We are more likely to pray for God to remove the trial rather than ask that he supply the grace to endure it.

We look for ways *out* rather than look for the blessings of being *in*. We pray the thing will pass rather than rejoice in our infirmity. We forget that *tribulation worketh patience*.

We have a tendency to murmur and ask for help rather than to be thankful to God. I know being thankful in difficult situations is extremely hard. But I know that is what God wants. Whatever we go through it is working together for our good. When we are weak, then we are strong, because then the power of God rests on us.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Here is the wisdom: when a child of God experiences weakness, he then humbly relies on God. When this happens, his strength is made perfect in weakness. Consequently, the child of God can take pleasure in necessities, and distresses, and other things; and in these things be strong in the power of God.

Be thankful, child, and know that in your weakest moments, you have the victory.

2 Stand against the Wiles of the Devil

We shall start off with a very familiar passage:

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

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12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:10-20

The first and obvious application is that we need to have our armor on and be minded to stand. The command to stand goes hand in hand with the command to put on the whole armor of God.

Many have made mention that there is no armor for the back – we are not to turn our back to the enemy, but stand firm and unmoveable: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:53).

Have you ever thought how often we dress for an occasion? Certain jobs require certain dress. From attorneys and carpenters to firemen and astronauts, every field of work has expected apparel. We use leather when riding and spandex when swimming. We use hard hats in construction and cowboy hats at rodeos.

But what is the Christian’s dress code? Some think it is a suit and tie. Some think it is a robe and a “backwards collar.” But God shows us it is a spiritual suit of armor. And this suit is to be worn continually.

This spiritual armor consists of six items. Allow me to elaborate a little on each one:

Loins girt with truth

We must have the truth, both in written form as the word of God, the Bible; and in speech and thought. The devil loves lies and God hates a lying tongue. A child of God is disobedient and sinful when he lies, and he positions himself to reap the effect of lies. In trying to be deceitful, he himself will be a victim of it. He will be deceived.

However, with truth, we position ourselves so as not to be deceived. As the old saying goes, “you can’t cheat an honest man.” And the devil cannot deceive you if you know and believe the truth. Without truth, all else fails. So, have truth in your dealings, in your speech, in your efforts, in your personal relationships. Be an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.

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John wrote in 3 John 1:4: I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

Breastplate of righteousness

Personal righteousness and sanctification are essential in standing against the devil. It is through lust and temptation that the devil works, and it is through truth that we counteract this temptation. Remember the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness in Matthew 4? He was tempted in the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. He was victorious over the world, his flesh, and the devil. He had the victory because he responded not with earthly reason or action, but with the word of God.

David said in Psalm 119:11: Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

God's word plus obedience equals righteousness. Doing right in every situation will prevent the devil from drawing you away from God. We will be tempted, and it is not sin to be tempted; but it is a sin to yield. A child of God will be tempted on all fronts during his life, but God gives his children the strength and will to persevere through all temptation. As we were taught to say in the Lord's Prayer: *"lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."*

Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel

Preach the gospel as a defense and as an offense. Personally, especially when dealing with the powers and spiritual wickedness in high places, I have used the Gospel as a great defense. Your enemy and his followers do not want to be preached to. They do not want to be exposed to the light of the Gospel. They love darkness and hate the light (John 3:16-21).

Here's another tactic: when being challenged and struggling against the devil, make time to preach the Gospel to the lost. The devil is defeated when he sees the pressure he applies provokes you to preach the Gospel.

You will notice the word "preparation." Think on that. Every believer should be prepared to preach the Gospel, being ready to give an answer for the hope that is in them. Having your "Gospel Shoes" on and laced rightly and tightly means you are ready to go. One shoe saves with compassion, making a difference; the other saves with fear, hating even the flesh-spotted garment (Jude 1:23).

Shield of faith

Faith is the victory. Through faith you can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Every attack of the devil is quenched if you have faith – faith in Christ, faith in his word, faith in his promises, and faith in his blood.

