

Introduction

Notes

ILLUSTRATION:

Thomas Hawkes – ever heard of him? Probably not!

It was February 8, 1555 when he was brought in before Bishop Bonner. He was condemned as a heretic on the following grounds:

1. He refused to have his child christened.
2. He refused to listen to the Mass in Latin.
3. He chose to read the Bible for himself.

As a result of these serious “crimes,” Hawkes was sentenced to die on June 10. Some of his friends were apprehensive, and thus asked him for a favor. They held to the same beliefs as Hawkes and realized that it was only a matter of time before they too would embrace the stake. Doubts plagued them: “How long can our faith stand the fire?” They asked Hawkes to give them a sign while burning at the stake.

Hawkes agreed that if he was at perfect peace of mind and the fire was tolerable, he would lift his hands above his head. The day finally came for his execution. His friends and fellow believers anxiously looked on searching for his sign. When in the fire so long that he could no longer speak, his skin had shrunk, his fingers had burned off, and everyone thought he was dead, he suddenly raised his burning hands over his head and clapped them together three times. The people, especially those who understood the significance, broke into praise and applause as Thomas Hawkes, one of our fore-fathers, slipped into eternity.

Doctrine was important then; it is still important now!

I. Key Definitions

- Doctrine – teaching, beliefs, instruction
- Bibliology – organized study of facts about the Bible’s indisputable origin, necessity, and authenticity.
- Theology – organized study of facts about God, His existence, and attributes.
- Christology – organized study of facts pointing to His pre-incarnate deity, His God-attributes, His work of salvation, etc.
- Pneumatology – organized study of facts pointing to the Holy Spirit’s ministry, His person, and His deity.
- Anthropology – organized study of facts about man’s creation, responsibility, and Fall.

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- Hamartiology – organized study of facts about sin’s origin and pervasiveness in humanity.
- Soteriology – organized study of facts about redemption and salvation.
- Angelology – organized study of facts about good and fallen angels.
- Ecclesiology – organized study of facts about the church started by Christ.
- Eschatology – organized study of facts relating to end-time events.

II. Why is doctrine important?

1. Doctrine is the cohesive glue that holds a body of believers together. The tie that binds should be one of doctrine.
2. Doctrine is the grounds for fellowship. Two cannot walk together unless they are agreed. The agreement should be in doctrine. Acts 2:42 teaches that before they continued in the fellowship, they continued in doctrine.
3. Correct doctrine is the guardian of the truth. We are to contend for the faith, a reference to a body of beliefs, teachings, or doctrine.

III. Where does our doctrine originate?

1. Not from TRADITION.
2. Not from MAN.
3. Not from Extra- or Non-biblical sources.
4. Our doctrine must come straight from the Bible for it is God’s Word (2 Timothy 3:16).
 - a. By definition, the Bible is God’s finished written Word.
 - b. In this book (biblos), He has revealed His person, His work, and His will for mankind.
 - c. God is the Author through the agency of the Holy Spirit and holy men (2 Peter 1:21).
 - d. If our standing on the Bible is not correct, then the substance of our biblical understanding is shaky at best – the Bible is the foundation for all that we believe and practice.
 - e. How do I know that there is a Heaven? The Bible says so. How do I know that Jesus is God? The Bible says so. How do I know that the Holy Spirit is a person, not a force? The Bible says so. How do I know that all men everywhere are sinners? The Bible says so.

Bibliology

Bibliology is broken down into its five major components. I liken these five components as the “pillars” of Bibliology.

Pillar 1 - Revelation

- a. Why is the Bible “authoritative”
 - i. It is God’s Word according to 2 Timothy 3:16

- b. Why is the Bible “God’s Word”
 - i. It was He who gave these words to men through the Holy Spirit moving them. 2 Peter 1:21

- c. What does “revelation” mean
 - i. Revelation is that act of God whereby He communicates truth to mankind that was previously unknown and otherwise unknowable.
 - ii. This “revelation” can be divided into General (creation, conscience) and Specific or Special revelation (Canon, Christ).

- d. Did God reveal His truth to men in English
 - i. No. He PRESERVED that truth through languages.

- e. Why is the Bible our Final Authority?
 - i. Verses to address:
 - 1. 2 Timothy 3:15-17
 - 2. 2 Peter 1:21
 - 3. Hebrews 1:1-3
 - 4. John 1:1-3
 - 5. Genesis 1:1-3

 - ii. What did Jesus teach about the Old Testament?
 - 1. its authority – Matthew 22:43
 - 2. its reliability – Matthew 26:54
 - 3. its finality – Matthew 4:4-10
 - 4. its sufficiency – Luke 16:31
 - 5. its indestructibility – Matthew 5:17-18
 - 6. its unity / clarity – Luke 24:27, 44
 - 7. its historicity – Matthew 12:40
 - 8. its facticity – Matthew 19:2-5
 - 9. its inerrancy – Matthew 22:29; John 3:12
 - 10. its infallibility – John 10:35

Pillar 2 - Inspiration

- a. What does this mean?

- i. Literally, the word “inspiration” is *theopneustos*, meaning God-breathed.
 - ii. Theologically, this doctrine refers to the act of God whereby He records His truth for mankind.
- b. Where is this taught?
- i. The *locus classicus* passage is 2 Timothy 3:16.
- c. What is the difference between revelation and inspiration?
- i. Revelation is the communication of truth. It may occur in a dream, a vision, audible voice, or a myriad of other ways. It DOES NOT have to be written down.
 - ii. Inspiration is said to occur when the word is now on paper. These events/truths that are now inspired may or may not be revealed truth.
 - iii. EXAMPLE: In the genealogical records, we can [safely] assume that David knew his father was Jesse and that this did not have to be revealed to Him miraculously.
 - iv. EXAMPLE 2: We know that Daniel saw and heard revealed truth from God, but was then told to “seal it up,” meaning that what he experienced was REVELATION, but it was not recorded (INSPIRATION).
- d. What did God “inspire” – words, thoughts, ideas?
- i. The whole tenor of the Bible speaks to the importance of words. Psalm 12:6,7; Proverbs 30:5
 - ii. Words are so important that it became a Name to describe Christ. John 1:1, 14; 1 John 5:7
- e. What is the human element in Scripture?
- i. It is written in at least three different languages.
 - ii. It was written by at least 40 different men.
 - iii. It reflects different literary styles.
 - iv. It shows human interest.
 - v. It utilizes human memory.
 - vi. It incorporates human cultures.
 - vii. It speaks from a human observer’s perspective.
 - viii. It gives different angles of the same event (the gospels).
 - ix. It speaks of God from our perspective. (Anthropomorphisms)
 - x. It reveals man’s sin (doesn’t gloss over it)
- f. How is “inspiration” credible?
- i. The testimony of Archeology
 - 1. Abraham – birthplace discovered, details of his sojourn in Egypt established, his battle with the kings verified, etc.

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2. Pithon – city built for Rameses II. Archeology revealed that the walls of the houses were made out of sunbaked bricks – some with straw, some without!
 3. Belshazzar – King of the Chaldeans? For a long time, no such name was found in Chaldean history, no gaps were found to “allow” for a missing name, and another king (Nabonidus) was listed during the time the Bible stated Belshazzar was king. Major problem?
 - a. In 1854, Sir Henry Rawlinson discovered in Ur some cylinders containing an inscription made by Nabonidus. In this message, he mentions “Belshazzar, his eldest son..”
 - b. Through further investigation, it was learned that Nabonidus was out of the country on business, Belshazzar was made the Regent or acting King, and Daniel was the “third ruler in the kingdom.”
- ii. The testimony of the Bible
1. Unity of the Bible
 - a. The wonder of its formation-the way in which it grew-one of the mysteries of time.
 - b. The wonder of its unification-a library of 66 books, yet one Book.
 - c. The wonder of its age-the most ancient of all books.
 - d. The wonder of its sales-the best-seller of all time, far ahead of any other book.
 - e. The wonder of its interest-the only book in the world read by all classes of people.
 - f. The wonder of its language-written largely by uneducated men, yet the best book from a literary standpoint.
 - g. The wonder of its preservation-the most hated of all books, yet it continues to exist!
 2. Its representation of God:
 - a. No human mind could conceive of a God so perfect. (Allah is a good picture of what humans can invent for a Deity.)
 - b. The Bible condemns man – definitely not an invention of the human mind (we tend to “glorify” or “deify” ourselves.)
 - c. Human writers would not write about an eternal torment or guilt caused by sin (most religions believe death ends it all).

- d. Man could not invent a “salvation by grace” system. Mankind wants to merit salvation by works.
- 3. Fulfilled Prophecy validates Scripture:
 - a. Prophecies concerning the Jewish nation
 - b. Prophecies concerning Gentile nations
 - c. Prophecies concerning the Messiah
- 4. It directly claims to be God’s Word. (1 Thess. 2:13)
- iii. The testimony of Christ.
 - 1. His words
 - 2. His works
 - 3. His resurrection
- iv. The testimony of changed lives
 - 1. Peter
 - 2. Paul

Pillar 3 - Canonization

- a. What is a “canon” (how else is it translated...)?
 - i. Canon is translated as “rule” in Gal 6:16 and Phil 3:16.
 - ii. Pictorially, the word “canon” refers to a measuring rod.
 - iii. Theologically, the word refers to the group of books that have been recognized as authoritatively God’s Word by meeting the criteria (canons) that have been established.
- b. Why is the apocrypha not accepted?
 - i. The apocrypha was never recognized by Israel.
 - ii. The apocrypha was not recognized by Christ (Luke 24:44)
 - iii. The apocrypha was not recognized by the first church.
 - iv. The apocrypha teaches false doctrine.
- c. Wasn’t it in the first KJV edition?
 - i. The original 1611 King James Bible contained the Apocrypha.
 - ii. It was placed in-between the testaments for its historical value.
 - iii. These non-canonical writings can help us understand the Jewish mindset during the 400 silent years between the testaments.

Canonicity - An Overview

• **Criteria**

- 1. Apostolicity
- 2. Catholicity
- 3. Consistency
- 4. Authority

• Stages

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Composing | 4. Completing |
| 2. Collecting | 5. Copying |
| 3. Comparing | |

• Disputed books

1. Hebrews: no human writer named
2. James: seemingly contradiction with Paul’s treatise on faith and works
3. 2 Peter: writing style is different from 1 Peter
4. 2-3 John: He is called an “elder” instead of Apostle.
5. Jude: quotes the apocryphal book Enoch
6. Revelation: the mention of a 1,000 year reign

• Local Churches meeting

1. Western (Rome)
2. Eastern (Alexandria)
3. Syrian (Antioch)

NOTE: Each region struggled but all came to the same conclusion

• Developing Canon as seen in Councils

1. Synod of Laodicea – 363 AD
Forbad the reading of any books that were non-canonical
2. Athanasius – 367 AD
He was the first to list the 27 books
3. Synod of Hippo – 393 AD
Confirmed these 27 books
4. Synod of Carthage – 397 AD
Only the New Testament to be read in the local churches
5. Council of Carthage – 419 AD
Reaffirmed the Canon

Pillar 4 - Illumination

- a. How does the Holy Spirit enlighten us?
 - i. Psalm 119:30 ~ The entrance of God’s word brings light.
 - ii. Illumination is that point in which the Holy Spirit helps man to understand and apply the truths to his own personal walk.
 - iii. How do we prepare our hearts to understand God’s word?
 1. We must express an attitude of humble faith.
 2. We must obey the light that we have already been given.
 3. We must meditate upon the light we have already received.

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- b. Is this the same as revelation?
 - i. No. Revelation is when God communicates something previously unknown and otherwise unknowable.
 - ii. Illumination is when God, through the Holy Spirit, allows man to understand that which has been revealed and recorded.

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Lecture 3 – Preservation

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Pillar 5 - Preservation

- A. Does the Bible say “how” God would preserve His word?
- i. Specifically, we are taught that in the Old Testament, God’s Word was preserved through these means:
 1. Priests (Deut 17:18)
 2. Kings (had to make own copy from the Priest’s copy)
 3. Fathers (Deut 6)
 4. NOTICE: Home (fathers), the Government (Kings) and Religion – aka, the Wilderness Church (Priests)
 - ii. Specifically, we are told this in the New Testament:
 1. God’s word is truth (John 17:17)
 2. The Church is pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim 3:15)
 3. The Church “received” His words directly (John 17:8)
 4. The saints are charged to contend for it (Jude 3)
 5. The saints are taught to teach what has been “pre-served” (same word as “observed”) Matt 28:18-20
 6. NOTICE: The emphasis for preserving the New Testament is relegated to local New Testament churches.
 7. DEDUCTION: If the church will always be here according to Matthew 16:18, then we must always have the Word of God.
- B. Define these synonyms:
- i. Byzantine
Byzantine refers to the region in which the gospel first spread. The Gospel left Jerusalem, traveling north by north west. (Byzantine is taken from Byzantium, which was changed to Constantinople, today called Istanbul – Turkey / Asia Minor.)
 - ii. Traditional
Traditional refers to the fact that this is the text that has been traditionally used by the churches.
 - iii. Syrian
Refers to region where missions and Bible printing exploded.
 - iv. Antiochian
This refers to the city where the first missionaries were called. This church also printed the Old Latin (Itala) and the Syriac Peshitta.
 - v. Received Text (Textus Receptus)
Refers to fact that this text has been received by churches.

- C. How does this differ from the Majority Text?
- i. The Majority Text is relatively a new thing put out by Dallas Theological Seminary in the early 1980's. It disagrees with the Received Text in less than 1% of its readings.
- D. Define these synonyms:
- i. Alexandrian
Refers to fact that the dominant manuscripts come from Egypt.
 - ii. Minority
Highlights fact that this text rests on little actual manuscript evidence.
 - iii. Critical Text
Represents a “scholarly” or critical look at the Received Text; allowing for its corrections in a new text.
 - iv. Nestles'-Aland Text
Two men most responsible for printing the Critical Text today.
 - v. Westcott-Hort Text
Two men who led translations away from the Received Text.
- E. Major Players:
- i. John Wycliffe
 1. First to publish Bible in English during the late 1300's.
 2. His English is based on the Latin Vulgate
 - ii. William Tyndale
 1. First to translate from Greek to English.
 2. Burned at Stake
 3. KJV retains over 90% of his word translations.
 - iii. Erasmus
 1. Catholic priest.
 2. Not in good favor with Pope (his work was on the “Forbidden Reading” list.
 3. Not wanting to break with tradition as a Protestant.
(Dies somewhere in between...)
 4. Used of God to bring the churches back to a pure Greek text used by underground churches rather than using the corrupted Vulgate by Jerome.
 - iv. Stephanus
 1. Also presented the world with several Greek editions.
 2. He also divided the Bible into chapters and verses.

- v. Elziver Brothers
 - 1. Printing team that published Bibles and texts.
 - 2. As an advertising blurb, they mentioned the “omnibum textum receptum...” – the text now received by all. The name “Textus Receptus” stuck.

Notes

STATEMENTS:

1. Preservation through the TR, Traditional, Byzantine, Antiochian, Syrian Text is NOT a limited, strict view of preservation. It is a HIGH view of God’s Person, Promise, and Power.
2. The Critical Text proponents have four major factors:
 - a. The oldest manuscripts are the best.
 - b. The manuscripts should be weighed, not counted.
 - c. The more difficult readings are to be preferred.
 - d. The shorter reading is to be preferred.
3. Facts are pesky things!
 - a. Fact 1 – Alexandrian text is shorter; the Received Text is longer.
 - b. Fact 2 – Alexandrian manuscripts are older than the Byzantine.
 - c. How you “interpret” these facts is where the debate rages:
 - i. Were early heretics more apt to take away or add to text?
 - ii. Were older manuscripts “older” because of rejection?
 - d. There is a 7% disagreement between the CT and TR. There is a 1.3% disagreement between the TR and the MT.

Consider these verses for Preservation:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Luke 16:29 | John 5:39 |
| 2 Timothy 3:15-16 | 2 Timothy 4:1 |
| Psalms 100:5 | Psalms 111:7-8 |
| Psalms 117:2 | Acts 7:38 |
| Psalms 119:22, 57, 100, 144, 152, 160 | Matthew 4:4 |
| Matthew 24:35 | John 10:35 |
| 1 Peter 1:25 (Isaiah 40:8) | |

Consider these verses for “conspiracy...”

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Deut. 4:2 | Deut 12:32 |
| 2 Peter 3:15-16 | 2 Thess 2:2 |
| 2 Corinthians 2:17 | 2 Corinthians 4:2 |
| Revelation 22:18-19 | |

CONCLUDING REMARK:

The purpose of preservation is PROPAGATION. We do not have these doctrines to argue over translations, texts, or pet doctrines. God has given us His Word so that we will LIVE it and SPREAD it.

Lecture 4 – Theology**I. The Existence of God**

- a. Different systems in the world to explain “GOD” to man
 - i. Deism
 1. God is Maker, but not Keeper of the Universe.
 2. God does not interact with man.
 3. God exists, but we have no personal relationship with Him.
 - ii. Atheism
 1. There is no God.
 2. It’s not a belief that God doesn’t exist; rather, it is a belief there is no God.
 - iii. Agnosticism
 1. If God exists, we cannot know Him.
 2. There’s no absolute knowledge about God.
 3. This is the position of a skeptic, bordering on atheism.
 - iv. Pantheism
 1. There is only One Substance in the universe – God.
 2. God is in everything.
 3. Everything is God.
 - v. Polytheism – belief in many gods.
 - vi. Tritheism
 1. There are three gods.
 2. This is the charge against Trinitarians.
 - vii. Dualism
 1. There are two equally powerful gods competing for control of the universe.
 2. Observed in Yin/Yang concept & the “Masters of the Universe” concept.
 - viii. Theism
 1. There is a God.
 2. I cannot know Him intimately.
 3. The difference between theism and deism is that in Deism, God is viewed as a spectator, an observer. In theism, God is a participant.
 4. A theist believes in God, sees His handiwork, but is lost. (For even the devils believe in one God.)