There is no attack of the devil that cannot be defeated by faith. Every temptation, attack, lie – these fiery darts – are quenched by faith in Jesus Christ. Most of these attacks will be directed toward the head and torso, but the devil will attack limbs also. All parts of the body need to be shielded.

Paul wrote, "above all." This is the main defensive piece of armor, and goes back to point 1. Make sure you understand the importance of faith.

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Helmet of Salvation

The devil works on your mind. That self-talk you hear all day. He will put evil thoughts into your head if you are not vigilant. Protect your head! Keep your thoughts aligned with the word of God. Remember your salvation. Be sure you are saved, and *know* you are saved. If the devil can get you to doubt your salvation, he will be victorious, and you will struggle your entire life. You will live in fear of losing God's love and wander in double-minded instability of purpose.

You see, no matter what happens, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him unto that day (2 Timothy 1:12). God want us to have that confidence. And if I could lose my salvation, I would have done so already a long time ago. But my salvation is not based on my goodness – it is based on Christ's goodness. I know nothing can separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. I know no man can pluck me out of God's hand. I know I have been given eternal life and I shall never perish.

So, whatever the devil throws my way, I know I am a child of God. I know God is in control, I know God will be glorified. And, with that confidence, I can go forward from God, knowing by his grace and love I shall endure all things.

Praying always, for others and for bold speech

We are commanded to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). So much can be said about prayer that this paper cannot contain it. But realize how important keeping your heart and mind in constant communication with the Father. And pray for bold speech. Words are powerful, but often we are silent when we ought to speak, and we speak when we ought to be silent. Remember your personal testimony – this is what the apostle Paul spoke of many times when before rulers.

So, standing must be done with proper dress code. The armor of God must be in place if a child of God is going to stand and withstand in the evil day. Let's go a step further, now.

Find the scriptural things to stand *against*:

- Evil
- Worldliness
- Unbelief
- Fear
- Apathy
- Excess

Find the scriptural things to stand *for*. Here are a few things I have realized:

- The Holy Bible – AV 1611 (2 Timothy 3:16)
- The true Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-5)
- The New Testament church – a Baptist church.
- Love Commandment Doctrine (John 15:12)
- Living holy for God (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

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- Ruling well my house (1 Timothy 3:4)
- Being faithful till Jesus comes (Revelation 2:10)

There are many more, of course, but this will suffice for now. Stand for God. Be unmovable, and always abounding. Hold fast that which is good. Endure to the end. Be faithful until death.

3 *Resist the Devil*

Some people think they are better off not contending with the devil. They think if they leave him alone, he will leave them alone. This is not true. Others think they have no choice but to go along with temptation. They think they are powerless against him. That is not true either. God tells us to resist the devil. Read this well-known verse in scripture:

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 4:7

God's promise is that if we resist, the devil will flee. And God tells us how:

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

1 Peter 5:8, 9

Here is how to resist: submit yourself to God, be sober, be vigilant, be stedfast in the faith, and know you are not alone.

Submitting yourself to God involves humbling yourself before him, for he resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. It also involves turning to God from idols (behind many idols are devils), honoring him as Creator, knowing you have a duty to God; and seeking and being obedient to his will. The will of God for you is found in the New Testament. Jesus exemplified this when he was tempted in the wilderness: there he confirmed during his temptation that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Jesus would not bow down but to God only, and he would not tempt God by disobedience.

Being sober means being in full control of your mental faculties. I doubt a person on psychotropic drugs (anti-depressants like Paxil, Zoloft, Prozac; or drugs like Haldol, which is used to treat psychotic disorder conditions where there is difficulty telling the difference between what is real and what is not) can be considered sober, and consequently they cannot walk circumspectly (Ephesians 5:15). Nor can people who use hallucinogenic drugs, or alcohol, or narcotics be sober. People who play certain video games or watch fantasy entertainment will also have trouble being sober. All these things affect the mind. The devil loves it. The devil wants you in a "false reality." He wants you thinking you are free when are in bondage. He wants you thinking you are lost when you are saved. He wants you thinking you are saved when you are lost. He wants you thinking you will find happiness in what he offers you.