- ix. Monotheism
 - 1. A belief in One God.
 - 2. Belief is shared by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

- b. Major Arguments for God’s existence
 - i. Cosmological
 - 1. The argument from Cause and Effect
 - 2. God is the First Uncaused Cause

 - ii. Teleological
 - 1. The argument from Order and Design
 - 2. God is the Principle Architect of everything

 - iii. Anthropological
 - 1. The argument from Life
 - 2. Since life begets life, God is the source of all living things

 - iv. Axiological
 - 1. The argument from Morality
 - 2. God is the Supreme Moral Lawgiver of the Universe

 - v. Ontological
 - 1. The argument from Necessary Ideas
 - 2. God’s existence, by definition, is necessary
 - 3. It is impossible for God to not exist

Notes

II. The Attributes of God

- a. Non-communicable Attributes (those which belong only to God)

i. Omnipresence	iv. Immutability
ii. Omnipotence	v. Sovereign
iii. Omniscience	vi. Eternal

- b. Communicable Attributes (those which belong to God, which as we develop causes us to become “Christ-like”)

i. Love	viii. Meekness
ii. Joy	ix. Temperance
iii. Peace	x. Holiness
iv. Longsuffering	xi. Justice
v. Gentleness	xii. Merciful
vi. Goodness	xiii. Righteousness
vii. Faith	

- c. Names of God
 - i. Adonai – Lord, Master
 - ii. Elohim – Plural noun, generic for “god” or “judge”

1. El Elyon – The Most High God
 2. El Shaddai – Almighty God who Nourishes
 3. El Olam – Everlasting God
- iii. Jehovah – Covenant name of Sovereign rule, “Unchanging, Self-Existent”
1. Jehovah Jireh – The LORD who provides (sees)
 2. Jehovah Nissi – The LORD our Banner
 3. Jehovah Qadash – The LORD that Sanctifies
 4. Jehovah Raah – The LORD my Shepherd
 5. Jehovah Rapha – The LORD that heals
 6. Jehovah Sabaoth- The LORD of Hosts
 7. Jehovah Shammah – The LORD is there
 8. Jehovah Shalom – The LORD my peace
 9. Jehovah Tsidkenu – The LORD our righteousness

Notes

III. The Trinity (Tri-Unity) of God

a. Old Testament Indications

- i. His Name, Elohim, is plural.
- ii. Genesis 1:26, Let “us” make man in “our” image...
- iii. The Great Revelation of Deuteronomy is Trinitarian

Deuteronomy 6:4, *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

1. This is called the Shema Passage, meaning “to hear, or listen”
 2. The [singular] Jehovah our God[s] is one [compound unit] Adonai.
 3. Lit. Jehovah, our Gods, is one compound, eclectic Lord.
 4. God, thus revealed, is to be loved in a three-fold way.
- iv. He is the Thrice-Holy God of Isaiah

b. New Testament Assertions

- i. The Father is God (Romans 1:7; 15:6)
- ii. The Son is God (John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8)
- iii. The Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-5; Matthew 28:18-20)
- iv. Yet, there is but ONE God! (Deut 6:4,5 cf / 1 John 5:7)
 - Consider the Baptismal Formula – “...in the name...” (not NAMES)
 - Consider the Apostolic Benediction – 2 Cor 13:14

Can we illustrate the Trinity?

We can come close; it is impossible, due to the fact that we cannot really fully understand the Trinity. Nor is there anything like the trinity which can be our illustration. Let us look at some illustrations of the Trinity.

Notes

1. St. Patrick used the Shamrock to explain the Trinity to the Irish. There are three petals that are unique and distinct while the three are one plant.
2. Some have suggested an equilateral triangle. This type has three equal angles and sides. If you take one angle away you do not have a triangle.
3. Others suggest three matches held together and burning. One flame, however there are three distinct parts to the flame.
4. An egg. There are 3 distinct parts. Put in a blender and you have 1 mix. (Probably the essence is different.)
5. A rope with three strands, yet one rope.
6. A tree. Branch, leaves and root.
7. The sun. Light, heat and motion.
8. Water. Solid, liquid and steam.
9. Butterfly. Egg, larva and butterfly.
10. Plant. Seed, flower and stem.
11. The color television is of interest. It produces on a black and white program a distinctly black and white picture however if you look closely you will see that the screen is made up of blue, green and red dots or lines. Your eyes perceive black and white. If you take any of the three colors away you no longer have a black and white picture to watch. All three colors are showing the same picture however there are three distinct colors.

The problem with these illustrations is that they all fail in some way or another.

CONCLUSION:

God, in His person, has been revealed to us in the “Godhead...” consisting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian God has certain attributes that He longs for us to have. The closer we are to Him, the more this “Christ-likeness” will be developed.

Can we fully understand with our finite minds the Infinite, Eternal One – NO!
However, we have all eternity to “get to know Him.”

Isaiah 57:15

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Notes

The Deity of Christ

Introduction:

What do you think about Jesus? Who do ye say that the Son of Man is? These are the questions that must be answered. We live in a day when the deity of Christ is under attack. The deity of Christ is under attack because the Word of God (the Bible) has been attacked. When modern versions deny in places or leave an unclear impression about who Christ is, there is no way to expect people to be grounded in this doctrine. If the deity of Christ is denied, is it any wonder why we have such a multitude of ideas as to how a person is saved. If Christ is not God, He cannot be our Saviour. If we have no Saviour, we must somehow seek a way to bridge the gap between God and man. If we are shaky in our Bible version, every other doctrine will somehow be affected. If we are not grounded in doctrine – specifically, the deity of Christ – we become prey to the cults of our day.

Why is doctrine important?

1. Doctrine is the cohesive glue that holds a body of believers together. The tie that binds should be one of doctrine.
2. Doctrine is the grounds for fellowship. Two cannot walk together unless they are agreed. The agreement should be in doctrine. Acts 2:42 teaches that before they continued in the fellowship, they continued in doctrine.
3. Correct doctrine is a gift from God. This body of beliefs, or faith, has been delivered once to the saints. We are to contend for the faith which has been given to us by God.

Concerning the deity of Christ, how do we prove it? We can use logic. We can use history. We can use Church Creeds. We can use perhaps other legitimate avenues. Nevertheless, the greatest proof lies in the Scriptures. What does the Bible say about the deity of Christ?

The Scriptures say much about Christ. We are told that He fulfills the office of PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING. We are told that He is the SON OF DAVID, the SON OF ABRAHAM, the SON OF MAN, and the SON OF GOD. We learn through Scripture that the “Son of God” is also “God, the Son.” How do we show this to others?

I. His deity is shown through His names.

A. He is called God.

- Isaiah 9:6 ~ *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* [Compare this with Jer 32:18 where Jehovah is called “Mighty God.”]

- Hebrews 1:8 ~ *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.*
- John 20:28 ~ *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*
- 1 Timothy 3:16 ~ *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.* [Compare this with John 1:1, 14]
- Titus 2:13 ~ *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*
- Romans 9:3-5 ~ *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 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; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*
- 1 John 3:16 ~ *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*
- 1 John 5:20 ~ *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*
- Revelation 1:8 ~ *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* [The importance of this verse is to show that Jesus is not just the “mighty” God, but the Almighty. The phrase, “...which is, which was, and which is to come...” is repeated with the phrase “Lord God Almighty” in the following verses: Rev 4:8, 11:7. The Alpha and the Omega, the One which is, which was, and which is to come, is the Lord God Almighty – Jesus Christ.]
- Revelation 21:6-7 ~ *And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God,*

and he shall be my son. (Alpha and Omega will be his God...)

Notes

NOTE: In Colossians 2:9, all the “fulness of the Godhead” dwells bodily in Christ Jesus. Additionally, both Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:21 refer to the Messiah as “Emmanuel” or *God with us*.

B. He claims to be the Jehovah of the Old Testament

- Jo 8:58 ~ *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*
 - a. Compare with Exo 3:14 ~ *And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*
- Jo 17:5 ~ *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*
 - a. Compare with Isaiah 42:8 ~ *I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.*
- Jo 10:11 ~ *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*
 - a. Compare with Ps 23:1 ~ *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*
- Mt 25:31-32 ~ *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*
 - a. Compare with Joel 3:12 ~ *Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.*
- Jo 8:12 ~ *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*
 - a. Compare with Psalm 27:1 ~ *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*
- Rev 1:17 ~ *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:*
 - a. Compare with Isa 44:6 ~ *Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.*

- C. He is called Lord. (Mt 22:44; Romans 10:9, 13) Roman emperors permitted this name to be applied to them only when they permitted themselves to be deified. The word literally means “Master” and is the New Testament equivalent to Jehovah. (Phil 2:9-11)
- Romans 10:13 ~ *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*
 - a. Compare with Joel 2:32 ~ *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered...*
 - Philippians 2:9-11 ~ *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
- D. He is called the Son of God. (Jn 5:17-18; Jn 3:16)
Sometimes this name is misunderstood as suggesting inferiority. However, we should always study the Bible in its own cultural context, instead of our culture. The Jews understood this title as being equal to God (John 5:19) and not inferior to Him.
- John 5:17-18 ~ *But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.*
- E. He is called the Lamb and Shepherd. (John 1:29 w/ John 10:10-14)
- John 1:29 ~ *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*
 - John 10:11 ~ *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*
- F. He is the Root and Branch of David. (Rev 22:16)
- Re 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.* (Zech 6:12; Jer 23:1-6)

II. His deity is shown through His works.

“What He did validates who He was; Who He was validates what He did...”

A. He Creates.

John 1:3; Heb 1:1-3; Col. 1:16 Christ is the creator and not a created

being. A created being, in God's government, could never do for us what Christ accomplished in our redemption.

- John 1:3 ~ *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
- Hebrews 1:1-3 ~ *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*
- Colossians 1:16-17 ~ *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

B. He Preserves all things.

Heb 1:3; Col 1:17 Many times what we refer to as the laws of nature are the volitional actions of the Son of God.

C. He Forgives sins.

Mark 2:5,10,11 / Ps 51:4, Lk 7:48-50 If Christ were merely a created being, He could never forgive sins. No angel can forgive sins, much less die for it. If Jesus had simply been a sinless, created being, He could have only been a substitute for one individual – one created being for another. Yet, because He is God, He is able to taste death for every man (Hebrews 2:9).

- Mark 2:7-11 ~ *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.*
- Hebrews 2:9 ~ *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

D. He gives eternal life. (John 17:2)

Notes

- John 17:2 ~ As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

Notes

III. His deity is shown through worship.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| A. Matt 2:2 | Wise men come to worship Him |
| B. Matt 8:2 | a healed leper worships Him |
| C. Matt 9:18 | a certain ruler worships Him |
| D. Matt 14:33 | those in a ship worship Him |
| E. Matt 15:25 | a Canaanite woman worships Him |
| F. Matt 28:17 | a group worshipping a risen Savior |
| G. John 9:38 | a healed blind man worships Him |
| H. Heb 1:6 | the Father commands the angels to worship |

IV. His deity is shown through His attributes.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| A. Omnipotence | Matt 28:18 |
| B. Omniscience | John 4:18; 16:30; Matt 16:21; 17:22; 26:1-2 |
| C. Omnipresence | Matt 28:20; John 3:13 |
| D. Eternal | Hebrews 1:11-12; John 1:1, Micah 5:2 |
| E. Immutable | Hebrews 13:8 (see Malachi 3:6; James 1:17) |
| F. Holy | Heb 7:26; 1Pet 2:22; 1John 3:5 |

V. His deity is shown through His equality with the Father.

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|----------|-----------------------------|----|------------|--------------------------------|----|------------|--|
| A. | He spoke with authority. Matt 5:21-22 | | | | | | | | | |
| B. | He gave a new commandment to be followed. John 13:34 | | | | | | | | | |
| C. | He stated His Words would be man's final judge. Mt 24:25; Jo 12:48 | | | | | | | | | |
| D. | He started a CHURCH <table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Mt 16:18</td> <td>"I will build MY church..."</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>1 Tim 3:15</td> <td>"The church of the living GOD"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Acts 20:28</td> <td>"church of God...purchased with BLOOD"</td> </tr> </table> | 1. | Mt 16:18 | "I will build MY church..." | 2. | 1 Tim 3:15 | "The church of the living GOD" | 3. | Acts 20:28 | "church of God...purchased with BLOOD" |
| 1. | Mt 16:18 | "I will build MY church..." | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | 1 Tim 3:15 | "The church of the living GOD" | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | Acts 20:28 | "church of God...purchased with BLOOD" | | | | | | | | |
| E. | 1 Corinthians 10:9...Here we learn that the Israelites tempted Christ while they were in the wilderness. (Num 21:6-7) | | | | | | | | | |
| F. | Isaiah 6:1-10...The context indicates that Isaiah saw Jehovah Sabaoth. Yet John 12:37-41 clarifies that he actually saw Christ. | | | | | | | | | |
| G. | In Ezek 34:11-12, Jehovah is seeking the lost. This same terminology is used by Christ in Luke 19:10. | | | | | | | | | |
| H. | In Zech 12:10, the prophet states that they would look at Jehovah whom they had pierced. Rev 1:7 clarifies that it was Christ who was pierced. | | | | | | | | | |
| I. | Titus 1-3...A quick perusal of these three chapters show us that Paul used the terms "Christ our Saviour" and "God our Saviour" interchangeably. (See chapter 1:3,4; 2:10, 13 and 3:4, 6) | | | | | | | | | |

- J. Additionally verses to show this equality would be John 5:18-21; 8:58ff; 10:32; 1 John 5:7 and Philippians 2:5.

Notes

CONCLUSION:

What does this mean to soul winning? In 2 Corinthians 5:19, we read, “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself..” God was “in Christ.” Jesus would state it this way, “Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” (John 14:11) Matthew 22:42 asks the question, “What think ye of Christ?” This is still the important question of the hour. Paul stated that he determined to preach nothing but Christ, and Him crucified (1Cor 1:23, 2:2). We are warned in Galatians 1:8-9 that there would come those who would pervert the Gospel of Christ. To the Church of Corinth, people were being led to follow another “Jesus.” (See 2 Corinthians 11:1-4.) Only the God of the Bible can save. Therefore, it would behoove any Christian to be able to prove from the Bible who he is putting his trust in for eternity. While the Mormon Church may claim to be the “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,” – when their claims are placed against the Bible we find several key truths:

1. They are not a biblical church.
2. They do not worship the Jesus Christ of the Bible.
3. They are not saints.
4. We are living in the Latter Days.

This study is by no means exhaustive. Study on your own will produce much more evidence concerning the identity of Jesus Christ.

The Day God Died...

Notes

Introduction:

What Christian has not tried to reason with a Jehovah's Witness about the deity of Christ and been "stabbed" with the question, "So, you believe God died...?" Of course, death to a Jehovah's Witness and to a Christian carries different definitions. The implication for a Witness is cessation of existence. If God ceased to exist, if even only for a few days, the world would be thrown into destruction (for He is the One who holds it all together.) By the way, they are absolutely correct in the logical conclusion of their assumed definition.

However, if death is defined in the Bible as "separation," - then we can speak about the deity of Christ as well as the humanity of Christ without fear of contradiction.

I. The Biblical Definition of Death

- a. Genesis 2:17, "...for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die..."
- b. Here is a promise of a consequence from the One who cannot lie. Did Adam (and/or Eve) die when the fruit was eaten? That depends on your definition of death!
- c. Notice Webster's 1828 Dictionary definitions under "DEATH"
 - i. #9. In theology, perpetual separation from God, and eternal torments; called the second death. Rev 2.
 - ii. #10. Separation or alienation of the soul from God; a being under the dominion of sin, and destitute of grace or divine life; called spiritual death.
 - We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. 1 John 3. Luke I.
 - Civil death, is the separation of a man from civil society, or from the enjoyment of civil rights; as by banishment, abjuration of the realm, entering into a monastery, &c.
- d. What does Genesis 2:17 teach literally?
 - i. Literally, "Thou shalt surely die..." is "dying, thou shalt die..."
 1. Adam Clarke: "Thou shalt not only die spiritually, by losing the life of God, but from that moment thou shalt become mortal, and shalt continue in a dying state till thou die. This we find literally accomplished; every moment of man's life may be considered as an act of dying, till soul and body are separated."

- ii. Observe what happened at the Fall.
 1. Adam and Eve were separated from God (they hid themselves)
 2. A lamb (or animal) was sacrificed – physical death was introduced
 3. The promise of the bruising of the Messiah (verse 15) – a reference to the Crucifixion

- e. How does Luke 16 picture death?
 - i. Two men, one rich and the other poor, die.
 - ii. Both men, after death, are seen.
 - iii. One man, after death, is comforted – the other tormented.
 - iv. Death for both was not cessation; it was separation of body and spirit.

- f. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...
 - i. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.
 - ii. In other words, the “dead” are still “alive.”

- g. How does this relate to Christ?
 - i. Did He die on the Cross? YES
 - ii. Did He cease to exist? NO
 - iii. Did He even really rest? NO
 - iv. What happened?
 1. His Spirit separated from the body that had been prepared for Him. The body stayed in the tomb, until He resurrected and came out of the tomb.
 2. His death was not a “cessation” of existence; it was a “changing” to another form – that which is not visible to the human eye.
 3. So, did God die? No, He did not cease to exist. Yes, He did voluntarily separate from His earthly body to finish the work of redemption.

Notes

II. The Biblical Reasons for Christ's Death

- a. Basic Principles to Understand
 - i. God is holy
 1. Isaiah 5:16 *But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.*
 2. Psalm 99:5 *Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.*
 - ii. A holy God cannot fellowship with sin (or sinful people)
 1. Rom 3:23 *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*

2. 2 Corinthians 6:17 *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*
- iii. Sin separates man from God, creating a gulf or span
1. Isa 59:2 *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*
 2. Isa 35:8 *And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.*
- iv. The payment for sin is death and the wages for sin is death.
1. Ro 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
 2. Ro 5:8 *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
- v. We need an atonement who knows our need.
1. Heb 4:15-16 *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*
 2. Ro 5:11 *And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*
- vi. This atonement is promised through the Messiah (the Christ), Jesus.
1. Ro 3:25 *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;*
 2. 1Jo 2:2 *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*
 3. 1Jo 4:10 *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*
- vii. Jesus would be obedient to His Father's will (or plan).
1. Lu 22:42 *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine,*

Notes

- be done.*
2. Heb 10:7 *Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.*
(Quotation: Psalm 40:7)
- viii. By His obedience, reconciliation is possible.
 1. Ro 5:19 *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*
 - ix. The bottom line: Jesus died for my sin as fulfillment of God's plan of redemption.
 1. Heb 10:12 *But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;*
 2. Ro 6:10 *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*
- b. The Necessity of Christ's death
- i. The holiness of God made it necessary
 1. Hab 1:13 *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity...*
 - ii. The love of God made it necessary (1 John 4:10)
 - iii. The sin of man made it necessary
 1. 1 Pet 2:25 *For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*
 - iv. Fulfillment of Scripture made it necessary (Lk 24:25-27, 44)
 - v. The purpose of God made it necessary
 1. Acts 2:23 *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain...*

III. The Basic Results of His Death

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. | He becomes my substitute | Isa 53:5; 2 Cor 5:21 |
| b. | He ends the Mosaic Law | Mt 5:17; Eph 2:15-16 |
| c. | He pays the price of redemption | 1 Peter 1:18 |
| d. | He secures my reconciliation | Col 1:20; Heb 2:17 |
| e. | He provides a propitiation | I John 2:1-2; 4:10 |
| f. | He defeats Satan | Heb 2:14; 1 John 3:8 |
| g. | He provides a basis of peace with God | Romans 5:1 |
| h. | He judges the sin nature | Romans 6:6 |
| i. | He provides justification | Acts 13:39; Rom 3:28 |
| j. | He provides security | John 19:30 |

CONCLUSION:

The good news of the gospel is not that Jesus only died, but also that He rose from the grave with a glorified body. He has forever conquered death, removing the sting, so that we can boldly say, "...To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord..." The Resurrection is a well-attested fact that has great ramifications (1 Cor 15) for us as believers. Bible Doctrines 2 will cover this in more detail.

Notes

Meet the Holy Spirit...

Introduction:

Because the ministry of the Holy Spirit has been so abused or misunderstood by Charismatics, many Baptists seem to be afraid to even mention Him. Yet, He is an equal member of the Godhead. He is co-equal, co-eternal, and co-existent with the Father and the Son. The word pneuma means wind, breath, or spirit. Pneumatology, then, is the study of the Holy Spirit.

I. The Personality of the Spirit

Comments: The purpose of this section is to show that the Holy Spirit is not a “force” or an “it.” Rather, He is a person. While He does not have a “body,” we must remember that personality is not equated with visibility. Personality exists when we find intellect, emotion, and volition.

a. Actions of the Spirit

- | | | |
|------|-----------------------|-------------|
| i. | He speaks | Acts 13:2 |
| ii. | He intercedes | Romans 8:26 |
| iii. | He testifies | John 15:26 |
| iv. | He commands / directs | Acts 16:6-7 |
| v. | He oversees the work | Acts 20:28 |
| vi. | He guides in our life | John 16:13 |
| vii. | He teaches us | John 14:26 |

b. Reactions of the Spirit

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| i. | He may be grieved | Ephesians 4:25-32 |
| ii. | He may be vexed | Isaiah 63:10 |
| iii. | He may be tested/tempted | Acts 5:9 |
| iv. | He may be resisted | Acts 7:51 |
| v. | He may be blasphemed | Mark 3:29-30 |

NOTE: Blaspheme: To attribute to the Spirit a work of the devil or to attribute to the devil a work of the Spirit.

II. The Deity of the Spirit

Showing the Holy Spirit has the marks of personality is not the same thing as proving that He is God. The purpose of this section is to show that the Person of the Holy Spirit is co-equal to the Father and the Son in the Godhead.

a. Attributes of the Spirit

- | | | |
|------|-------------|-------------------|
| i. | Omnipotent | Lk 1:35; Mt 28:18 |
| ii. | Omniscient | 1 Cor 2:10 |
| iii. | Omnipresent | Psalm 139:7-10 |
| iv. | Eternal | Heb 9:14 |
| v. | Love | Rom 15:30 |
| vi. | Holy | Eph 4:30 |

b. Actions of the Spirit

- | | | |
|----|---------|-------------------------------|
| i. | Creates | Ge 1:1-2; Ps 104:30; Job 33:4 |
|----|---------|-------------------------------|

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| ii. Regenerates | John 3:3-8 |
| iii. Resurrects | Rom 8:11 |
| iv. Transforms | Rom 8:10; 12:1-2 |
| v. Saves | 1 Cor 6:11 |

Notes

III. The Spirit's Role in Salvation

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| a. He convicts | John 16:8-11 |
| b. He regenerates | John 3:3-8 |
| c. He fills | Eph 5:16-20 |
| i. This is INDIVIDUAL | |
| ii. This is COMMANDED | |
| iii. This is ACTIVE | |
| iv. This is REPEATABLE | |
| v. This relates to SERVICE | |
| vi. This happened in OLD TESTAMENT | |
| d. He places into the body | 1 Cor 12:13 |
| i. This is CORPORATE | |
| ii. This is NOT COMMANDED | |
| iii. This is PASSIVE | |
| iv. This is ONCE | |
| v. This relates to SALVATION | |
| vi. This did not happen in the OLD TESTAMENT | |
| e. He seals Eph 1:12-14 | |
| i. It implies mark of ownership | 2 Tim 2:19 |
| ii. It implies identification | Eph 1:13,14 |
| iii. It implies genuineness | Rom 4:11 |
| f. He secures | Romans 8:14-16 |
| g. He equips (spiritual gifts) | 1 Cor 12; Rom 12 |
| i. These two lists are worthy of examination. | |
| ii. In the later list (Romans 12), the sign gifts are missing. | |
| iii. The emphasis in this list relates to the ministry of the Word. | |
| h. He sanctifies | 1 Cor 6:11 |
| i. He empowers | Acts 1:8 |
| j. He indwells | 1 Cor 6:15-20; Jo 14:17 |

CONCLUSION:

The Holy Spirit is both personal and divine. He is called God, has the attributes of God, does the work of God, and is recognized as such in the New Testament. While some denominations may misunderstand His ministry, that is no reason for Baptists to shy away from this doctrine.

Created in whose Image?

Introduction:

Was man created or did he evolve? We are told repeatedly today about the fact of evolution. Yet, Jesus gave credence to the fact that there was a “first man” who was married to his “first lady.” This couple fell, bringing about the bondage of sin that our whole creation has felt. (Matthew 19:14)

Adam, who was created in God’s image, fell. As a result, there were born to him children bearing his (Adam’s) image. The work of salvation is God conforming us back into His image. We are changed from one image (Adam) to another (Christ). If we stay in Adam, we die. If we are “in Christ,” we live. The word anthropos means man. Anthropology, then, is the study of mankind.

I. The Creation of Man

This section assumes the validity / authority of every verse of Scripture. If there is no “literal creation account,” the words of the New Testament are hollow and not worthy of our obedience.

a. The Declaration of the Bible

- i. The Bible declares the fact of man’s creation; it does not defend it.
- ii. There is no argument about creation versus evolution. God simply stated, “In the beginning God created...”
- iii. Verses to consider: Genesis 1:1; Malachi 2:10; Isaiah 43:1-7; Isaiah 45:12; Matthew 19:4; 1 Corinthians 11:9; Colossians 1:16; Psalm 139:14.

b. The Day of Man’s Creation

- i. Man was created on the sixth day.
- ii. These were literal, 24-hr days (as the word YOM is generally understood; additionally, the use of ordinal and cardinal numbers attest to this fact)
- iii. There is no “gap” in Genesis 1:1-2.

c. The Design of Man’s Creation

- i. First Climate
 1. The earth was “watered” by a vapor or dew.
 2. There was no rain (nor need for it).
 3. The firmament created a canopy / terrarium effect.
 4. There were no UV rays from the sun.
 5. As a result of the canopy, the temperature would have been a constant 72-76 degrees.
- ii. Formative Creation
 1. We are told that the LORD God (Jehovah Elohim) formed man.
 2. The LORD formed man, which is what describes the potter and his clay.

3. Shows an attentive, deliberate act from the Creator directed toward the crown of His creation – man.
- iii. Fertile Crescent
1. The Earth is the Lord's...He could have placed man / garden anywhere.
 2. The Garden was planted Eastward, being the source of four rivers.
 3. The exact location of the Garden is controversial, but it can be argued that when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, they headed toward the "Fertile Crescent" – thus dubbing it the "cradle of civilization."
- iv. Female Companionship
1. Adam was lonely.
 2. God made him woman.
 3. Man was not made for solitude, but for society.
 4. There was an introduction of a new relationship.
 - a. Bone of my bone; Flesh of my flesh
 - b. Two become one

QUOTE:

B.R. Lakin: "The woman was not taken out of the foot to be trampled on; she was not taken out of the head to be lorded over; she was not taken out of the hand to be manipulated. Rather, she was taken out of his side to be close to him and from beneath his arm to be protected and guarded, and from very close to his heart to be loved.

d. The Duty of Man's Creation

- i. Man's first commandment involved WORK.
 1. Work is NOT a result of sin.
 2. God created man to work, to live with purpose.
- ii. Man had the duty to pass a test.
 1. God wanted service out of love.
 2. He did not want automatons / robots.
 3. Consequently, He gave Adam and Eve a free will.
 4. No where in Scripture do we conclusively see that God took this gift away. While man is born with a bent toward sin; he still stands before God as a free moral agent.

II. The Constitution of Man

From what is man made? On what level does he operate? Is he a trichotomous being or a dichotomous one? According to 1 Thess 5:23,

God wants to sanctify us wholly, which includes our spirit, soul, and body being preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ.

Notes

a. The Body

- i. The body makes us WORLD-conscious.
- ii. In our bodies, there are different “gates” in which knowledge is conveyed.
 - 1. Ear Gate
 - 2. Eye Gate
 - 3. Mouth Gate
 - 4. Mind Gate

CONCLUSION: The body was made out of dust and the dust was made out of nothing. The body is mingled together of dust and air. If you are blessed to have natural beauty, realize that all you are is some well-formed dirt.

b. The Soul

- i. The soul makes us SELF-conscious.
- ii. This is what we are, who we are, what we feel, etc...
- iii. It is our heart, mind, and will.
- iv. It is the seat of our emotions.
- v. It is the house of our conscience.
- vi. It is where we know and think MIND
- vii. It is where we choose to love HEART
- viii. It is where we choose... WILL

c. The Spirit

- i. The spirit makes us GOD-conscious.
- ii. The Word of God is the only instrument that can separate the soul and the spirit according to Hebrews 4:12.
- iii. Within our spirit, we find the faculties needed for worship, adoration, communion, praise, and love toward God.
- iv. Our spirit is dead, or separated, from God as a lost man. It must be quickened – made alive – in order for fellowship to take place.
- v. Within our spirit is a “God-shaped” hole that man will try to fill with something or someone.

The **PURPOSE** of God for mankind:

The body is to serve the soul; the soul is to serve the Spirit. Together, spirit-soul-body, is to serve God and in turn help those around him.

The **PURPOSE** of man for mankind:

The spirit is to be subservient to the soul; the soul is subservient to the body. Body-soul-spirit in turn becomes an avenue for Satan to exercise his influence. This philosophy of “please the body” leads to hedonism (if it feels good, do it!) Cross reference this with Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 – God’s way looks better!

III. The Condition of Man

- a. Man in a fallen state
 - i. Sinful in nature (in Adam) Ps 51:5; Jer 17:9, Eph 2:1-3
 - ii. Sinful in practice Tit 3:3; Rom 3:23
 - iii. He is lost Luke 19:10; 2 Cor 4:3-4
 - iv. He is dead Eph 2:1-5
 - v. He is under God’s wrath Rom 1:18; John 3:18,36
 - vi. He is sure of death and hell Rom 5; Heb 9:27; Rev 20:15

- b. Man in a state of grace
 - i. He is called a child of God 1 Jn 3:1-2; Jn 1:12; Gal 3:26
 - ii. He under God’s favor Eph 1:3; Rom 5:2
 - iii. He is waiting for glory Phil 3:20-21; 2 Cor 5:1
 - iv. He is sure of heaven 2 Tim 4:18; 1 Thess 4:13-18

- c. Responsibility to the Old Nature
 - i. Accept God’s estimation of it Rom 6:6-11
 - ii. Make no provision for it Rom 13:14
 - iii. Mortify it Col 3:5; Heb 11:12
 - iv. Don’t improve it Rom 6:13
 - v. Put it off Eph 4:22

- d. Responsibility to the New Nature
 - i. Reckon yourself alive to it Rom 6:11
 - ii. Walk in newness of life Rom 6:14; Eph 2:10
 - iii. Feed and nourish it 1 Pet 2:2
 - iv. Depend on Spirit for power Eph 4:30, 6:10; Zech 4:6
 - v. Put it on Eph 4:24

The CROSS illustrates man’s choice vividly:

First Cross	Lost man	ALL sin in him; ALL sin on him
Last Cross	Saved man	ALL sin in him; NO sin on him
Middle Cross	God/Man	NO sin in Him; ALL sin on him

IV. The Condemnation of Man

- a. We are born in Adam 1 Cor 15:22
- b. His sin is put to our account Rom 5:12
- c. The only way to escape condemnation is to be “taken out of Adam” and to be “placed into Christ.” This placing into Christ is not the result of our own effort; it is the work of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor 12:13
- d. Because the sin of Adam was against an “eternal” God, the consequence of this sin is an “eternal” death. Romans 6:23
- e. Jesus came to make the payment for us, as a gift. He came that “we might have life...” The gift of God is “eternal life” through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Notes

- f. Verses for consideration:
 - i. Matthew 25:41
 - ii. Proverbs 12:2
 - iii. Romans 6:23
 - iv. Romans 3:19
 - v. Romans 8:1
 - vi. 2 Cor 3:9 (the whole chapter)

Notes

CONCLUSION:

Man was created in God's image. That image is hard to find today. Whenever you study the doctrine of man, you inevitably cover the doctrine of sin – in our society, these two doctrines cannot be separated biblically.

The work of the Holy Spirit is transforming us into a new image, the image of God's dear Son. When Adam was created, he was called a "son of God." We are now sons of God by a "new" creation according to 2 Cor 5:17.

O Wretched Man that I am...

In Romans, we see a great doctrinal treatise on the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God. We find how these two diametrically opposed concepts are reconciled by the propitiation of Jesus Christ. In the journey from justification to glorification, Paul reveals to us his struggles in Romans 7. In this chapter, he describes himself as a captive to sin – the things he does not want to do, he does; that which he wants to do, he does not. How can he find deliverance from this indwelling sin? The answer comes from the power of the Holy Spirit.

The problem of sin is global. We can talk about its devastating effects on ministries, on homes, on society, etc. Yet, it becomes personal when we see what sin wants to do in us.

The word *hamartios* means “to miss the mark.” Hamartiology, the study of sin, is a case-study for how badly we have missed the mark of God’s perfection. This lesson forms an overview of sin as viewed through the lens of Scripture.

Introductory comments:

- Sin is older than man.
- Sin, as well as salvation, began in heaven and was brought to earth.
- The doctrine of sin affects all other doctrines.
- Sin is more than just a right or wrong; it is an offense against a holy God which must be dealt with.
- Sin is deceptive.
 - o Man first abhors it.
 - o Then, he endures it.
 - o Then, he embraces it.
 - o Then, he loves it.
 - o Then, he justifies it.
 - o Then, he causes others to fall prey to the same sin!
- Sin cannot be defined by a moral society because the standards of society are always changing. It must be defined biblically – for God’s word will not change.

I. Defined as:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| a. Transgression | I John 3:4 |
| b. Unrighteousness | I John 5:17 |
| c. Omission of known duty | James 4:17 |
| d. Not from faith | Rom 14:23 |
| e. Thoughts of foolishness | Proverbs 24:9 |

II. Sources of, in:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. Satan | John 8:44 |
| b. Man’s heart | Matt 15:19-20 |

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|------------|
| c. | Adam's transgression | James 1:15 |
| d. | Natural Birth | Psalm 51:5 |

Notes

III. Kinds of:

- | | | |
|----|--------------|---------------------------|
| a. | National | Prov 14:34 |
| b. | Personal | Josh 7:20 |
| c. | Secret | Psalm 90:8 |
| d. | Presumptuous | Psalm 19:13 |
| e. | Open | I Tim 5:24 |
| f. | Shameless | Isaiah 3:9 |
| g. | Youthful | Psalm 25:7; 2 Tim 2:22 |
| h. | Public | 2 Sam 24:10-17 |
| i. | Unpardonable | Matthew 12:21-32, Jn 8:24 |
| j. | Of ignorance | Leviticus 4:2 |
| k. | Willful | Hebrews 10:26 |

IV. Consequences among Unsaved:

- | | | |
|----|-----------|--------------------------|
| a. | Blindness | John 9:41; 2 Cor 4:3-4 |
| b. | Servitude | John 8:34 |
| c. | Death | Romans 6:23, 1 Tim 3:1-7 |

V. God's attitude toward:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|----------------|
| a. | Withholds men from | Genesis 20:6 |
| b. | Punishes for | Exo 32:34 |
| c. | Provides a fountain for | Zech 13:1 |
| d. | Blots out | Isaiah 44:22 |
| e. | Casts away | Micah 7:19 |
| f. | Forgives | Exo 34:7 |
| g. | Remembers no more | Jeremiah 31:34 |

VI. Christ's relationship to:

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. | Free from | 1 John 3:5 |
| b. | Knew no | 2 Cor 5:21 |
| c. | Makes men conscious of | John 15:22-24 |
| d. | Died for ours | 1 Cor 15:3 |
| e. | Was an offering for | Isa 53:10; Heb 9:28-10:6 |
| f. | Substitute | Isa 53:5; Matt 26:28 |
| g. | Takes it away | John 1:29 |
| h. | Saves from | Matt 1:21 |
| i. | Forgives | Matt 9:6; Mark 2:1-9 |
| j. | Reconciles us | Hebrews 2:17 |
| k. | Purges | Hebrews 1:3 |
| l. | Cleanses | 1 John 1:7-9 |
| m. | Washes | Revelation 1:5 |

VII. The Christian's responsibility:

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. | Acknowledge | Psalm 32:5 |
| b. | Confess | Psalm 51:3-5 |
| c. | Be repentant | Psalm 38:18 |
| d. | Not serve it (or obey it) | Romans 6 |
| e. | Subdue it | Romans 6 |
| f. | Lay aside | Hebrews 12:1-3 |
| g. | Resist it | Hebrews 12:4 |
| h. | Keep from | Psalm 19:13; Romans 13:14 |

VIII. Helps against:

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. | Use God's Word | Psalm 119:9-11 |
| b. | Guard the tongue | Psalm 39:1; James 3:1-5 |
| c. | Walk in the Spirit | Romans 8:1-14; Gal 5:16-24 |
| d. | Avoid evil companions | Proverbs 1; 1 Tim 5:22 |
| e. | Keep short accounts | 1 John 1:7-9 |
| f. | Exercise love | 1 Peter 4:8 |
| g. | Frequent trips to Advocate | 1 John 2:1 |

CONCLUSION:

- Sin is a lie or distortion of the truth.
- Sin is an avoidance of light and a preference to darkness.
- Sin is separation from God as He will not fellowship with it.
- Sin is not freedom; it is servitude.
- Sin is transgression of a divine command. Consider the word "trespass."
- Sin is a denial of a divine right to command. (Rebellion)
- Sin is a failure to meet God's standard.
- So, the law (place where sin hides) condemns all. We need Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes. (Ro 10:4)

The only antidote for the sin problem is found in the Cure of Calvary. Just as the story of the serpents in the wilderness teaches us, we must "look and live." Just as the serpent was lifted in the wilderness, even so was the Son of Man lifted from the Earth. His finished work remains there for all who will come to find rest from the burden of sin.

Notes

So Great Salvation

Notes

INTRODUCTION

Doctrine, or our fundamental set of beliefs, is being constantly eroded in this relativistic society. We live in a world that clamors for no absolutes and that it doesn't matter what you believe; just so long as you believe! In essence, our society has replaced faith in Christ with faith in faith – and the results of such a substitution are catastrophic for eternity.