But God wants you sober. God wants you to be able to understand the height and depth of Christ. He wants you to have that wisdom from above. He wants you to be able to see clearly what is happening around you

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and have “understanding of the times.”

Being vigilant means being always on your guard. Be a watchman. Have your mind always considering your circumstances and being careful in your actions and reactions.

I remember reading an Israeli author teaching on how to survive in Arab areas in Israel. He made a careful point that posture goes a long way. If you look like you are ready and on guard, potential enemies back off. They like to go for victims who are unsuspecting.

Another author on surviving in the urban areas made a similar comment: when you are walking in places like on the street or in a parking lot, always being watching and looking around. When passing strangers look them in the eyes. (Some muggers go in pairs, and one will try to distract you while the other comes from behind.) If you look like you are ready, usually the ones looking to hurt will wait for another less ready victim. This author referred to this attitude as “the alley cat attitude.” He noted the difference between a house cat who will blindly wander into trouble, trusting everyone; and an alley cat that watches everything and always positions himself so he can escape – never getting too close to anything potentially harmful. Always on his guard, the only way for an adversary to get to him is to tempt him over a long period of time. Walk circumspectly, the Bible says. Do not stumble, do not fall in traps. Do not be distracted from the objective. Have eyes full of light.

Be steadfast in the faith. Base your understanding of the Bible according to God’s method in Isaiah 29:9-13. Jesus resisted the devil’s temptation in the wilderness in Matthew chapter 4 by using the Old Testament commandments (precepts). This is the pattern he set for us. By using what God commanded we can resist the devil. You will notice however that the devil leaves only for a season. He has a tendency to return to cause grief. Resisting is a continual process.

Now, Jesus gave us the New Testament commandments. We are told to teach them to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). We hide these in our hearts so that we do not sin against God. Doing these thing puts up a resistance from which the devil will flee.

4 *Neither Give Place to the Devil*

Satan is constantly seeking for territory in your life. He is looking for any weakness or undefended access to your life. Once the devil finds your weakness he will exploit that weakness until you fall from your own steadfastness. And a weak link in a chain means the rest of the links, however strong, cannot hold the chain together.

God has given each of us territory to defend for him. In 2 Samuel 23 we find the mighty men of David. In verses 11 and 12 we learn about Shammah:

11 And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines.

12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory.

Shammah (or Shimeah) comes from the Hebrew word Shema – to hear, listen and obey. Shammah means presence (Jehovah-Shammah – The Lord is there – Ezekiel 48:35).

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And, although some may look at the territory God's given me as a simple field of lentils, for the principle of thing I am determined to defend it by God's grace. It may be least, but he that is faithful in least is also faithful in much – that is the test for faithfulness: giving you something small to see how faithful you are.

As a husband, father, and pastor; I have territories and the responsibility to keep them sanctified before God. As a king and priest, I have a kingdom (of God) and a temple (my body) to care for. And by the grace of God and his strength, the devil will have no place with me.

Consider your home. Does the devil have some territory there? Is there a small place for the devil? How about your computer? How about your car? How about your cell phone or MP3 player? How about your heart? Your life? Your work? Is all the territory you have control over sanctified for the master's use?

If you want the victory, do not give place to the devil.

Imagine the folly of a person who desires spiritual victory over some area in his life, but at the same time has the enemy camped out in his home. He says he wants God to help and bless, but he has altar to Satan in his house. Should he not rather purge his house of all things that are dishonoring to God first? How about a man wanting to overcome lust, but he has his box of smutty magazines in the closet? Or someone who wants to stop swearing but listens to rap music? Hello? How can anyone want victory over the enemy and still freely give him territory in his life?

There are a lot of believers who need to serve eviction papers to the unwanted squatters. Every person is the landlord of his house, the priest of his temple, the king of his realm. When we put the evil out, we need to replace it with good. Else, there may be seven more evils that return with it.