We hold ourselves to be more than just simply Evangelical. We carry the name of Fundamentalist. This term, used in the late 1870's Bible Conferences in Niagara, embodied a distilled seed of biblical Christianity. This seed came to be known as the Fundamentals of the Faith, which included:

1. The Inerrancy of the Scriptures
2. The Virgin Birth (and Deity) of Jesus Christ
3. The Vicarious Atonement of Christ
4. The Bodily Resurrection of Christ
5. The Visible Return of Christ

Our subject in this lecture deals with the third statement – the vicarious [substitutionary] atonement of Christ. This fundamental belief is tied to the subject of salvation. Soteriology is mainly the doctrine of the atonement. Some definitions would be in order:

Soteriology:

1. Act of saving; preservation from destruction, danger or great calamity.
2. Appropriately in theology, the redemption of man from the bondage of sin and liability to eternal death, and the conferring on him everlasting happiness. This is the great salvation. [Webster's 1828 Dictionary]

Atonement:

1. Agreement; concord; reconciliation, after enmity or controversy. Rom 5.
2. Expiation; satisfaction or reparation made by giving an equivalent for an injury, or by doing or suffering that which is received in satisfaction for an offense or injury; with for.
3. In theology, the expiation of sin made by the obedience and personal sufferings of Christ. [Webster's 1828 Dictionary]

In simple definitions, we could say that an "atonement" is the reconciliation of the guilty by means of a sacrifice. There are several elements involved in this concept:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. There is man's sin. | Ex 32:30; Psalm 51:4 |
| 2. There is the blood. | Lev 16:11; Heb 9:13-22 |
| 3. There is guilt transferred. | 2 Cor 5:21 (Lev 16:11) |

4. There is guilt removed. Lev 1:1-4; 1Cor 6:11
5. There is forgiveness granted. Lev 16:21; Rom 4:6-7
6. There is righteousness imputed. Phil 3:9; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 10:3-4

Notes

In looking at the subject of salvation, it must be remembered that salvation is not simply a “New Testament Doctrine.” God has provided salvation for people during every period of earth’s history. This provision has always been extended by grace and accepted by faith – though the object of that faith may not have always been the finished work of Christ.

This truth is underscored in studying the Jewish economy under the Law. One day annually, the Jews had a high, holy day known as the Day of Atonement. For sake of clarification, the assumption of this lecture is that Christ’s death is sufficient for the world, hence an unlimited atonement (in scope; though limited of course in its application to only those who believe) is taught.

Before delving into this doctrine, allow two more definitions of salvation to make sure we have the right picture:

Soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, must be the grandest theme in the Scriptures. It embraces all of time as well as eternity past and future. It relates in one way or another to all of mankind, without exception. It even has ramifications in the sphere of the angels. It is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments. It is personal, national, and cosmic. And it centers on the greatest Person, our Lord Jesus Christ. – C.C. Ryrie (Basic Theology, Victor Books: Wheaton, IL, 1987 p277)

The word “salvation” is the translation of the Greek word *soteria* which is derived from the word *soter* meaning “savior.” The word “salvation” communicates the thought of deliverance, safety, preservation, soundness, restoration, and healing. In theology, however, its major use is to denote a work of God on behalf of men, and as such it is a major doctrine of the Bible which includes redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, conviction, repentance, faith, regeneration, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, preservation, and glorification. On the one hand, salvation is described as the work of God rescuing man from his lost estate. On the other hand salvation describes the estate of a man who has been saved and who is vitally renewed and made a partaker of the inheritance of the saints. L.S. Chafer (Systematic Theology, Victor Books: Wheaton, IL, 1988, p21)

I. The Motivation for Salvation

- a. When we look at society today and see man’s stubbornness and rebellion, it is a fair question to ask: “Why would God want to save sinners?”
- b. To say it another way: What in His nature would provide for us salvation or even allow us to be in a “save-able” condition? After all, the angels are not redeemable.
- c. Consider these thoughts about God’s nature and purpose:

- Salvation reveals His love. John 3:16
 - ☒ He is not willing that any perish 2 Pet 3:9

- Salvation reveals His holiness. Rom 3:23-27
 - ☒ Salvation is a holy God making the move toward us (He is the Prime Mover and Initiator of salvation) so that we can have fellowship with Him.

- Salvation reveals His grace. Eph 2:7-9
 - ☒ This gift is undeserved.

- Salvation reveals His goodness. Ps 25:8; 34:8
 - ☒ The fact that God wants to have fellowship with us is a amazing. He created us in His image; through the process of sanctification [a part of the salvation “process”], He is conforming us back to that image.

Notes

II. The Nature of Salvation

- a. Salvation is not the work of man, but rather it is the work of God.
 - Consider the following verses:
 - ☒ Ephesians 2:8-9, For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

 - ☒ Titus 3:5, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

 - ☒ John 1:12-13, 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: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

 - We are “complete in Christ” in Colossians 2. This work includes these concepts:

☒ Redemption	Security
☒ Reconciliation	Glorification
☒ Forgiveness	Sanctification
☒ Propitiation	Regeneration
☒ Justification	Imputation

- b. This “work” accomplished by Christ is a finished work.
 - This makes Christianity a religion of “DONE” where all others are about “DOING.”
 - When Jesus said, “It is finished...” He was not referring to the end of a ministry or a life! Rather, He was referring to the substitutionary offering of Himself for our sins.

- ☒ This phraseology refers to something being completed. It would be used when a debt was paid in full, such as a mortgage.
- ☒ In the case of Christ, our redemption price was paid in full as the sin debt was cancelled.
- ☒ This “debt” was nailed to His cross according to Col 2:14. “Having nailed” is an adverbial participle in the Greek text which points us to the means of removal. The penalty of sin demanded by the decrees against us was taken out of the way by the death of Christ for believers. The culture and procedures of that day shed some interesting and illuminating light here.
- ☒ Under the Roman procedure of trial and conviction, no one could be legitimately brought to trial until he had been officially indicted or charged with a prepared certificate of debt or a written indictment. On the certificate the criminal’s unlawful deeds or crimes were written. Then after trial, if convicted of the charges, his indictment with its offenses and the penalty was nailed to his prison cell door.
- ☒ There it remained, standing in the way of his freedom until the sentence was served or otherwise paid or removed. When once paid or served, the constituted authority would write “canceled” or “paid in full” on the indictment. The freed person would then take his indictment and nail it to his door showing his penalty had been paid and removed.

☒ The Apostle’s point is Jesus Christ has paid our certificate of debt with its charges and nailed it to His cross - showing forever that it has been paid in full. Therefore, in the doctrine of expiation, Jesus Christ is the agent, the



"Hey fellow...those stairs don't go all the way to the top!"
(Ephesians 2:8-9)

cross is the point and place, and the penalty of sin is its object.

Notes

- In all other religions, salvation is a work that man does for God. In other religions, it is how man can become God, etc. Yet in biblical Christianity, salvation is a work that God does for man; it is not man becoming God – rather it is God becoming man!
- Since Christ’s work is finished, it should be clear that salvation is not a work of man for God. When a person comes to Christ, he is acknowledging that he cannot save himself [repentance] but has now recognized the work of salvation God has wrought for him and which he accepts as God’s gift. Salvation originates in God’s purposes, not in man’s and is forever delivered from any legalistic approach that would elevate human works as a ground for salvation. (Chafer – p.122)
- **DEFINE REPENTANCE:** In theological circles, this can often be a heated discussion. The reason for the passion is that salvation / eternity is at stake. Years ago, a group of people was teaching that salvation was just getting someone to say a prayer, as though it were the ingredients of a magical prayer and a soulwinner that constituted salvation.
 - ☒ This position was “out of balance” as it did not emphasize sin. It came to be known as “easy-believism” which is a misnomer. Salvation is not intended to be difficult.
 - ☒ In response to this loose teaching of salvation, another group responded with the need of repentance for salvation. Yet, repentance became defined many different ways:
 - ☒ “Making Christ the Lord of your life...”
 - ☒ “Turning from your sin to Christ...”
 - ☒ “A change in behavior...”
 - ☒ This strong teaching on repentance, while borne out of pure motives, swung the pendulum the opposite direction. This teaching became known as “Lordship Salvation” – a teaching that Christ must be LORD and SAVIOUR at the moment of conversion.
 - ☒ I would suggest that both extremes miss the mark and that the answer must be somewhere in the middle.
 - ☒ The solution is NOT to redefine the word, but our un-

derstanding of the biblical definition. The Greek word (as well as Hebrew from Old Testament) indicates a “change of mind that LEADS to a changed life.”

- ☒ In other words, repentance is the ROOT, but a changed life is the FRUIT. We must not use the terms interchangeably as it will create confusion.
- ☒ If repentance is a “change of mind;” and if it is necessary for salvation, the next question is what changes? In simple terms, an unsaved man has a belief system. He believes that he is fine and is good enough for salvation.
- ☒ When confronted with the gospel, he must now recognize that his belief system is flawed; he must now believe the gospel with its implications.
- ☒ This explains why the gospel of John NEVER uses the word repent or repentance, but consistently uses the word BELIEF. In like manner, Romans only uses the word REPENTANCE twice, and only once (Romans 2:4) could be argued to be in the context of salvation.

Notes

III. The Work of Salvation and Removal of the Barriers

a. Salvation is necessary!

We cannot come to God because of barriers that stand in our way. For example, consider these barriers:

1. The holiness of God
 - While we may think of God as a God of love, more is said scripturally of His holiness than love. EX: What do the Cherubim proclaim?
 - God cannot fellowship with unholy or unrighteous people. This presents a barrier for “all have sinned..”
2. The sin of man
 - We have IMPUTED sin.
 - i. Born with Adam’s nature on our account.
 - We have INHERITED sin.
 - i. We inherit our nature from our parents who inherited it from theirs, etc.
 - We have INDIVIDUAL sins.
 - i. Forget Adam and your parents for a moment, you have committed some sins as well!
 - ii. It is these sins that have separated us from God. (Isaiah 59:1-2)

Notes

3. The penalty of sin
 - Since God is holy and we are not, His justice must be enacted against our sins – the wages are death.
 4. The death that comes from sin
 - As we are in need of spiritual life or regeneration, we are separated from Him. He wants us to pass from “death to life.”
 5. The unrighteousness of our actions
 - We cannot “impress” Him; He declares our very best to be filthy rags.
- b. It is not enough to IDENTIFY the barrier; we must also remove it! This is the teaching of reconciliation. We cannot remove the barrier; so, God removes it and comes to us.
1. Reconciliation, in the Bible, means to change from enmity or disharmony into friendship and harmony. Biblically, reconciliation was not a mutual reconciliation. It was primarily the Offended One, God moving in our direction to provide for our peace and salvation.
 2. As the songwriter said, “When I could not come to where He was, He came to me!” – What a Saviour!
 3. The doctrinal definition of this concept can be summarized as such: In short, reconciliation is the whole work of God in Christ by which man is brought from the place of enmity to harmony or peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
 4. There are other terms used in Scripture of God’s gracious work in Christ like redemption, justification, regeneration, and propitiation, but reconciliation seems to be the over-all term of Scripture which encompasses all the other terms as a part of what God has done through the Lord Jesus to completely remove the enmity or alienation, the whole of the barrier (sin, God’s holiness, death, unrighteousness, etc.).
 5. It is this work that sets God free to justify the believing sinner by faith in Christ so there is peace with God, the change of relationship from hostility to harmony.
- c. The Work of Reconciliation
1. The source – God 2Cor 5:18

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2. | The agent – Christ | Ro 5:10-11; Col 1:20-21; 1 Pe 2:24 |
| 3. | The object – Man | 2Cor 5:19 |
| | • God is propitiated. | |
| | • Man is reconciled. | |
| 4. | The instrument – Christ’s death | Eph 2:10; 2Cor 5:21 |
| 5. | The results – are exciting: | |
| | • Removal of the barriers | Eph 2:14-18 |
| | • Positional Sanctification | Ro 5:1; 2Co 5:17; Col 2:10 |
| | • Justification | 2Cor 5:18-21 |
| 6. | The ministers – believers | 2Cor 5:15-21 |

Notes

d. The Accomplishments of Reconciliation

1. *Propitiation* a satisfactory payment
2. *Redemption* We have been bought out of the slave market
3. *Substitution* He has vicariously stood in our place
4. *Regeneration* We are made a new creature through birth
5. *Justification* We are declared righteous

CONCLUSION:

Now, you can sense the warning against neglecting so “great salvation.” Soteriology represents the “supreme mission” of Christ in the world, for Christ came to save sinners (1 Tim 1:15). Soteriology is a watershed issue, for it negates the concept that all roads lead to Heaven. Rather, it is exclusive in its declarations. The most dogmatic statement ever made in history was made by Jesus Christ. It is recorded for us in John 14:6, “...I am THE way, THE truth, and THE life; NO MAN cometh unto the Father but by me...”

Here are some final thoughts on why this salvation is so great:

1. It has a divine Author.

- a. It was not a “plan B” response.
- b. It was not a “crisis management” decision.
- c. Our security begins with His purpose; the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world.

2. It has a great purchasing price.

- a. We are purchased / bought by the blood of God (Acts 20:28)
- b. Creation was a great work; salvation was greater.

3. It is a universal opportunity.

- a. God loved the world John 3:16
- b. He wills all to be saved 1 Tim 2:4-6
- c. He is the Saviour of all men 1 Tim 4:10
- d. He is the propitiation for the world 1 John 2:2

Notes

4. It is eternal in its duration.

- a. Isaiah 45:15-18
- b. Isaiah 51:6
- c. Hebrews 5:9
- d. Hebrews 9:12

5. It came to us Personified.

- a. Salvation is in a Saviour; not a system.
- b. It is found in Christ; not a church.
- c. It is not something we have; it is Someone we know.
- d. Isaiah 12:1-2 HE is become my salvation...
- e. 2 Tim 1:12 WHOM I have believed...
- f. Psalm 27:1 The LORD is my light...
- g. Psalm 62:2 HE only is my rock and salvation...

6. Salvation is a “process” that God promises to complete.

- a. Justification Past Fact
I have been saved from the penalty of sin.

- b. Sanctification Present Possession
I am being saved from the power of sin.

- c. Glorification Predicted Reality
I shall be saved from the presence of sin.

Eternal Security

Disclaimer: The writers of these articles used a different version of the Bible than I would use...

As I was preparing a lecture on eternal security, I noticed that much of what I would say was already to be found on the internet. Rather than retyping all of this below, I have simply cut and pasted the different articles and have added them for you as an addendum to Soteriology. - Bro. Lester

NONE OF THIS LECTURE IS ORIGINAL WITH ME.

‘...nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus. Such a gospel I abhor. If one dear saint of God had perished, so might all; and then there is no gospel promise true, but the Bible is a lie, and there is nothing in it worth my acceptance... If I did not believe the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, I think I should be of all men the most miserable, because I should lack any ground of comfort.’ - Charles Spurgeon.

What it is:

That once a lost sinner has put his/her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation and has been justified from every charge, being made a partaker of the divine nature, then it is impossible for that person to ever be lost again.

What it isn't:

Eternal security doesn't mean that anyone who attends church, or brings their life into accord with Christian teaching, or goes forward at a salvation meeting is forever saved. It is important to mention that this whole study is concerning those that have been truly born again. Many profess Jesus Christ but have never been saved. This whole study is based on the promises and work of God for those that have truly entered into His family.

I want to start this study on eternal security with a couple of questions that at face value may not seem to have much in common with the topic at hand. Here are the questions: Why does the nation of Israel still exist, and why are they still in possession of their land?

The answers to these questions have a lot to do with eternal security because it shows the faithfulness of God to keep his word even when his chosen people are in a state of unbelief.

The Abrahamic Covenant

Israel still exists and is in possession of their land because God made an unconditional covenant with Abraham. In it, God promised Abraham that his descendants would become a great nation and that they would be given the land forever. (Gen 12:1-3, 13:14-17) The term in Hebrew for making a covenant is 'to cut a covenant'. The corpse

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of an animal is cut in half and both parties making the covenant would pass through the two halves of the carcass. In the Abrahamic covenant God put Abraham into a deep sleep and passed through the pieces alone signifying that the fulfillment of the covenant rested entirely with Him! (Gen 15:6-21)

Because of this covenant, Abraham's descendants are still in possession of the land today. They have been persecuted more than any other nation but they still exist because of God. You cannot point to their faith or love for God as reasons why God has preserved them because they have largely been in a state of unbelief, rejected His prophets, even rejecting His own Son. They exist because of God's faithfulness to keep his promise. In showing what is going to happen to Israel, Paul declares 'that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved... From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved; for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.' (Rom 11:25-29)

Why is this important? This is crucial cause it shows that once an unconditional covenant has been made, God will not change his mind but will fulfill what He has promised. Paul's confidence that Israel will be saved in the end was based on two things:

- 1) The fact that Israel is beloved for the sake of the fathers (Abr., Isaac, Jacob)
- 2) God's gifts|callings are irrevocable (meaning He will not change His mind.)

The New Covenant that a believer enters into is an unconditional covenant! It is God who has promised to keep our salvation safe and secure to the end. Has God called you? Have you been given the gift of the Holy Spirit? Then if so, believe in the faithfulness of God because the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable! He will not change His mind or go back on those He has called!

Four Passages Teaching Eternal Security

The following are four passages that I want to comment on concerning eternal security. There are far more than these, some of which have been mentioned at the end of this study.

Rom 8:30-39

Vs 30: 'And those whom He predestined, He also called; and these He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.'

Question: Who is the 'He'?

Obviously it is God the Father who has done these things. That's why we believe the salvation is from God. We don't save ourselves. God saves us. This verse declares that God performs each stage of our salvation. It started before the foundation of the world (predestined...) and ends at the Second Coming.(glorified...). Our glorification is so assured that it is written in the past tense. Glorification is not earned but is an act of divine grace to those who believe. And it is assured because our life (the new creation) is hidden with Christ in God and is revealed when He comes in glory. Do you really think a true believer can lose his salvation when God has done all this to make it safe?

Question: Going back to Rom 8:30, where in a passage like this could you even begin to talk about a true believer losing his salvation?

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Nowhere, because it is God who completes each stage of our salvation. You see, it doesn't even come down to what a person believes about predestination and election. Some believe that God specifically chose those that He would save, and this choice is totally independent of any action on the part of one chosen. Others believe that God, before the foundation of the world, simply saw those that would believe (because He is outside of time...) and chose them, knowing that they would have faith and live for Him. Either way, we can still be confident that the ones God has predestined, He will call. Those that He calls, He will justify. And those that He justifies, He will certainly glorify! The only question left would be that which Paul asks next – 'What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us who can be against us?'

Vs 33 'Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.'

For a moment, let's say you can lose your salvation. If this were true then obviously God would be the only one who could pass that decree. He is the judge of mankind. He is the one who declared you to be righteous in his sight so therefore he is the only one who could now declare you to be 'lost' again. Now do you really think that God is going to bring a charge against his elect? Of course not! He justified them knowing everything that they would ever do. Verse 33 states that God the Father will not do this. Will Jesus Christ bring a charge against a believer? Of course not! He died for them and now lives to intercede for them. Their salvation is secure because it is in God's hands, not man's.

Vs 37-39 'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

This is the climax of Paul's doctrine of salvation. It comes at the end of Romans eight where he is summing up his message, the good news of salvation for those who believe.

Question: What is there that is not included in the words 'death,' 'life' or 'things to come' that could cause you to lose your salvation?

Nothing! He is trying to make it as clear as he can. There is nothing in this life that can separate us from God. There is nothing in the future that can cause us to be separated from God! Our current life can't do it, our death can't, and angels and demons can't. There are no powers that can even come close because God is the author and perfecter of our salvation!

John 6:37-40

Vs 37-38 'All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.'

Verse 37 combines God's sovereignty, man's responsibility, and eternal security for those who do come to Him. We can be assured that of all that the Father gives the Son, he will never cast them away.

Question: What would have happened if Jesus didn't complete the will of God?

For Jesus to be able to die on our behalf he had to be a spotless sacrificial offering to God. If at any stage he had not performed the will of God then that would be sin. Jesus had to be perfect in all that he said and did for his death to be accepted by God.

Question: What was the will of God that he had to do?

Vs 39 'This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose none, but raise them up on the last day.'

The only place I can find where Jesus stated what the overall will of the Father was, is in this verse and it states that it is God's will that Jesus loses none of those that the Father has given him!

Question: Will Jesus ever fail to do God will?

Never! Otherwise no one could be saved. So to say that a truly born again believer can lose his salvation is equivalent to saying that Jesus has lost one of those that God has given him and thus has failed in completing the will of God! No No No No, No! A believer's salvation is secure because it is Jesus who keeps them safe and loses none!

John 10:27-29

Vs 27 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.'

This whole discussion about eternal security is only directed towards those that have been born again. In this passage, Jesus calls them his 'sheep'. He says that he knows them, and they in turn follow him.

There are a lot of people out there that profess to be Christians who are not. They may join a church, be baptised, and perform good works but if they have never truly come to God for salvation through Jesus Christ then it will not help them. Jesus spoke of these people when he said 'Many will say to me on that day, Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles? And then I will declare to them 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.'

By their very question they show themselves to be false sheep, for what truly born again believer would come into God's presence and point to the things that they had so-called done for God? True sheep boast only in their shepherd and it is utter stupidity, when God is calling all to behold his Son, to tell God to behold your works!

Question: What is the difference between these groups?

Of the first group he says 'I know them'. Of the second group he says 'I never knew you'. The difference is not about the works done but about truly being saved and having a relationship with the shepherd. Of the first group, those who are truly his sheep Jesus goes on to say:

Vs '...and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.'

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Question: When do you receive eternal life and how long does it last?

Eternal life is Gods life, whose nature is eternal. That’s why the bible declares that ‘God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life.’ 1John 5:11-12

Notice the past tense in ‘has given us.’ You receive eternal life when you receive Jesus Christ because all things are in Him. And of course it never ends. It is eternal, as God is eternal. So to say that a true believer could lose his salvation would be to say that his eternal life has come to an end. Stupid. Jesus himself, who is our life, has promised us that he will ‘never leave us or forsake us.’ This is his promise to his true sheep. Likewise to say that a true believer could lose his salvation would be the same as saying that one of Jesus’ sheep has perished. But he has promised that his true sheep ‘will never perish’

Vs 29 ‘My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.’

Question: Even though no one can snatch a true believer out of Gods hand, they can choose to walk away right?

No. In terms of your salvation, you are not holding onto him; He is holding onto you. He holds you like you would hold someone hanging off a cliff. If their strength gives way and they can hold no longer, you still have them firmly in your grasp. And he would hold you like this even while you go through your period of insanity, wanting to walk away from him.

Hebrews 10

A lot of the problems that people have in accepting eternal security come from the fact that they don’t understand how fully Jesus dealt with the sin issue on the cross. They still have an Old Testament view of forgiveness. Hebrews 10 was written to show how ‘much better’ it is for those under the New Covenant.

Vs 1-3 ‘The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the reality themselves. For this reason it can never by the same sacrifices repeated year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshippers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.

Question: From the above scripture what is the consequence of being made ‘perfect’?

If someone could have been made perfect then they would have one cleansing that was for all time. It would take all sins into account, past present and future. The person having been made perfect would no longer have to go around guilty (or conscious as the NASB puts it) of their sins.

Question: Could living under the law do this?

No, because the sacrifices only dealt with sins previously committed but could in no way help sins that were to be committed in the future. Thus they had to be repeated endlessly year after year.

Vs 4 ‘But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.’

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The people living under this system were never free because the very next day after the annual sacrifice they would sin again and straight away need another sacrifice. They were constantly guilty and aware of their sins. This also describes the condition of a believer who hasn't come to realise the extent of God's provision and grace in the sacrifice of His Son.

Question: Has anybody ever been 'made perfect'?

Vs 14 'For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.'

When a sinner is born again all sin is dealt with once and for all. It is not just the sins he has committed that are forgiven. It is all the sins he will ever commit that have been forgiven! When Jesus died on the cross all of our sins were in the future and He paid for them all. So much so that the Bible can now say that a believer has been (notice the past tense) made perfect, which, from verse 2 means that he has been cleansed once for all sin and no longer has to go around with a sense of guilt for them. And notice how long this position of the believer is said to last for – 'made perfect forever.' Forever means eternally secure! Oh the grace of God!

Vs 17-18 'And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more. Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.'

Question: Why is there no longer any sacrifice for sin?

Because there is no sin left to forgive. Simple. It has been dealt with once and for all. Notice the lengths that the writer of Hebrews goes to, to stress this point. (Ch 7:27, 9:12, 25-26, 28, 10:1-2, 10, 12, 14).

Question: Does sin then affect our relationship with God?

Sin in the believer's life can affect their daily relationship with God if it is not recognised as such and confessed to God (1 John 1.9). But in no way does this annul their position in God as being justified and declared perfect in his sight. This is where so many Christians get the cart before the horse thinking that their works give them a greater position in God.

Sanctification does not lead to justification! Justification leads on to sanctification! Saying it another way, for a born again believer our practice does not alter our position in Christ. We are justified (a position where God declares you righteous in his sight) and sanctification (becoming more like Christ in our life) follows that. As outward example is in John 13:3-10. Peter was completely clean (vs 10) which speaks of justification, but as he walks in the world he needed to clean his feet as they would get dirty. As believers we are 'completely clean' as the Lord said, or 'made perfect forever' as Hebrews declares. As we walk in the world there is the need to clean our feet by coming to God and acknowledging our wrong ways.

Reactions when so-called followers walked away.

The Bible presents cases where people have turned away from the Lord and abandoned the faith. How should we view such people? Still saved, never saved or not saved anymore? We will look at the reaction of Jesus, John, and Paul.

John 6 (Jesus)

Vs 41 'Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said 'I am the bread that came down out of heaven'

Vs 60 'Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said. 'This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?' But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this...'

Vs 66 'As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.'

In John chapter 6 we have a progression of opposition to what Jesus was saying. Firstly the Jews in general opposed Him. Then those who were said to be His disciples grumbled, and finally they 'withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.'

Question: How did Jesus react to His own disciples leaving Him?

This is crucial. When His own disciples turned away from Him did he treat them as still saved, never saved, or no longer saved?

Vs 63 'It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh counts for nothing; the words I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.'

Vs 65 'For this reason I have said to you, that nobody can come to me unless it has been granted him from the Father.'

Jesus confirmed three things:

- The Spirit is the one who imparts true spiritual life and without this people will not accept Jesus' revelation concerning Himself. But the one who has received life will accept Jesus' teaching because His words are spirit and are life.
- That people may follow after Him for all sorts of fleshly reasons but in the end it counts for nothing. They are not saved and will fall away when hardship or persecution begins.
- That for a person to be truly saved the Father himself must call him to His Son and that the people who were turning from Him showed that they had never been called or saved to begin with.

Jesus didn't freak out by this opposition because He knew those that truly believed and of them declared that he would lose none! We are in a less fortunate position of not really knowing who has and who hasn't been saved but the word is still true that those who are saved are eternally secure.

1 John 2:18-19 (John)

'Children it is the last hour; and just as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us.'

Here we have the reaction of John when people left the faith. They had been with them but had left. Did John react by saying that they had now lost their salvation? No. John's reaction to this is to declare that they could not have been saved to begin with else they would not have left the faith.

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2 Tim 2:17-19 (Paul)

'...and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place and they upset the faith of some. Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His", and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.." Paul's reaction when these two characters had gone astray from the truth affirms how we are to look at salvation. He says that the foundation of God (salvation) has this seal –

"The Lord knows those that are His." This is how God views salvation and affirms eternal security. Jesus said he knows his sheep and they shall never perish. From God's point of view, all of his children are safe and are eternally secure because he knows them and will never let them completely fall. The problem only comes with us because we cannot see the heart of a person or how true their faith is.

"Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness." This is mans view of salvation. This is what we should be able to see. We may not be able to see a person's heart but we can see a changed life and the evidence of a true salvation will be a turning away from sin. If a person confesses Jesus Christ as Lord but has no fruit or evidence of that salvation in their life then what confidence is there that they are actually saved? None. (1John 3:10-11)

Other Verses Confirming Eternal Security

Here are more reasons why true sons of God are eternally secure:

1. They are already seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus confirming that their salvation is finished and secure, and also that they are perfect in Christ already. (Eph 1:3, 2:6)
2. The Holy Spirit seals them as a mark of ownership and security until the day of redemption. Even grieving the Holy Spirit doesn't cause Him to leave (Eph 1:13-14, 4:30)
3. The promise of God is that He would never leave or forsake his children. Likewise the Holy Spirit is promised to be with true believers forever. (Heb 13:5, John 14:16)
4. The penalty for all sin has been forever settled through the perfect and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 3:23-26, 4:23-5:2, 5:6-9)
5. They have been born again and they cannot be unborn, nor can the new creation perish because they have been born from imperishable seed. (! Pet 1:23)
6. The new creation is totally secure because it has been hid with Christ in God until Jesus comes in glory and his sons are revealed. (Col 3:1-4)
7. If a Christian's life and work are completely burnt up at the Judgment Seat of Christ (that is, there was nothing that he did that was based upon the foundation of Jesus Christ) he himself is still saved yet with no rewards.(1 Cor 3: 15)
8. God who began the good work in them has promised that he will carry it on until the day when Jesus returns. They are called to 'work out', not 'work for' their salvation. (Phil 1:6, 2:12-13)
9. They stand before God clothed in the righteousness of Christ, not in their own righteousness. (2 Cor 5:21,Rom 5:19-21)
10. God, knowing everything that would happen, chose them before the foundation

- of the world and as such they are holy and blameless before Him. (Eph 1:4)
11. They are kept by the power of God through faith, and not through the efforts or the works of the one who is saved. (1 Pet 1:5)
 12. Their inheritance is assured and is imperishable, kept in heaven for them. (1 Pet 1:2-4)
 13. Jesus is able to save them completely because He lives to make intercession for them and He cannot die. (Heb 7:24-25)
 14. Even though all their righteousness is as filthy rags, they have been saved (past tense, completed event) by grace (the unmerited favor of God) and not by their own works, so that even in the ages to come they may marvel at the surpassing riches of his grace! (Eph 2:6-9)
 15. They are God the Father’s irrevocable gift to the Son and he never changes his mind about His gifts and callings. (John 17:6-7, Rom 11:29)
 16. God has promised to keep them from falling and to present them faultless before Himself. (Jude 24, 1 Thes 5:23-24, 1 Cor 1:8-9 Note: Even though Paul had much to say about the gross sins that were happening in the Corinthian church, he still gave them the promise that God is faithful and would present them blameless on the day of Christ Jesus!)

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Let me just end with a quote from Spurgeon because he believed that knowledge of security produced a love, amazement, and gratitude towards God that no fear of falling away could ever do.

‘No doctrine is so calculated to preserve a man from sin as the doctrine of the grace of God. Those who have called it ‘a licentious doctrine’ did not know anything at all about it. If they knew the grace of God in truth, they would soon see that there was no preservative from lying like knowledge that we are the elect of God from the foundation of the world. There is nothing like a belief in my eternal perseverance, and the immutability of my Father’s affection, which can keep me near to Him from a motive of simple gratitude... Of all men, those have the most disinterested piety, the sublimest reverence, the most ardent devotion, who believe that they are saved by grace, without works, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God.’¹

The Riches of God’s Grace in Christ Jesus

The Believers’ Position in Christ

Eph 1:3-8 ‘Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding’

This study is about the believers’ position in Christ Jesus. I don’t know of anything that is more crucial as a foundation to the Christian life, than for the believer to see what has been completed for him ‘in Christ Jesus.’ From the Ephesians passage quoted above, we

1 - This information comes from <http://www.jesusplusnothing.com/studies/online/eternalsecurity.htm>

could say that this entire study is embraced within that wonderful phrase ‘the riches of God’s grace.’

So how do we define grace? A common definition is ‘God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.’ Another definition is ‘the unmerited favour of God.’ Both of these are true definitions, but the one that I like the best is simply ‘God’s love set free.’ You see grace incorporates all that God desired to do for mankind because of His love, which He is now free to perform, because His justice has been met through the sacrificial death of His son. So, in acting righteously in view of the cross, God’s love is now free to act as He wills! And oh how He has acted for the believer if only we could see it! Just as it says in the passage above, we have (past tense – when we first believed in Jesus) been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will – to the praise of His glorious grace!

So this study will explore the riches of God’s grace in regard to the believers’ position in Christ. In most of Paul’s letters there is a sharp distinction drawn between what God has done for us by grace, and how we are to live in view of this fact. The divine order that God has established through these letters is to first sit and learn of your position in Christ, and then, in view of this position, the exhortation is given to live a life consistent with your position. In other words, the Christian life is becoming (in your experience) what you already are (in your position in Christ). This divine order is clearly seen in Ephesians, Colossians, and Romans amongst others. For example, and as a study of your own, please read the book of Ephesians and note down all that God has done for you and that which you are called to do yourself. You should see a sharp distinction between the first three chapters and the last three. (With the connection between the two starting at chapter 4, verse 1.) Commenting on Ephesians, Watchman Nee said

‘Most Christians make the mistake of trying to walk in order to be able to sit, but that is a reversal of the true order. Our natural reason says, If we do not walk, how can we ever reach the goal? What can we attain without effort? How can we get anywhere if we do not move? But Christianity is a queer business! If at the outset we try to do anything, we miss everything. For Christianity begins not with a big DO, but with a big DONE. Thus Ephesians opens with the statement that God has ‘blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ’ and we are invited at the outset to sit down and enjoy what God has done for us; not to set out to try and attain it for ourselves.’

So the purpose of this study is to set forth that which is DONE, and through faith, enable you to rest in the finished work of Christ and your exalted position in Him! The framework for the following has been taken (somewhat loosely!) from Lewis Sperry Chafer’s excellent book ‘Salvation.’ I recommend you read this book as it contains more than I could add here. Before looking at that which God has done for the believer in Christ, Chafer raises the following five points that are very important to remember.

1. These positions are not experienced, but are facts of the new life out of which precious experiences may grow. For example justification is not experienced but the joy and peace that occurs because of this fact will be.
2. The Christian positions are not progressive. They do not grow or develop from a small beginning. They are as perfect and complete the instant they are possessed as they ever will be in the ages to come. For example, sonship does not grow, as an old man is no more a son of his father at his death than he was at the day of his birth.
3. These positions are in no way related to human merit. They are made to stand on

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the unchanging Person and merit of the Son of God. The Christian is ‘accepted (now and forever) in the beloved.’

4. Every position is eternal by its very nature. The consciousness and personal realisation of these positions may vary with the daily walk of the believer, but the abiding facts of the new being are never subject to change in time or eternity.
5. These positions are known only through divine revelation. They defy human imagination, and since they are not experienced, their reality can be entered into only by believing the Word of God. These eternal riches of grace are for the lowliest sinner who will only believe.

One more thought before you start racing through the list – Think! Yes, think about them. Meditate on them and what it means for you. You see, I’ve read lists like this before and I know the temptation to race through it. But I believe that these are truths that God would want to firmly establish within our hearts, for they glorify His character and show the extent of His work on the cross for us. So please, go slow, ask the Lord to reveal the truth in it, and mediate upon these things. Further on in his book ‘Sit, Walk, Stand,’ Watchman Nee says

‘Our Christian life begins with the discovery of what God has provided. From this point onwards Christian experience proceeds as it began, not on the basis of our own work but always on that of the finished work of another. Every new spiritual experience begins with an acceptance by faith of what God has done – with a new ‘sitting down’ if you like.’

As you read each point, remember also what has just been said in that these truths are eternal and are as true of you today (if you truly believe in Jesus) as they ever will be. They do not grow or increase, but are free gifts of God’s amazing grace. That’s why we say that the Christian life is becoming what you are. One more last point – failure. Failure is almost a prerequisite for enjoying what God has done. God has hidden these truths from the proud and self-confident and as such they seldom seem interested, or care to believe that these things be of great benefit. But to those who truly see their need of God, the things of grace become the greatest delight! May you enter in new experiences of God’s love as you accept by faith that which God has done ‘in Christ.’

All of the following is true of every genuine believer in Jesus Christ. It is God’s gift to all through the ‘riches of His grace in Christ Jesus.’ These things are the result of His ‘love set free!’

In the Eternal Plan of God

Before the world had even been created, God knew and chose those who would be saved, and in the course of time He called them to Himself. Do we fully understand it? No way! Not until He explains it all in heaven. Do we still believe it? Yes, both through the word of God and the experience of God’s call upon our own lives.

Notes

Foreknown:

Rom 8:29 'For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.' Also 1 Pet 1:2

Elect:

1 Thes 1:4 'knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.' Also Rom 8:33, Col 3:12, Tit 1:1

Predestined:

Eph 1:11 'In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.'

Chosen:

1 Pet 2:4 'Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious.' Also Matt 22:14

Called:

Rom 9:11 '...that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls.' Also 1 Thes 5:24

Brought Near to God

How near to God has Jesus brought the believer? In our position, just as near as Christ is himself! – In our experience, just as near as we wish to go! His blood has been poured out for the sins of the world and the temple curtain has been torn in two!

Reconciled by God:

2 Cor 5:18 'Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ.' Also Col 1:20

Reconciled to God:

Rom 5:10 '...when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.' Also 2 Cor 5:20

Redeemed:

Col 1:14 'we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.' Also 1 Pet 1:18, Rom 3:24

Brought Near:

Eph 2:13 'But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.'

Given Access:

Eph 2:18 'For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.' Also Eph 3:12, Rom 5:2, Heb 4:14-16, 10:19-20.