5 *Pull Down the Strongholds*

Let us read 2 Corinthians 10:3-6:

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

If you are going to have full victory over Satan, you have to pull down the strongholds he has in your mind. These strongholds are programming we received over our lifetime. God gave his children mighty weapons to pull down these strongholds. The word of God should be used to re-program the mind.

These weapons we reviewed earlier. They are called the armor of God.

The strongholds of programming come as a result of sitting in government schools, associating with the wicked, watching and listening to the media, and sometimes incorrect training from parents. They come from books, memes, friends, experiences, etc.

Here is a meme: "Once my kid turns eighteen, he's on his own and I can't tell him what to do." I have heard

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that phrase too many times. Here is the pulling down of that stronghold, bringing it into captivity to the obedience of Christ: God said to honor thy father and mother. Children, obey your parents. In 1 Samuel 3:12-14, Eli was to be judged by God for the behavior of his sons:

12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

Here is another stronghold, and it starts like this: “I need to go to the doctor for....” Here is the obedience of Christ:

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

James 5:14-16

You see, your programming – every thought – has to be cast down when that thought exalts itself against the knowledge of God. You are responsible for your thoughts and you need to take control of your thoughts. You need to steer your thoughts in the right direction.

As a final illustration, I remember when I got saved and started reading the Bible. As a child I went to government schools, and was taught among other things, that the false idea of evolution was true. I learned the evolutionary scale. My parents bought me books on the subject. I remember getting a chart showing how an ape evolved into man, showing Anthropithecus, Cro-Magnon, Neanderthal, Homo-erectus, to Homo-sapiens, etc.

For twenty-five years I believed the lie of evolution. For twenty-five years I was programmed with this stronghold of the devil that infects our schools, teaching the children they are nothing more than an evolved animal and that there is no Creator, no judgment, and no perfect standard of righteousness.

For twenty-five years I was fully convinced Darwin's lie was true.

And then, as a born-again child of God, I read the book of Genesis. Twenty-five years of programming was deleted in about three seconds and replaced with righteous programming. The devil had pushed this lie my whole life until that point. But now his lie had no place in my mind. I realized that I was created, that there was a Creator, and that I have a responsibility to my Creator.

Our weapons are mighty to pull down these strongholds. The most used weapon is the sword of the Spirit – the word of God (Hebrews 4:12). Use it daily. Cleanse the temple, cleanse the mind. Get the Satanic programming out! Replace it with the truth of God's word, and you will see the power it supplies.

6 *Be Not Ignorant of his Devices*

When striving for complete victory over your adversary, it helps to know what his devices are. You want to know what he has in his arsenal, and what his strategies are. Consequently, you can prepare for them and not fall victim to them.

One of the ways Satan gets the advantage in our lives is through people. If he can get you to react in a wrong way, you are weakened by sin, and usually grieved. But the joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). If you are grieved by people, you are susceptible to attacks and in danger of defeat.

Paul realized this when he wrote in 2 Corinthians 2:10, 11

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;
11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

To me, it never ceases to amaze how important people relationships are in the work of God. God's kingdom involves people. Things are secondary. The devil will get an advantage in your life if you are not always cautious and careful in your relationships.

Especially in the ministry, a man deals with a lot of people and personalities. Many good people have their ways of doing things. It is easy to fall victim to resentment. Always remember, your neighbor is not your enemy. If they do wrong towards you, it could likely be unintentional. And if intentional, we are told to forgive (Luke 11).

Many people have been used by Satan to say something foolish, or act in a wrong way. In Matthew 16:17, Jesus said God revealed to blessed Peter who Jesus is; but then shortly thereafter, in verse 23, Jesus says to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

No one would contend Peter is Satan, or that Peter desired to be used by Satan to try and hinder Jesus. Peter opened his mouth foolishly. And no one would contend that Peter did not love Jesus, or that Jesus did not love Peter.