Children of God

Can someone born, then become be unborn? Can a son in a family somehow cease from being a son? Or can someone who has been adopted, be un-adopted? No, no,

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and finally, no! If you have been born into a family then you may change your name, but you cannot change your D.N.A and you are forever a son of your father. The same applies for our spiritual birth! The believer is a son of God Himself, born again of incorruptible seed and because of this we cry 'Abba Father!' – literally 'daddy'.

Born again:

1 Pet 1:23 '...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible.' Also John 1:12, 3:7

Sons of God:

1 John 3:2 'Beloved, now we are sons of God.' Also 2 Cor 6:18, Gal 3:26

New Creation:

2 Cor 5:17 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.' Also Gal 6:15, Eph 2:10

Adopted:

Rom 8:15 'you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."' Also Gal 4:5

Heirs:

Gal 4:7 'Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.'

Totally Acceptable to God by Jesus Christ!

A good question is 'Do you have to be perfect to go to Heaven?' Most say no, as no one is perfect. Yet could a perfectly holy God allow anything less than perfection into His presence? Obviously not! The answer is therefore yes, you do have to be perfect, but how could this ever be achieved by a sinful creation? In Christ, righteousness and perfection is a gift! His declaration is that believers are forever justified – a position that not only means 'just as if I had never sinned', but also, 'just as if I had done everything right!' Wow!

Justified:

Rom 5:1 'Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God.' Also Rom 3:24, 8:30, 1 Cor 6:11, Tit 3:7

Righteous:

Phil 3:8,9 '...that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ.' Also Rom 3:22, 5:17, 10:3-4, 1 Cor 1:30, 2 Cor 5:21

Sanctified:

1 Cor 1:30 'Christ Jesus, who became for us... sanctification.' Also 1 Cor 6:11, Heb 10:10

Made Perfect:

Heb 10:14 'by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.' Also see Heb 10:1-2 for the results of being 'made perfect'.

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Accepted:

Eph 1:6 'to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.' Also 1 Pet 2:5

Forgiven:

Col 2:13 'God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.' Col 1:14, 3:13, Eph 1:7, 4:32

Complete:

Col 2:10 'And you are complete in Him.'

Forever United and Joined With Christ

Watchman Nee once said 'If I place a piece of paper in a book and burn the book, where is the piece of paper?' No prize for saying that it has gone, as it has been burned as well. In like manner, believers have been placed 'in Christ,' so that whatever has happened to Christ has also happened them. When Jesus died and rose again, so did we spiritually, and never again will God see a believer as anything other than a new creation 'in Christ Jesus.' We are forever united and joined to Christ and His history is our history!

Crucified:

Rom 6:6 'For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with.' Also Gal 2:20

Dead:

Ro 6:8 'Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.' See Co 3:3

Buried:

Rom 6:4 'We were therefore buried with him through baptism.' Also Col 2:12

Raised:

Col 3:1 'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.' Also Rom 6:4

Ascended:

Eph 2:6 'And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.'

Jesus' Very Own Possession

In a parable about the kingdom of God, Jesus likened Himself to a man who found a treasure in a field. And because of His immense joy, He sold all that He had so that He could purchase that field. The treasure within the field stands for those in the world who believe in His name. For them, He was willing to give up all that He had (His life) and 'for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross!' We are the Father's gift to the Son, His bride, His inheritance and His joy! Amazing!

His Gift

John 6:37 'All that the Father gives Me, will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me, I will certainly not cast out.' Also 10:29, 17:6,11,12,20

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His Bride

2 Cor 11:2 'I promised you to one husband, to Christ.' Also Eph 5:25-32, Rev 19:7, Jn 3:29

His Inheritance

Eph 1:18 'that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.'

His Possession

Eph 1:14 '...who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession.'

Blessed With the Holy Spirit

Each believer is also given the Holy Spirit, not only as our means of living the Christian life in this age, but also as a guarantee that as God's possession we will participate in the glory of the age to come! There is no true Christian alive that has not been given the Holy Spirit.

Born:

John 3:6 'Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.'

Baptized:

1 Cor 12:13 'For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.'

Indwelt:

1 Cor 6:19 'Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you?' Also 2:12, John 7:39, Rom 5:5, 8:9, 2 Cor 1:21, Gal 4:6

Sealed:

Eph 1:13-14 'having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance.'

Within the 'Much More' Care of God (Rom 5:10)

Think of it - when we were sinners and enemies of God, He fully justified us from every charge because our faith in the work of His precious son Jesus. How much more now, as His treasured possession, will believers find themselves the object of His care!

Objects of His love:

Eph 2:4 'But God, who is rich in mercy...' Also 5:2, 1 John 3:1

Objects of His grace:

Rom 5:2 'through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.' Also Eph 2:7,8 Tit 2:12,13

Objects of His power:

Eph 1:19 'and his incomparably great power for us who believe.' Also Phil 2:13, 1 Pet 1:5

Objects of His faithfulness:

Heb 13:5 'For He has said 'I will never leave you or forsake you.' Also Phil 1:6, 1 Thes 5:23,24, 1 Cor 1:8-9, Jude 24

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Objects of His peace:

Phil 4:9 ‘the God of peace will be with you.’ Also 4:7

Objects of His encouragement:

1 Thes 2:16 ‘by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope.’ Also Rom 15:4-5

Objects if His intercession:

Heb 7:25 ‘Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.’ Also Rom 8:34, Heb 9:24

A Heavenly Home Assured

Last, but most important of all, He has given us a heavenly citizenship – where we will be fellow heirs with the King of Kings! We live as strangers and exiles on this earth, far from our true home to come. We are ambassadors of God in a country not our own. But our heavenly home is assured and our inheritance is waiting, kept safe by God himself!

Heavenly Citizens:

Phil 3:20 ‘For our citizenship is in heaven.’ Also Eph 2:19, Heb 12:22

God’s Household:

Eph 2:19 ‘...but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household.’ Also 3:15, Gal 6:10

Heavenly Inheritance:

1 Pet 1:4-5 ‘...and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power.’ Also Eph 1:14, Col 3:24, Heb 9:15

One last thought... from the simplicity of a flower to complexity of space, the more mankind explores the work of God. the more we stand in awe of its perfection. We can now examine the properties of God’s creation right down into the cellular level, and this only confirms the thought that God has intelligently created everything and His work is perfect and complete. With such a creative and all-powerful God, do you think He would complete anything less than perfection in His most important work – our salvation? The riches of His grace detailed above are just part of the fact that confirm that He has indeed completed His most perfect work in those that believe! The new creation is the most wondrous of all His creations! Ok, so there is still one more thought...but it is something awesome to consider. Commenting on the entire list of the work done for the believer, Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote the following:

‘These marvels of grace constitute that ‘good work’ which He has but begun in those who trust Him. To this much more is yet to be added according to Phil 1.6 “He that began a good work in you will carry it on until the day of Christ Jesus.” The ‘riches of grace’ are the beginning; the final presentation in glory in the likeness of Christ will be the completion. Such a final perfection and such an eternal being is the greatest divine undertaking for the one who has been lost in sin. Nothing less than this would satisfy His boundless love.’

Notes

The “riches of God’s grace”, that is, His love set free, is incredible! I hope you have seen something more of His amazing work for everyone who has been born again. But like Chafer says, it’s only the beginning! One day, when He comes again, the process shall be complete and we shall be changed into His very likeness. And then, for the ages that are to come, His bride shall be a visible witness to the incredible kindness and grace of God. (Eph 2:7) Let me end with a quote which seems appropriate and will one day be reality...

“Grace is but Glory begun, and Glory is but Grace perfected” Jonathan Edwards ²

Eternal Security of the Believer

True children of God are, according to the Scriptures, forever saved and eternally secure because:

1. They are born again of incorruptible seed which yields the fruit of everlasting life (1 Peter 1:23).
2. They stand before God clothed in the imputed (credited) righteousness of Christ, and not in their own (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:19-21).
3. His sheep have been given eternal life—they shall never perish (John 10:28).
4. Their eternal lives are forever hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1-3).
5. They are already seated in the heavenlies in Christ (Ephesians 1:3; 2:6).
6. The penalty for all their sin has been forever settled through the perfect and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 4:23-5:2; 5:6-9).
7. Loss of reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ is certain for the careless Christians, but not loss of salvation (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).
8. God faithfully chastens all of His children, even to the point of taking home those who refuse their Heavenly Father’s correction (He 12:6-11; 1 Cor 5:1-5; 11:28-32).
9. They have already been delivered from the wrath to come (1 Thes 1:9,10; 5:8-10).
10. They are sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption (Eph 4:30; Ro 8:23).
11. The Lord knoweth them that are His; false professors will be revealed as such at the White Throne Judgment (2 Tim 2:19; Revelation 20 ~ 15; Matthew 7:21-23).
12. God is the one Who has begun the good work in the believer, and He has promised to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; they are to “work out,” not “work for” their salvation (Philippians 1:6; 2:12,13).
13. They are already living stones in the spiritual building of God of which Christ Himself is the Chief Cornerstone (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:20-22).
14. They are members of the Body of Christ, each with a peculiar function and without each one, the Body would not be complete (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
15. They are kept by the power of God, through faith, not through the efforts or the works of the one who is saved. (1 Peter 1:5).
16. Their incorruptible, everlasting inheritance is reserved for them by God (1 Pet 1:4).
17. They are God the Father’s irrevocable gift to God the Son (John 17:6,7).

Notes

2 - This material can be found at <http://www.jesusplusnothing.com/studies/online/positioninchrist.htm>

18. Backsliding is a sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn 1:7-9).
19. He is able to save them to the uttermost because Christ "ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).
20. They are upon trusting Christ made "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).
21. Nothing can separate them from the love of Christ (Romans 8:38-39).
22. By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified (He 10:10-14).
23. They cannot be unborn (John 3:6-8).
24. Christ dwelleth in them for ever (2 John 2).
25. No man can pluck the Christian out of His Father's hand, and that necessarily includes the believer himself (John 10:29).
26. All who are justified are finally glorified—none are lost along the way (Ro 8:28-30).
27. In their flesh dwelleth no good thing; they are saved by grace (undeserved favor) and not by their own works (Ephesians 2:8, 9).
28. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance; God will never annul His promise or cast out those who have come unto Him through Christ (Rom 11:29; John 6:37; 17:2)³

Security is based upon:*

1. God's promises
2. Christ's role as Intercessor
3. Spirit's sealing
4. God's role as Father
5. Christ's role as Elder Brother
6. Spirit's role as Comforter
7. Done vs. Doing
8. Adoption
9. He's holding us (rather than us holding to Him)
10. Membership in His body

* Security can be explained, or understood, when it is looked at systematically through the Scriptures. Rather than collecting verses at random, discern what "argument" a verse supports. Then, learn two or three arguments well (supported by 5 or more verses each). This is a way to use God's word effectively. Each of the 10 statements mentioned above can form an "argument" for security by itself. This should give you some food for thought (assuming that there are still Christians in the 21st century who are unafraid to think!)

Notes

“I will build My church...”

Notes

The word “ecclesia” (alt. Ekklesia) is used in 115 verses in the New Testament (according to a PowerBible Greek word search). The vast majority of times (over 98%) refer to a local New Testament Church. Ecclesiology, then, refers to the study of the Church.

Introduction:**From the words of Christ...**

1. Matthew 16:18 is the first mention of “church” in the New Testament.
2. From the Gospels, we find “church” coming from Jesus only 2x – in Matthew 16:18 and 18:17.
3. Matthew, who writes to the Jews and emphasizes the kingdom, is the only Evangelist to record something about the Church.
4. This could imply that the 12 Apostles were not fully comprehending the introduction of the Church, per se. (Even as late as Matthew 24, they are still asking questions about the Kingdom and God’s program for Israel.)
5. From the limited use of the word by Christ, we can make several observations:
 - a. He expects holiness in His Church (as implied by “church discipline” in ch. 18)
 - b. He is the Owner of the Church.
 - c. He is the Builder of the Church.
 - d. The Church is built upon the Confession about who Christ is.
 - e. Therefore, Christ is not only the “Founder” of the Church; but also He is the “foundation” of the Church.
6. The last words of Christ to one of His churches is found in Rev 3:20. Here, He is standing outside the church, knocking on the door, ready to have fellowship.
7. He admonishes the churches in Asia Minor to repent – why? Because He is coming quickly!

From the words of Peter...

1. The Catholic Church teaches that Peter is the “ROCK” upon which Christ built the Church.
2. Peter would disagree. He taught that Christ was the “LIVING STONE” and the “CORNER STONE” upon which the Church had been built. (1 Peter 2:1-8)

From the words of Paul...

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Christ is the Head of the Church. | Col 1:18 |
| 2. Christ gave His live for the Church. | Eph 5:25ff |
| 3. The Church is a Bride | 2 Cor 11:2 |
| 4. The Church is a Body | 1 Cor 12 |

Concerning the “HOLY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH...”

1. Peter was not infallible
 - a. The Jerusalem Council took James’ advice, not Peter’s.
 - b. Paul rebuked Peter face-to-face for his actions.
2. Peter was not in Rome, but in Antioch.
 - a. When Paul wrote to Rome, he named many people – Peter not named.
 - b. The Antiochian church mentions Peter as their first bishop.

- c. The tomb of Peter was found in Jerusalem in 1953
SOURCE: (<http://biblelight.net/peters-jerusalem-tomb.htm>)
 - d. The Supremacy of Peter is built upon tradition, not Christ.
3. Peter was only one of the foundation stones. Ephesians 2:20
 - a. God used each of the 11 men (not Judas) to further the gospel, to preach to every creature, and to start churches.
 - b. Biblically, Christ is the Cornerstone. The Apostles are the foundation stones. We are the lively stones (as the church is still being built today).
 4. Salvation is to be found in Christ, not His institution.
 5. The Church Jesus started was “local” rather than “universal” (or, Catholic).
 6. No one Church ever had preeminence over another church.
 - a. This is the basis for the autonomy of the local churches.
 - b. This view teaches that Christ is the Head of the Church, not the Pope.
 7. No man (be he Pope, Pastor, or whatever) could truly be the VICAR (read: Substitute) for Christ.
 - a. Sinfulness cannot be substituted for sinlessness.

Notes

I. What is a Baptist Church?

- B Biblical Authority (or, Bible is our final authority)
- A Autonomy of local church (Autonomy: self-governing)
- P Priesthood of the Believers (implies a Privilege and a Responsibility)
- T Two Ordinances (Baptism; Lord’s Supper)
- I Individual Soul Liberty (power to choose; once chosen – has power over us)
- S Saved Membership
- T Two Officers (Pastor / Deacon)
- S Separation of Church and State

II. Are Baptists Protestants?

- a. Protestants are so named because of the Protestant Reformation.
- b. This Reformation dates to 31 October 1517, with Martin Luther.
- c. Inherent in the name is the fact that there was something wrong with the Catholic Church, and hence, a protest. This group wanted change, hence, a reformation.
- d. Baptists pre-date the Protestant Reformation.
- e. The testimony of one Catholic Cardinal dates Baptists to the 300’s AD.
- f. We believe that the Baptist churches are a continuation of the Church that Jesus started.

III. Why should I belong to a local church?

- a. God commands that we assemble together. Hebrews 10:25
- b. It is the only effective way to carry out our commission. Mt 28:18-20
- c. It is where we observe the ordinances (a local church) 1 Corinthians 11

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------|
| d. | A Pastor is God’s gift to us | Eph 4:11-16 |
| e. | We need the fellowship of mature believers | Galatians 6:1-2 |
| f. | It is where the tithe and offering is given | 1 Cor 16:1-2 |
| g. | We have been spiritually gifted to edify the body | 1 Cor 12; Rom 12 |
| h. | Pragmatically, the New Testament mentions it 115 times! | |

Notes

IV. When did the Church begin?

- a. Ask 10 men, you’ll get 10 answers!
- b. There are different opinions / views / convictions on this subject.
 - i. It began with John’s Baptism of Christ.
 - 1. Weakness: Could give the indication that John is the “head” or “founder” of the Church.
 - 2. Weakness: It could confuse the issue of the Kingdom (which was genuinely offered) and the Church (which was a new and separate entity).
 - ii. It began with Christ and the calling of the disciples.
 - 1. Since the Apostles were the Foundation Stones for the Church, this is where they are first seen as “called” out.
 - iii. It began in Matthew 16:18
 - 1. Some would argue that “build” is future tense.
 - 2. This is not the only way to interpret this word.
EX: Some take the word “build” and substitute “edify.” The meaning is now: You are my Church...I will edify you...
 - iv. It began with Christ instituting the Lord’s Supper.
 - 1. Since we believe in the “New Testament” Church, this is where the New Testament (Covenant) was inaugurated.
 - 2. You cannot have this Testament without the death of the Testator.
 - 3. This ordinance was given the DAY that Christ died (reckoning the evening/morning time-frame)
 - v. It began at Pentecost.
 - 1. Weakness: Could make the Holy Spirit the “head” of the Church.
 - 2. To whom was the Commission (before Pentecost) given?
 - 3. It is better to say the Church was empowered at Pentecost.
 - 4. One could also say that there was a change of Administration at Pentecost.
 - vi. It began at the end of Acts (ultra-dispensationalism).
 - 1. Conservative Christians who take the Bible literally would not embrace this concept.
 - 2. This concept makes the Great Commission “Jewish” in nature and excuses a lack of soulwinning on the part of Christians.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus is the Head of the Church. He started it and is building it. He will also come to take “His Bride” to be with Him. While many want to pinpoint an exact starting time for the church, there is room for legitimate discussion here. What must be seen as a “non-negotiable” is that Jesus started the Church during His earthly ministry.

For clarification, our ministry teaches that the Church was officially begun when Jesus called out the 12 disciples from the larger group, making them His Apostles. His doctrine was so fully “owned” by these men that the early church continued in the “Apostles’ doctrine...” which was none other than Christ’s doctrine which they had received and taught.

Notes

The Doctrine of Angels...

Notes

Introduction:

Angels are shrouded in mystery. We know that they exist, but not much information is given to us in the Sacred Scriptures. The purpose of the Bible is to show the unfolding drama of redemption, as it pertains to God and man. Since angels are outside the sphere of redemption, they fall outside the parameters of the Bible.

Our society is enamored, or fascinated, with angels. We picture them in the outfield, in the end-zone, that they touch us, etc... We have pictures of Guardian Angels helping children across a path. We attempt to catch spirits with a piece of wood and a feather on a rear-view mirror! Perhaps this fascination comes from the fact that angels are similar to man when they appear to us, yet, we know that they are stronger, more intelligent than us – in a word, superior. However, they are still part of the creation – our adoration must be addressed toward the Creator.

The word *angel* comes from the word *angelos*, meaning, a messenger. Only two holy angels can be definitively named from Scriptures – Michael and Gabriel.