But look at how Jesus dealt with the situation: "Get thee behind me, Satan." Jesus understood the devil had temporarily used Peter's mouth. And Jesus puts blame on who is guilty (not Peter, but Satan). He also commands the adversary victoriously, saying to "get behind me." With a posture of the Victor, Jesus commands Satan to get out of his way. He does not beg for mercy, threaten, or revenge. Jesus simply identifies the root and goes forward for God. He was not hindered by the devil.

Here is a short list of wrong attitudes or actions toward people:

- Unforgiveness
- Envy
- Pride
- Hypocrisy
- Respect of persons
- Deceit
- Lust

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- Mocking
- Apathy
- Rebellion
- Self-will
- Selfishness
- Self-centeredness
- Anger
- Discouragement
- Railing
- Malice
- Revenge
- Discourtesy
- Stumbling
- Disregard
- Hate
- Harm
- Threatening
- Harsh judgment
- Debate
- Strife
- Violence
- False accusations
- Dissembling

In a love environment, however, there is no occasion of stumbling (1 John 2:10). Love covers the multitude of sins.

Satan's devices also include works to hinder you in your walk. Paul was hindered from his purpose to go to Rome (Romans 1:13; 15:22) and to the Thessalonians:

Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

1 Thessalonians 2:18

Going forward for God requires a striving (Luke 13:24; Romans 15:20; 1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 2:5). I suppose if it were the easy way, everyone would do it.

The devil will use problems, snares, fears, distractions, debts, etc., to try and get you to quit. But remember the times he fights the hardest is right before a great blessing from God. Satan wants you to quit before you see God's goodness. And many have quit, and just one stroke before hitting the mother-load.

7 Overcome by Word of God

God has not only defeated the devil when he bruised his head at Calvary, but he also shows us how we can have the same victory through faith in the Son of God.

Jesus wants us to be “over-comers.” It is not enough to “hold the fort” against the devil’s attacks – we must storm his castle and take his territory. In the battle over souls, the mature believer goes after the lost. He is not content to stay at home and rest on laurels. He has a sincere desire to kick open the gates of hell and pull some of those in darkness out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh (Jude 1:23). Jesus promised the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church (Matthew 16:18).

So how does a babe in Christ mature to the point where he is a good soldier of Jesus Christ? He does it by building himself up on the word of God. 1 John 2:12-14:

12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. 13 I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

Young men are strong spiritually. They are strong because the word of God abides in them. They meditate, memorize, prove, and rest on the word of God.

20 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Acts 20:32

This strength can only be found in Jesus Christ and in his word. Read the Bible every day. Hide it your heart. Meditate upon it in your mind. Use it as a blessing to others. This is the way of over-comers.

Conclusion – the Victorious Life

This is where you want to be. Your life’s condition is due to a large part on the choices you make. Addictions, unfaithfulness, slothfulness, apathy, worldliness, etc.; all have their effect in where you are today.

Many people want the victory, but they just sit in hope that it comes automatically. It does not. It takes effort, faith, and consistency. It takes an overriding desire to achieve for God.

Secondly, the battle is ongoing. Just because you have the victory today, does not mean there will not be struggles tomorrow. God in his goodness moderates what we experience to make sure we can endure.

If you give up, it is not because you could not win, it is that you surrendered. You took the easy way out. The devil laughs, your life is not happy, and you feel defeated and unprofitable in the Lord’s work.

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Do not get apathetic. Do not accept today's defeat as permanent. Tomorrow is another day. God's mercies are renewed every day (Lamentations 3:22, 23). A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again ... (Proverbs 24:16). Start over and go forward for God.

And you will find on this uphill battle called "life" that God gives us strength, joy, fellowship, and a lot of blessing. But this road is the way to life and godliness. It is a worthy walk. It is a walk directed by the Spirit of God. It is the blessed, glorious life of a strong soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3). It is a life that pleases God.

The End.