I. Jewish Perspective of Angels

- a. There are four angels that surround God's throne:
 - i. Michael
 - ii. Gabriel
 - iii. Raphael
 - iv. Uriel

NOTE: The last two are mentioned in the apocryphal book of Enoch.
- b. Some Jewish rabbis taught that the angels were created on the second day; others on the fifth day. They are united in saying that the angels were created before mankind.
- c. They believed that the angels could argue in heaven and when there was "turmoil" in the household above, it affected the "household" below.
- d. Judaism sees Genesis 1:26 ("us") referring to God and the angels, in which they were envious of man becoming a potential competitor for God's affections. The angels, then, were against the creation of man.
- e. Jewish teachings about angels are ancient, going back to the first five books of the Bible, the Torah. Cherubim with flaming swords guard the gates of Eden after Adam and Eve are banished (Gen. 3). An angel arrives to tell Abraham he and Sarah will have a child (Gen. 18) and then an angel stays Abraham's hand when he is about to sacrifice that child (Gen. 22). It is an angel who saves Hagar and Ishmael in the desert (Gen. 21), appears to Moses out of the burning bush (Ex. 3), and announces to Samson's mother to be that she is to have an exceptional child (Judges 13). This list is but a sampling of the angelology of the Bible.
- f. The Hebrew word for angel means messenger. One traditional portrait of angels is as functionaries who carry out God's will. The rabbis declare that "wherever the angel appears the shechina (the divine Presence) appears (Exodus Rabbah 32:9)." Angels are used to give God distance from

the action. Since it is too anthropomorphic (that is, giving God human characteristics) to have God wrestle with Jacob, an angel serves the purpose (Gen. 28).

- g. Judaism is given shape by the writings of the rabbis. The Talmud, rabbinic commentary encompassing both Jewish law and legend written in the years between 50 BCE and 600 CE, is full of speculations and stories about angels. In rabbinic literature, angels sometimes show a little independence of mind. They even argue with God, making a persuasive case that human beings should not be created. The angels argue that people will commit offenses against truth and peace. Since the angels' arguments are not refutable--human beings do indeed sin continually against both truth and peace--God dashes truth to the ground, and creates human beings in spite of their deficiencies (Genesis Rabbah 8:5).
- h. The list below shows what some Jews consider to be archangels.

1. Metatron	All-Illuminating
2. Raziel	Divine Wisdom
3. Tzaphkiel	Understanding
4. Tzadkiel	Loving-Kindness, Grace
5. Gabriel	Justice
6. Uriel	Beauty, Mercy
7. Haniel	Victory
8. Michael	Glory
9. Raphael	Foundation, Healing
10. Sandlephon	Kingdom
- i. The Jewish perspective is shrouded in mysticism and based heavily upon rabbinical teachings. The Hebrew Bible does not specifically mention any angel by name until Daniel's prophecy. Here, only two names are mentioned. The Bible only calls one angel an "Archangel," whereas the chart above shows that Judaism believes in four, seven, or ten archangels, depending upon the individual person.
- j. According to Midrash Tehillim 88:4, angels wait until all Jews finish their morning prayers and weave them into a crown which they place on God's head. Additionally, the angels praise God during the night time because Israel praises God during the day.
- k. Ultimately however, angels have an ancillary role. In both the Bible and later literature, Judaism insists God is initiator and arbiter of what happens here on earth. Rabbi Judan teaches in the Talmud that God wishes to be directly addressed: "If trouble comes upon someone, let him cry not to Michael or Gabriel, but let him cry unto Me (Jerusalem Talmud Berachot 9:12)." As Jews recite each year during Passover: "And the Lord brought us out from Egypt--not by an angel, not by a seraph (fiery angel), and not by a messenger, but the Holy One alone..."

II. The Muslim Perspective of Angels

- a. They are light-based creatures, created by God to serve and worship God. Belief in angels is one of the beliefs in Islam or faith without which there is

no faith. Whoever does not believe in any of these 6 faiths or beliefs is not a believer (mu'min). These pillars are belief in: God, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and that predestination, both good and bad, comes from God.

- b. They are intangible, sentient entities, who do not have a free will. Their purpose is to serve God. Being made of light, they can assume almost any form, completely real to the human eye, and traverse a distance just as fast as light or faster.
- c. While Iblis (the Arabic Devil/ Satan) did disobey God, was expelled from Heaven, and became the avowed enemy of man, he was a Jinn (from whence the English word genie is derived) and not an angel, which is not angelic in any way, since they are made of smokeless fire, not light, have free-will, and can disobey or openly defy God.
- d. There are four Archangels whom Muslims are required to acknowledge as part of their conversion to Islam.
 - i. Gabriel Revealed the Quran to Mohammed
 - ii. Michael brings thunder / lightning to the earth
 - iii. Raphael Signals Judgment Day by blowing a horn
 - iv. Azrael Angel of death; separates soul from body.

Notes

III. The Christian Perspective of Angels

- a. As revealed in the New Testament
 - i. 2 Thessalonians 1:7
And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,
 - ii. Colossians 2:18
Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind...
 - iii. Ephesians 1:21
Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
 - iv. Colossians 1:16
For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:
 - v. John 1:51
And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.
 - vi. Revelation 12:7
And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

- vii. Revelation 22:9
Then saith he [angel] unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.
- viii. 1 Peter 3:22
Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.
- ix. 2 Peter 2:11
Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.
- x. Jude 9
Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.
- xi. Luke 22:43
And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him [Jesus].
- xii. Mark 8:38
Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.
- xiii. Hebrews 12:22
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,

NOTE: The apostles were firmly convinced in the existence of angels. Some of them actually saw angels. You would not be able to convince Peter that angels did not exist.

- b. As revealed by Christ
 - i. Matthew 18:10
Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.
 - ii. Mark 8:38
Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.
 - iii. Mark 13:32
But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

- iv. Matthew 13:41
The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;
- v. Matthew 26:53
Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

NOTE: Jesus was not just teaching a superstitious belief that existed among the Jewish people at that time. He was telling the truth.

Notes

IV. The Nature of Angels

- a. They are created
 - i. Psalm 148:1-5
 - ii. Nehemiah 9:6
- b. They are spiritual
 - i. Hebrews 1:14
 - ii. Psalm 104:4
- c. They are powerful
 - i. Isaiah 37:36
 - ii. Psalm 103:20-22
- d. They are ranked...
 - i. Jude 9
 - ii. 1 Thessalonians 4:16
 - iii. Colossians 1:16
- e. They have personality
 - i. Intellect 1 Peter 1:12
 - ii. Will Jude 6
 - iii. Emotion Luke 2:13
- f. They do not reproduce and do not die.
 - i. Mark 12:25
 - ii. Luke 20:36
- g. They are innumerable
 - i. Hebrews 12:22
 - ii. 2 Kings 6:17

V. The Purpose of Angels

- a. They praise God
 - i. Isaiah 6
 - ii. Revelation 5:11-12
- b. They guide
 - i. Acts 8:26
 - ii. Acts 10:3

- c. They guard believers (even after death)
 - i. Luke 16:22
 - ii. Jude 9
- d. They return with Christ
 - i. Matthew 25:31
 - ii. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8

Notes

VI. The Fall of Angels

- a. When did they fall?
 - i. Scripture does not conclusively tell us.
 - ii. With that in mind, all the “theories” are just that – theories!
- b. Who is their leader?
 - i. The leader is Satan [means *Adversary*]. He has many names:
 - 1. Devil slanderer
 - 2. Serpent deceitful
 - 3. Lucifer morning star
 - 4. Evil One
 - 5. Dragon
 - 6. Prince of this world
 - 7. God of this world
 - 8. Accuser
 - 9. Beelzebub
 - 10. Belial
- c. Why did they fall?
 - i. Some attribute to them the sin of lust, connecting Genesis 6 and Jude 6 together.
 - ii. Some say it was the sin of pride, allowing Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 to stand as representative of all the fallen angels.
 - iii. Some classify their fall according to a Calvinistic paradigm, i.e. – they simply were not “elect” angels.
 - iv. While we cannot dogmatically say the “why” of their fall, we can dogmatically state that they are unredeemable. The death of Christ on the Cross DOES NOT atone for the sin of the angelic race.
- d. What do they do now?
 - i. They oppose God’s purposes Daniel 10:10-14
 - ii. They execute Satan’s purposes Matt 25:41; 12:26-27
 - iii. They wrestle against us Ephesians 6:12
 - iv. They try to deceive God’s people 1 Samuel 28:7-20

CONCLUSION:

When the Bible shrouds something in mystery, there is no way for us to be dogmatic. The purpose of Scripture is not to point us to angels – rather, it is to point us to the Creator of the angels, Jesus Christ.

A Survey of Matthew 24*In Defense of the Pre-tribulation Rapture*

Notes

Introductory Remarks:

Eschatology consists of the Rapture, the Tribulation, and the Judgments, the Millennial Reign, the Second Coming of Christ, the new Heaven and the new earth. As Bible Doctrines 1 is an overview of the 10 major doctrines, this lecture focuses on the Rapture, and specifically – the Pre-tribulation Rapture.

Matthew 24 is a “major” Scripture passage for end-time study. Some have taken this passage to teach a pre-tribulation rapture, a post-tribulation rapture, a mid-tribulation rapture, and recently, a pre-wrath rapture. The purpose of this lecture is to contextually study Matthew 24 and let it speak for itself.

- In Mat 21:12, Jesus has gone into the Temple. This immediately followed His appearance into Jerusalem upon a donkey with a great crowd crying, “Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord..”
- He heals people in the Temple and the Sanhedrin (vs. 15-16) confronts Him. He leaves the Temple and goes to Bethany (vs17) and lodges there.
- The next day, He enters the Temple again (21:23). From this point, He speaks in parables – the Pharisees and Chief Priests understand it is about them (21:46).
- Coming into chapter 22, He is still speaking parables. This continues through chapter 23. In 23:38, Jesus remarks about “their house” is left unto them desolate and states that the Jews (nationally) would not see Him again until they stated the same words before He had gone into the Temple (21:12).
- Coming into chapter 24, we now read that Jesus went out and departed from the Temple. The disciples want to show Him all the buildings of the Temple. Jesus said to them, “See ye not all these things [buildings of the Temple]...there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”
- Now Jesus is at the Mount of Olives. The disciples ask Him three questions that set the context for the Olivet Discourse:
 - o When shall these things [the destruction of the Temple] be?
 - o What is the sign of your coming?
 - o What is the sign of the end of the world?

I. Questions for Consideration

- a. At what point are we in Christ’s ministry?
 - i. Jesus has just offered Himself as the Messiah. He has strolled into Jerusalem upon the “foal of an ass” to a great multitude announcing Him as the Son of David. This is the official offer of the Kingdom to Israel.
 - ii. Furthermore, we must notice that upon His presentation of His Messianic credentials, He has gone into the Temple – the “house of God.” (Some say the “house of God” refers only to the church – Jesus clearly saw the Temple as the “house of God”

- by stating: “My house shall be called a house of prayer.”) This “house” is now left desolate (23:38).
- iii. In chapter 23, we have the formal rejection by Israel of her Messiah. Jesus is weeping over “Jerusalem” in 23:37.
 - iv. The answer to this question: We are in the context of Jesus offering the Kingdom (which was at hand) to the Jews and their official rejection of that offer.
- b. To whom is He speaking?
- i. Part of the key to interpreting this passage is in identifying the primary and original audience. Is He speaking to the Church; is He speaking to the Jews; is He just speaking to His disciples?
 - ii. Of course, when questions like these are raised, inevitably there is the side-question: When did the church begin?
 - 1. The church was started by Christ. He is the Head of the church (Col 1:18) and the Builder of it (Matt 16:18). This church is referred to as His body (1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12).
 - 2. The New Testament church was started by Christ. I am not sure how much the early disciples understood this “church” as separate from Israel. They still looked for the kingdom. Very little is said about the church in Christ’s earthly ministry.
 - 3. The church received its empowering at Pentecost (Acts 2), which was necessitated by Israel’s rejection of the Messiah. Had the Jews accepted Christ’s legitimate offer of the Kingdom, He would have gone to the Cross, resurrected, and set up the Kingdom then. (This is one of those “what ifs” that we can never dogmatically answer scripturally.)
 - iii. I propose that Jesus is talking to the Jewish nation. Here are my reasons:
 - 1. He just left Temple after offering Himself to Jews as Messiah. (Mt 22-23)
 - 2. He has just wept over Jerusalem. (23:37)
 - 3. His disciples are content to show Him the Temple. (24:1)
 - 4. Jesus has just prophesied the destruction of the Temple. (24:2)
 - 5. The message that is preached is the Kingdom Gospel (24:14)
 - 6. He references Daniel’s 70 week prophecy for Israel (24:15)
 - 7. He alludes to the “birth-pangs [sorrow] of Messiah” which is also called the time of “Jacob’s trouble” (24:8 cf w/ Jer 30:4-7)
 - 8. The culmination of these prophecies is the sign of the Son of Man. This is the 2nd Coming when the Kingdom

Notes

is established (an event for Israel) and is not the rapture (an event for the Church). (24:30)

- a. At the rapture, the “seizing” or catching away is in a moment – no human eye can see that.
 - b. At the rapture, Christ comes personally. Here (24:31) He sends His angels for the elect. “The Elect” biblically refers to Israel or the Church and is not determinate by context. However, the context indicates (by previous data) that the “elect” here is the nation of Israel receiving the kingdom promised through David.
9. One that is often missed is the prophecy of verse 5: Many shall come in my name, saying “I am Christ [Messiah]...” We have so long associated the word “christos” as simply a part of Jesus’ name.
- a. We read His name as if Jesus were His “first name” and that “Christ” were His last name.
 - b. The word “Christ” is a title. It is NOT a name. It is the Greek equivalent for the word “Messiah” according to John 1:41.
 - c. Jesus is prophesying that in the last days, there will be imposters who present themselves to the Jewish nation as Messiah. Messiah was a fulfillment of promises made to the Jews.

Notes

II. Why is the Rapture Pre-Trib?

- a. In studying Matthew 24, we are dealing with the nation Israel and God’s ultimate working with her.
 - i. This has been seen in the reference from Daniel’s 70th week mentioned by Christ in verse 15. (Daniel 9:27 – Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and thy holy city...)
 - ii. The discourse is in the context of the destruction of Jerusalem, her Temple and way of life as a result of their rejection of the Messiah.
- b. Consequently, we see glimpses of the message that will be preached during the final week of Daniel’s prophecy. This message sounds all too similar to that preached by John the Baptist and Christ before Israel’s rejection: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand...” Ironically, this message will be preached by 144,000 Jewish evangelists – where is the church?
 - i. The 144,000 Jewish males are mentioned in Revelation 7:4ff and 14:1ff.
 - ii. The church is strangely missing from Revelation 4-18. In chapter three, John shows seven distinct churches in Asia Minor. In chapter 4, John is commanded to “come up hither...” He is immediately transported to that which happens hereafter the mentioning of the churches, representative of the church age.
 - iii. In this hereafter section, the first thing John sees is the crowning

- of the King by the 24 elders. Who are these elders? We are not sure. Some suggest that these “represent” the church. I believe that there are literally 24 elders. I cannot dogmatically state who they are, but I can dogmatically state that at the Bema Seat [Judgment Seat of Christ] which immediately follows the Rapture, the Church casts their crowns at Jesus’ feet. (Rev 4:10; 19:12)
- iv. The Church is not seen again until Rev 19 when she is coming from Heaven to earth with Christ.
 - v. The reason the Jewish message (Gospel of the Kingdom) is being preached by Jewish evangelists (144,000) is because the Church will have already been taken out of the way. When God has prepared the Jews for the receiving of her Messiah and Kingdom, we will come with Him to help set it up.
 - vi. 1 Kings 8:60 tells us that God’s plan for the Jewish nation was for the entire world to know. The Jews failed in that plan, and [with their formal rejection of the Messiah] that commission would be given to a new entity known as the Church [after the death of the Testator]. When the Church is removed (1 Thess 4:13ff), the entire world will know the truth about a coming Kingdom through the witness of 144,000 Jews.
- c. Matthew 24:8 is a reference to the birth-pangs of Messiah.
- i. This Greek word, *Odin*, is used only 4 times in the New Testament: Matthew 24:8; Mark 13:8; Acts 2:24; and 1 Thessalonians 5:3.
 - ii. A similar word is used in the Old Testament to describe the same event: Yelad – Jeremiah 30:7; Isaiah 66:7-8
 - iii. The Jewish teaching caused them to consider two Messiahs: Messiah ben Joseph and Messiah ben David. Christian teaching reconciles this apparent “two Messiah” theory by showing two comings of Christ. He would come the first time to suffer, a “Messiah ben Joseph.” He is coming the second time to reign as “Messiah ben David.” Isaiah 66:7 speaks of a child being born before the travail – the first coming. He then speaks of a birth after great travail in verse 8. Matthew 24:8 tells us that what is about to happen is the “beginning” of these labor pangs. When the time of this “distress, trouble, or tribulation” is over, Israel will “bring forth” her Messiah. (Jer 30:7)
 - iv. There are those who try to say Matthew 24 was all fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. While that would be an easy way out, there are many questions left unanswered – for example: Why has Jesus not come back yet!
 - v. I want to insert a Messianic Jew’s perspective in at this point. First, let me preface it by saying that he uses the New American Standard. I do not advocate that, but have left his quote intact:

“The English phrase, birth pangs of the Messiah, or the Hebrew Chevlay shel Mashiach, is a major theme of the Bible. It is commonly known as the seven-year tribulation period. In Matthew (Mattityahu) 24, Yeshua [Jesus] describes the signs of the end. “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us,

when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age [Olam Haze]?’ “(Matthew 24:3 NAS) Yeshua said that these days are the beginning of sorrows (Matthew [Mattityahu] 24:8. The Greek word translated as sorrows here is *odin*. This word means “birth pangs.” The birthpangs of the Messiah are also spoken of in Jeremiah (Yermiyahu) 30:4-7, as it is written:

Now these are the words which the Lord spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah, “For thus says the Lord, ‘I have heard a sound of terror, of dread, and there is no peace. Ask now, and see, if a male can give birth [travail with child?]. Why do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth [*odin*]? And why have all faces turned pale? Alas! for that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s distress [trouble], but he will be saved from it’ “(Jeremiah [Yermiyahu] 30:4-7 NAS).

The birthpangs are also mentioned in First Thessalonians 5:1-3:

Now as to the times and the epochs [seasons], brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs [*odin*] upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape (1Thes 5:1-3 NAS).

It can also be seen in Revelation 12:1-2, as it is written:

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars [this is Israel (Genesis [Bereishit] 37:9)]; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor [*odin*] and in pain to give birth (Rev. 12:1-2 NAS).

The Scriptures reveal two synonyms:

The birthpangs = the time of Jacob’s (Ya’akov’s) trouble.

The time of Jacob’s (Ya’akov’s) trouble = the seven-year tribulation.