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Appendix L

The Apostles in the New Testament

| NUMB ER | NOTES | MATTHEW | MARK | LUKE | JOHN | ACTS | ROMANS | 1 COR | 2 COR | GALATIANS | EPHESIANS | COLOSSIANS | 1 THESS | 1 TIM | 2 TIM | TITUS | HEBREWS | 1 PETER | 2 PETER | JUDE |
|---------|---|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|--|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| | | MATTHEW 10:1-6 | MARK 3:14-19 | LUKE 6:13-16 | APOSTLE/NOT USED | ACTS 1:13, 14 | ROMANS 11 ROMANS 11:13 | 1 COR. 1:1 1 COR. 9:1-5 | 2 COR. 1:1 | GALATIANS 1:1 | EPHESIANS 1:1 | COLOSSIANS 1:1 | 1 THESS. 2:1-6 | 1 TIMOTHY 1:1 | 2 TIMOTHY 1:1, 11 | TITUS 1:1 | HEBREWS 3:1 | 1 PETER 1:1 | 2 PETER 1:1 | JUDE 1:1 |
| 1 | | SIMON PETER | SIMON PETER | SIMON PETER | JOHN 1:40 | PETER | | CEPHAS | | GALATIANS 1:18 PETER | | | | | | | | PETER | PETER | |
| 2 | SIMON'S BROTHER | ANDREW | ANDREW | ANDREW | JOHN 1:40 | ANDREW | | | 1 COR. 15:7 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | MOTHER CALLED MARY (LUKE 24:10, KILLED ACTS 1:12) 2 BROTHERS CALLED BROTHERS (MARK 3:17), SONS OF THUNDER JAMES BROTHER | JAMES ZEBEDEE | JAMES ZEBEDEE | JAMES | NOT MENTIONED | JAMES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | JOHN ZEBEDEE | JOHN ZEBEDEE | JOHN | NOT MENTIONED | JOHN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | PHILIP | PHILIP | PHILIP | JOHN 12:22 | PHILIP | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | BARTHOLOMEW | BARTHOLOMEW | BARTHOLOMEW | NOT MENTIONED | BARTHOLOMEW | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | CALLED DIDYMUS (JOHN 11:16) | THOMAS | THOMAS | THOMAS | JOHN 11:16, 145, 2024-29 | THOMAS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | LEVI, SON OF ALPHAEUS (MARK 2:14), PUBLICAN (LUKE 5:27, 29) | MATTHEW | MATTHEW | MATTHEW | NOT MENTIONED | MATTHEW | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | ALPHAEUS, SAME JAMES IN ACTS 12:17? SEE ACTS 15:13, 21:18, GALATIANS 2:9 | JAMES ALPHAEUS | JAMES ALPHAEUS | JAMES ALPHAEUS | NOT MENTIONED | JAMES ALPHAEUS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | BROTHER OF JAMES (LUKE 6:16, ACTS 1:13, JUNE 13) ALPHAEUS | LEBBAEUS THADDAEUS | THADDAEUS | JUDAS | JOHN 14:22 | JUDAS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | JUDE |
| 11 | CANAANITE | SIMON | SIMON THE CANAANITE | SIMON ZELOTTIS | NOT MENTIONED | SIMON ZELOTTIS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | TRAITOR, SIMON'S SON (JOHN 124, 132, 20) | JUDAS SCARROT | JUDAS SCARROT | JUDAS SCARROT | JOHN 6:71 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | ACTS 1:26 | | | | | MATTHIAS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | ACTS 14:14 | | | | | BARNABAS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | ACTS 14:14 | | | | | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | PAUL | | | | |
| 16 | KN TO BROTHER SEE MARK 6:3 SEE ALSO GALATIANS 25-12, 1 COR. 15:7, ACTS 12:7, ACTS 15:13, 21:18-26 | | | | | | | | | PAUL GALATIANS 1:19 JAMES, THE LORD'S BROTHER | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | ACTS 16:19-27 | | | | | | | | | | | | SILAS | | | | | | | |
| 18 | APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | JESUS | | | |

Appendix M

The Path of The Just

The progression for growth in the New Testament is seen over and over:

- Look
- Listen
- Learn
- Live
- Love
- Labor
- Lead
- Leave

We have showed passages supporting the progression below.