This period of time will be Israel’s most trying time ever. This period of time is known as the tribulation. Jacob (Ya’akov) is Israel. There shall be great tribulation in Israel such as never was since there was a nation (Dan 12:1). It will also be a time when G-d will ultimately judge sin and all the nations on the earth. Through it, the nation of Israel will be physically saved from total destruction by G-d, and will, as a nation, accept Yeshua as the Messiah “..But he shall be saved out of it” (Jeremiah [Yermiyahu] 30:7). In Hosea 5:15 it is written, “I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face: in their affliction [the Chevlay shel Mashiach /tribulation] they will seek Me early.”

Israel will face genuine crisis during the time of Jacob’s (Ya’akov’s) trouble. The prophet Zechariah prophesied that two of every three inhabitants of Israel will perish during this time, with a remnant of only one third of the population being saved (Zechariah 13:8-9). In Isaiah (Yeshayahu) 13:6-8 it is written:

Wail, for the day of the Lord is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore all hands will fall limp, and every man’s heart will melt [see Luke 21:26]. And they will be terrified, pains and anguish will take hold of them, they will writhe like a woman in labor; they will look at one another in astonishment, their faces aflame (Isaiah [Yeshayahu] 13:6-8 NAS).

Isaiah 13:10 corresponds to Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24; and Rev 6:12. Other passages that speak of the birthpangs include Gen 3:16; 35:16-20; 38:27-28; Isaiah 26:16-21; 54:1; 66:7-9; Jeremiah 4:31; 6:24; 13:21; 22:23; Micah 4:9-10; and John 16:21-22.

There are several stages to Israel's birthing the Messiah:

Isaiah 66:7 is a birth before travail. "Before she [Israel] travailed [received the Messiah (Mashiach)], she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child" (Isaiah [Yeshayahu] 66:7). Isaiah 66:7 is a birth before travail. This happened during the first coming of Yeshua, the Messiah. The birthpangs that Israel experienced during Yeshua's first coming came after Yeshua's death with the destruction of the temple and the dispersion of the Jewish people out of Israel by the Romans in 70 C.E. (Common Era).

Isaiah 66:8 is a birth after travail. Isaiah 66:8 says, "...as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." This will happen before Yeshua returns to earth to set foot on the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4) as Israel experiences the hardest time she has ever experienced since she was a nation (Daniel 12:1) in the period of time known as the birth-pangs of the Messiah or the tribulation. The tribulation and the birth-pangs of the Messiah are one and the same thing. What we are seeing in these days is the woman (Israel) becoming larger and larger, coming closer and closer to the time when she is about to give birth."¹

Notes

- d. What about Matthew 24:29?
 - i. Doesn't the fact that the Sun is darkened after the Tribulation indicate a Post-Tribulation rapture? Before answering that question, it is important to remember that this question assumes the presence of the Church in this chapter (as that is the group to whom the rapture is applicable). If however, we are dealing with the nation of Israel turning to their Messiah before the Kingdom is set up, we may expect to see Jesus silent on the question of the rapture (specifically since He knew the men to whom He spoke would not be alive for the rapture, and many would not make it to the destruction of the Temple).
 - ii. However, even though we are speaking primarily on "Jewish ground" in Matthew 24, we can notice that in Matthew 24:27, we have the coming of the Son of Man as lightning.
 1. What are we to glean from this picture?
 - a. Jesus is coming from the East. Specifically, at His 2nd Coming, the Jews look for Him to come through the Eastern Gate.
 - b. Lightning is swift. When Christ comes to this earth, it will be visible for all to see.
 - c. This is not the case with the rapture, in which the Church is called away at the "Midnight Cry" by the Bridegroom.
 - i. There is profit in studying the 7 feasts (festivals) of Israel.
 - ii. As an appendix to these notes, you will find "Lecture 4c" which deals with a study of the former and latter rains and their respective feasts. Hosea 6:3 teaches us that Christ will

- come as the rain...inherent in these verses are the two comings of Christ to the earth.
- iii. There is mention of “Rosh Hashanah” in Matthew 24. Verse 36 contains the words spoken by a Jewish Bridegroom when asked about his wedding.
 - iv. Verse 42 continues with this same thought. It is the “Father” who will tell the “Son” when the “house” [mansions] He has been preparing is sufficient enough to bring the Bride to that chamber.
- e. But doesn’t Matthew 24:39-41 teach that the church will go through the Tribulation?
- i. The context is describing days of judgment in Noah’s day. The ones taken in that day were taken in judgment – not an enviable position. Noah was actually the “one left.”
 - ii. It is “eisegesis” to state that the “ones taken” are taken in the rapture. That doesn’t fit the picture of the typology of Noah.

III. Can 1 Thessalonians 4-5 give proof of the Pre-Trib rapture?

- a. Those who studied the Scriptures knew there would come a time like no other – a time for Jacob’s trouble [distress, affliction].
- b. This church at Thessalonica had been under severe stress, affliction and distress. Consider 1 Thess 1:6; 2:14; 3:3-4; 3:7; 2 Thess 1:4-6.
- c. This church was starting to think they had missed the rapture. Paul writes to them to not be ignorant of the Scriptures. They obviously could not have missed the rapture because the events of the Day of the Lord had not yet transpired.
- d. Later, this church was afraid that due to the troubles they had faced, they might have missed the Day of Christ. (2 Thess 2:1-3)
- e. Paul, as he comforted a church going through tribulation (though nothing like the “Great Tribulation” that will be in the Day of the Lord), reminded them of the Rapture. In effect, he was stating “Your troubles seem heavy now, but remember, you will not have to go through the Great Tribulation: you will be caught away. Comfort yourself with these words.”
 - i. Paul uses the picture of comfort in 4:18 as well as 5:11.
 - ii. In ch. 5, he describes the Lord in similar terms as the rapture in ch 4. Observe:
 1. The day of the Lord will be as a thief in the night.
 2. The bridegroom will come unexpected at the midnight hour.
 3. The rapture was to bring comfort.
 4. The Day of the Lord was to bring comfort.

- a. QUESTION: What comfort can be derived from a promise of going through the Great Tribulation?
- b. QUESTION: Often, people refer to the Day of the Lord as a Day of Wrath – what comfort does this Day bring to the Church (unless she is not going through it...)?
- c. NOTE: The Day of the Lord is a time period. Zech 14 refers to it as a day of wrath and blessing. Peter sees the Day of the Lord concluding at the end of the Millennium with a new heaven and earth.
- d. NOTE: Scripture indicates that within the time-frame of the Day of the Lord is the “great and terrible day of the Lord.” (Joel 2:31 with Acts 2:20) There is a specific day where He pours out His wrath.
- e. NOTE: Also included in this time-frame would be the Day of Christ, the day in which Christ presents His bride. In keeping with the picture of the feasts, this would be after the Day of Atonement (called the “day of redemption” [we are sealed unto this day]) at the Feasts of Tabernacles.

Notes

IV. What do we believe about 1 Thessalonians 4?

- a. We see the Promise of His Coming.
 - i. Jesus promised He would return for us (John 14:1-3)
 - ii. The angels promised He would return (Acts 1:10-11)
 - iii. Paul asserts that same promise here.
- b. We see the Person of His Coming.
 - i. He is not sending angels for us.
 - ii. He is coming Himself.
- c. We see the Program of His Coming.
 - i. He is coming in the air FOR His church.
 - ii. He is coming to the earth With His Church.
 - iii. When He returns in the air – it is atomos – an indivisible moment of time.
 - iv. When He returns to the earth – every eye shall see Him.

CONCLUSION

A pre-tribulation rapture is in keeping with the picture that CHRIST instituted with the church as His bride. While the Jews will have seven years (the 70th week of Daniel) to be prepared for God’s kingdom, the church will have its bridal week (this “week” will be in Heaven; the “week” of Tribulation [for the Jews] will be on the earth).

A pre-tribulation rapture is in keeping with the understanding of how the early church would have understood Paul's phrase "the last trump." (1 Corinthians 15:52). By "last trump" we do not presume that God will blow several trumpets to get us ready. Rather, we understand this phrase to delineate a specific day. In Jewish history, the "last trump" referred to the Feast of Trumpets, the first feast of the fall season.

A pre-tribulation rapture attempts to keep a "big picture" approach to Eschatology, rather than resting its position on any one verse. While there are questions that are raised with any eschatological position, we believe that a pre-tribulation rapture can offer reasonable answers to questions that are raised. For example:

1. **I have heard that the "last trump" is the last trumpet judgment mentioned in Revelation, which is after the tribulation is already started. Is that true?**

ANSWER: The early church, made up primarily of Jewish believers, could not cross-reference Paul's epistle to John's Revelation. These two books were separated by over 30 years. Yet, Paul writes to them expecting them to understand his terminology. How would the early believers in the first century have understood "the last trumpet?" They would have seen a reference to Rosh Hashanah.

2. **Matthew 24:29 states that immediately after the Tribulation of those days, the sun and moon are darkened, and then the sign of the Son of Man coming. How does this hold up to a pre-tribulation position?**

ANSWER: Matthew is introducing us to the "great and terrible day" of the Lord, or the Day of His wrath. This will obviously precede His coming to the earth with the Saints in which every eye will see Him. Furthermore, this will also be the time that Israel will look upon Him whom they have pierced.

Since the Day of the Lord is a time period that runs from the rapture until the creation of the New Heaven and the Earth, it is important to separate the big picture from the "one day" of wrath. The Church will be raptured at the very beginning of the Day of the Lord, before the Tribulation begins. The Church will return with Christ after the Great Tribulation and Day of Wrath. There is no contradiction. Both events are true. The Church will be gone before the rapture; the second coming of Christ will be preceded by cosmic signs in the heavens.

3. **The Tribulation period (7-year period) is the time of Satan's wrath because believers are martyred. If this were God's wrath, it would be poured out on the unbelievers only. Does this not destroy the pre-tribulation position?**

ANSWER: First, it is not scriptural to state that God has never poured out wrath upon His people. Read Ezra 5:12; 7:23; 8:22; 10:14 to see where He has done this. Also, it would do well to read Numbers 11:33 where the wrath of the Lord was kindled against His own people. In 2 Kings 22, the wrath of God was upon Israel because they had not obeyed the book.

With that being said, it is not without the bounds of Scripture to see God pouring His wrath upon the earth, and having that wrath affect both believers and non-believers alike. Can we fully understand that? No. Do we have a scriptural precedent, a “law of first-mention...”? Yes.

Is this study meant to answer every question about the rapture, the Day of the Lord, the Day of Christ, the sun and moon being darkened, etc? No. Is it meant to give parameters to the doctrinal position we take concerning the blessed HOPE – i.e. the rapture of the Church before the Tribulation begins? Yes. Is it meant to provoke further thought and study into the area of eschatology? Yes – most definitely!

Notes

INTRODUCTION:

There are seven major feasts that are given to the Jews as a sign. God, who is One of decency and order, does His work with purpose. These feasts were not given simply to pass the time; rather they were given as a teaching tool for the coming Messiah.

Notes

I. The Seven Major Feasts

a. Feasts of the Former Rain

- The Feast of Passover April 6-12
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread April 6-12
- The Feast of Firstfruits April 6-12
- The Feast of Pentecost May 26

b. Feasts of the Latter Rain

- Feast of Trumpets Sept 16
- Day of Atonement Sept 25
- Feast of Tabernacles Sept 30-Oct 6

c. Overview of the Latter Rain Feasts

- **Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)**

All of the Former Rain feasts were fulfilled at Christ's first coming. All of the Latter Rain feasts point to His second coming. Each Spring feast was fulfilled on the exact day...

1. This Feast pictures the Rapture (of the Church)
2. This Feast is known as the "Wedding of the Messiah." The Church, which is the Bride of Christ, will be caught up to the "wedding" at the last trump.
3. This Feast occurs on the New Moon, which is 29.5 days after the last new moon. (See Colossians 2:16-17)
4. In order to make sure that this feast was celebrated properly, the Jews celebrated for two days (because no one knew the exact day or hour for when the new moon would begin).
5. The phrase "of that day and hour" is an expression used by a Jewish Bridegroom when asked about his wedding day. He could not set the date; he was given permission to go get his bride after the place he had gone to prepare was approved by his father.
6. We are told that the new moon and the feasts (holy days) of the Lord are a shadow of things to come (Colossians 2:17). Since this feast is the only one to fall on a new moon, we should take special note.
7. This Feast is when the "last trump" (Shofar) is blown. Paul alludes to this in 1 Corinthians 15. This is not the same as the seven trumpet judgments of Revelation.
 - a. We cannot go to the book of Revelation and say

- that the “last trump” is the voice of the seventh angel (Revelation 11:15). This is not the way that the original recipients of this letter would have understood it.
- b. The Talmud states that the resurrection of the dead will occur on *Rosh Hashanah* (which they also call “the birthday of the world”). Paul also mentions this in 1 Corinthians 15.
 - c. In the first century, the “last trump” referred to a specific day of the year. In Judaism, there are three trumpets with a name:
 1. First Trump - shofar is blown on *Shavuot* (Pentecost)
 2. Last Trump - blown on *Rosh Hashanah* (Trumpets)
 3. Great Trump - blown on *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement) which heralds the return of Messiah back to the earth (not the air).
8. There are “Seven Days of Awe” between Trumpets and Atonement. This could picture the Seven Years of Tribulation. *Yom Kippur* pictures the defeat of Satan and being put away at the end of the tribulation. (If you were to add the two-day trumpet feast and the Day of Atonement to the Seven Days of Awe, you would have ten days of tribulation (possible reference in Rev 2:10).
 9. In a Jewish Wedding, a marriage takes place over a period of time known as the Bridal Week. The end of the week is when the marriage act is consummated. At the close of the week, there is a wedding supper. (Compare this with Judges 14, Rev 19, and Gen 29:22-28). NOTE: Pretribulationists believe that the bridal week is the same as Daniel’s 70th week. The “week” in Heaven runs concurrent with the “week” on earth.
 10. In the Jewish wedding, the bride never knows when the wedding day will be. She is to be in a continuous state of readiness. The Bridegroom will come as a “thief in the night” in order to take, seize (rapture) his bride away to the bridal chamber prepared for them in the father’s house.
 11. This Feast is also known as the “Coronation of the Messiah” for the Jews. This is where they believe that the Messiah will start reigning as king, thus

beginning the day of the Lord, which would include the Tribulation period.

Notes

12. The Rapture is also the time for the Bema Judgment, or the judging of the works of the righteous. Judgment must begin first in the *house of the Lord*.

- **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)**

1. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are referred to as “High Holy Days.” Of the two, Yom Kippur is the most serious.
2. This is the day when the Jew must consider his own sinfulness and how that separates him from God.
3. In biblical times, a blood offering would be offered for the sins of the people and the priest. (God was not pleased with these offerings - He was pleased with the offering of His Son.)
4. There were two goats on *Yom HaDin* (Day of Judgment): The Sacrifice and the Scapegoat.
5. The shofar is blown to announce that judgment is coming. Consider the last words of Christ:
 - a. to the church of the Laodiceans REPENT
 - b. I come as a thief in the night (16:5)
 - c. I come quickly (22)
6. His last words were not the Great Commission. It was “REPENT” for I am coming quickly with judgment.
7. The Jews believed that the gates of heaven were opened on Rosh Hashanah, and then were shut at the close of Day of Atonement. Prayers of deliverance would no longer be heard after the Atonement ceremony was over.

- **Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot - Season of our Joy)**

1. This feast reminds us that we are all sojourners
2. This feast teaches us that God is our shelter
3. This feast reminds us Christ is the light of the world.
4. This feast teaches us that faith requires flexibility.
 - a. The booth was not permanent.
 - b. The booth was not defensible
 - c. The booth was open to the heavens.
5. This feast reminds us of the frailty of human life
6. This feast reminds us of a permanent home that is being prepared

7. This feast reminds us of the living water of salvation we find in Christ.

Notes

II. The Feasts of Tabernacles - Other Names

- a. Sukkot
- b. Feast of Lights
- c. Season of Joy
- d. Feast of Ingathering
- e. Feast of Booths
- f. Feast of Nations

III. The Feasts of Tabernacles - Time of Christ

- a. Many believe that Christ was born during this Feast.
 1. The angels declared tidings of great joy.
 2. Jesus became flesh and *tabernacled* among us.
 3. The shepherds were still out (custom was to remain until the first rain or frost in October)
 4. Joseph and Mary were going to Bethlehem (4 miles from Jerusalem). Why was the city so crowded? Was it only the taxing - or was it that the Romans taxed the people at the biggest “payday” of the year - the Feast of Ingathering?
 5. We cannot be dogmatic on the date of His birth, but we do know that the feasts point to Christ and each “Former Rain” feast was fulfilled to the date.

- b. Many believe that He will return (the Advent) during this Feast
 1. This feast ultimately points to Emmanuel - God with us. It is a time when God will tabernacle with men.
 2. We cannot be dogmatic, but it is interesting to consider that the Millennium could begin around the time of this Feast.
 3. We do know that this Feast is celebrated during the Kingdom age (Zech 14:16-19; Isaiah 66:18-23).
 4. **NOTE:** Many Messianic Jews believe the Mount of Transfiguration experience occurred during the Feast of Tabernacles. This explains why Peter wanted to build a tabernacle (booth) for Moses and Elijah. They would be required to observe this feast! Jesus took that statement and taught those disciples that Moses (LAW) and Elijah (PROPHETS) were given to point to Christ alone, just as that Feast did.

IV. Understanding the Prophetic Element

- a. The feast points to the Millennium - a time of rest that was pictured by the Sabbath.
- b. During this “tabernacle” time, Jerusalem becomes the city of Joy.

- c. Without God dwelling with man, we have no hope. Notice the observations of Wilmington:
1. The Age of Innocence ended with wilful disobedience in Genesis 3.
 2. The Age of Conscience ended with universal corruption in Genesis 6.
 3. The Age of Human Government ended with devil worshipping in Genesis 11.
 4. The Age of Promise ended with God’s people enslaved in bondage - Exodus 1
 5. The Age of Law ended with creatures killing the Creator.
 6. The Church Age ends with apostasy - 1 Tim 4; 2 Tim 4
 7. The Millennium ends with an attempt to destroy God Himself - see Revelation 20.
- d. God does not give us prophetic truth for speculation; He gives it to us for motivation. We are not to argue about the identity of the Anti-Christ or the exact location of Tubal! We are to remember that we have a God who is going to personally rendezvous with human history!
- e. The Feast of Lights is the time when the Light of the World will tabernacle with man, hence, there will be no need for the sun.
- f. The Feast of Ingathering will be the time when all of Israel is regathered to every square inch of the land God has given to her.

Notes

Conclusion

As believers, we have been commanded to study the word of God. Part of that study is to remember the “Hebrew” roots of Christianity. While Christianity is a distinct religion from Judaism, this new message was taken to the Jew first... Why? Could it not possibly be that every thing they had been given (the Law, the prophets, the Feasts, the sacrificial system, the Levitical Priesthood, etc) all pointed to Christ?