| THE PATH OF THE JUST IS AS A SHINING LIGHT (PROVERBS 4:18) | | | |
|---|-------------|------------------|---|
| 1 | LOOK | MATTHEW 13:13-16 | 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. |
| | | MARK 8:17-21 | 17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? 19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. 20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. 21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand? |
| | | LUKE 2:30 | 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, |
| | | LUKE 10:23 | 23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: |

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|---|---------------|-------------------|--|
| | | JOHN 12:39-40 | 39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. |
| | | ROMANS 11:8 | 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. |
| | | HEBREWS 12:2 | 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. |
| | | | |
| 2 | LISTEN | MATTHEW 13:18, 43 | 18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. |
| | | MATTHEW 11:15 | 15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. |
| | | MARK 4:9 | 9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. |
| | | MARK 8:18 | 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? |
| | | LUKE 8:8 | 8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. |
| | | ACTS 28:25-28 | 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. |
| | | 2 TIMOTHY 4:3 | 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; |
| | | | |
| | | | |

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| | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------|--|
| 3 | LEARN | MATTHEW 13:13-19 | <p>13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.</p> <p>14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:</p> <p>15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.</p> <p>16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.</p> <p>17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.</p> <p>18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.</p> <p>19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.</p> |
| | | MATTHEW 15:10-17 | <p>10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:</p> <p>11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.</p> <p>12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?</p> <p>13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.</p> <p>14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.</p> <p>15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.</p> <p>16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?</p> <p>17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?</p> |
| | | MARK 7:14 | <p>14 And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Harken unto me every one of you, and understand:</p> |
| | | MARK 8:18 | <p>18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?</p> |
| | | LUKE 8:10 | <p>10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.</p> |
| | | 1 CORINTHIANS 3:1-3 | <p>1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.</p> <p>2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.</p> <p>3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?</p> |

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| | | | |
|---|-------------|-----------------|---|
| | | 1 PETER 2:2 | 1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: |
| 4 | LIVE | MATTHEW 7:24-29 | 24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. 28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. |
| | | PHILIPPIANS 4:9 | 9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. |
| | | JAMES 1:22 | 22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. |
| | | HEBREWS 5:12-14 | 12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. |
| | | PSALMS 37:23 | 23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. |
| 5 | LOVE | JOHN 14:15 | 15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. |
| | | JOHN 14:21-24 | 21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. |

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| | | JOHN 13:34-35 | 34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. |
| | | JOHN 15:12-17 | 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. 16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. 17 These things I command you, that ye love one another. |
| | | JOHN 21:15-17 | 15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. |
| | | ROMANS 13:10 | 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. |
| | | 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3 | 1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. |
| | | 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14 | 14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: |
| 6 | LABOR | JOHN 4:34-36 | 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. 35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. 36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may |

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| | | | rejoice together. |
| | | 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1 | 1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. |
| | | 1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 | 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. |
| | | 1 CORINTHIANS 16:14 | 14 Let all your things be done with charity. |
| | | COLOSSIANS 3:14 | 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. |
| | | 1 THESSALONIANS 1:3 | 3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; |
| | | 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-13 | 12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. |
| | | HEBREWS 6:10 | 10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. |
| 7 | LEAD | 1 PETER 5:2 | 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; |
| 8 | LEAVE | 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 2 PETER 1:15 | 6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 15 Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. |

Appendix N

THE PRINCIPLE OF “DO AND TEACH” THROUGHOUT THE HOLY BIBLE

Exodus 18

20 And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

Exodus 35

1 And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These are the words which the LORD hath commanded, that ye should do them.

Leviticus 19

37 Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 20

8 And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.

22 Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.

Deuteronomy 4

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

Deuteronomy 6

1 Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Deuteronomy 11

32 And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.

Deuteronomy 26

16 This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

Deuteronomy 29

9 Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

Ezra 7

10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Psalms 111

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10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

Isaiah 28

9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

Matthew 5

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 7

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Matthew 28

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

John 13

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Acts 1

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

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Galatians 6

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Philippians 4

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Romans 2

13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

2 Timothy 2

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

James 1

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.