

Living Faith Christian Fellowship's
Doctrinal Study Guide To:

Apostolic Faith
&
Biblical Christian Living

Compiled from eight pamphlets originally written as separate articles

By Bro. Mark Bullen

Living Faith Christian Fellowship

Brookfield, MO

www.thefaithoncedelivered.info

Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. The Faith Once Delivered...	3
II. Recipe For Being Right	13
III. Learn To Identify False Teachers...	19
IV. Visiting A Church First Century A.D.	29
V. Biblical Salvation	33
VI. The Gospel: Truth Vs. Error	78
VII. Teaching Them To Observe	97
VIII. For The Perfecting Of The Saints	121

**Compiled and Corrected:
The Year Of Our Lord, 2016**

2Ti 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Section One

THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS

MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

I was raised in an Independent Baptist church in Albuquerque, New Mexico. As a five year old I was led to ask Jesus into my heart to save me, and a year later was baptized. I was told this was what it took to be secure for Heaven, have my sins forgiven (past, present, and future); and no matter what I did, or how I lived, I could not lose my home in Heaven.

At age fifteen, the fruit of heretical doctrine was evident in my life. If you had asked me if I was secure for Heaven, I would have said, "Yes, I prayed the prayer and got baptized". However, since I was taught that this is all it took -- this is all I did for my salvation; and anything else that I did was because I wanted God to bless or help me. I assumed he already owed me salvation since I accepted His free gift. Though kept in church, I lived just like the world, except for the boundaries set by my parents and the pricks of my conscience. I did all I could safely get by with, and still be accepted by my peers and parents. How I lived and talked depended on which group I was with. I had no concept of a living, obeying faith in God, or of genuine repentance; not to mention "laboring to be accepted of him" (II Cor. 5:9); or "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1); or "bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:4,5). I had never been taught that LIFE was found through a STRAIT GATE and at the END of a NARROW WAY. The reward being at the end of my race, and not at the beginning had never been made plain to me. Instead I was in advanced math classes planning to be a chemical engineer and make "lots" of money.

My mother was concerned about how my brother and I were living, and encouraged us to go to a youth camp the summer of 1982. That summer an evangelist preached hard on repentance and Judgment Day. I realized I had never repented before God of my sin, my way, and my attitude. I went forward with a broken heart and prayed, "God, *really* forgive me this time, I want to know you and live for you". In Baptist terminology I had "surrendered my life to full-time service"; however, later in studying Scripture I realized this was my true conversion experience, and requested "Believer's Baptism". Baptists often rail on the Catholics for baptizing infants, but baptizing young children, as they now do, was considered baptizing infants when the controversy started in the dark ages.

My own confusion and frustration in deciding when I was "saved" probably started my lack of confidence in modern Baptist doctrine and practice, but I didn't know enough to answer my questions, and my Baptist leaders only gave me the Baptist *canned* answers. The shallowness of these answers helped to spark my desire to find the truth.

After my conversion at the youth camp, my brother (who had also repented at camp) and I decided to start a "Bible Club" in our 3000 student high school -- Manzano High School in Albuquerque, NM. We began carrying our Bibles to school and passing out tracts, witnessing and winning many students --leading them to pray that prayer as we were taught. That next year I memorized over 600 verses including the first 13 chapters of Matthew, we threw away our worldly music, we bought our first suit and tie for church, bought new study Bibles, and began reading many Christian books.

I had a very exciting three year ministry in my public high school before graduating in '85. I then attended Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Missouri; but only for one semester. After arriving there I soon discovered that this institution was not the place I could entrust my doctrinal training -- I took the Word of God much more serious than they did. The radio tower in the midst of the campus was at that time rented out to the worst rock music station in town; and I could not even play a cassette tape in my dorm without rock beat bleeding through. This and many other things disgusted me so, I could not stay -- God would not let me. The Lord graciously moved me out and back home.

I then rented an apartment in the city (my parents lived in the country) so I could work with a junior high boys class at our church (Young Elijah's Club), and go witnessing more often. I worked for my father's construction business, and took correspondence courses from a college recommended to me by a preacher I respected.

At age 19 I wrote a short book, YOUNG ELIJAH'S, about my experiences in the High School Bible Club ministry, and another pamphlet entitled, "LORD, ARE THERE FEW THAT BE SAVED". The first to motivate

teens to witness in their schools, and the second trying to answer my own questions and problems with inconsistent Baptist doctrine.

I soon changed to a more conservative Baptist church across town, and began working with their youth. Then in '87 I decided to attend Hyles Anderson College, which this church recommended. This I did, and was much more satisfied with this school than the one in Missouri; but there were still inconsistencies that bothered me.

At this school I met my wife, Angela, and in September of '88 we were married. This college where we met had many good things to teach us, though now we see there was much bad also. I thank God that through their influence my wife and I did not hold hands until after we were engaged, and did not kiss until the preacher said, "You may kiss the bride". We were planning on going back to that school, but the pastor of the more conservative church, in Albuquerque, asked us to work for him. He hired my brother, who had been attending there while I was at college, and myself to work with the youth, and serve as associates. God blessed our efforts, and in the next year we built a youth ministry, which averaged 100 youth at Friday Night Rally, and 150 in Sunday School. We saw many lives changed, and Bible clubs started in schools.

God began dealing with me about starting a church where we could strive to be completely Biblical, without the compromise and worldliness. October '89 found us in Peoria, IL, where my wife was raised. Her father had not been in church for some time, and there were not any churches doing what we felt needed to be done in the area. My wife's parents were the first to attend, but by the spring of '90 we had a special day with 143 in attendance. The next fall, on our 1st anniversary, we were buying a building, had a bus, and 217 in attendance. We baptized 30 in the morning service. We were finding great success being "modern day Baptists". We were using all the gimmicks we were taught in college.

On our "Second Anniversary Sunday" we had 218 in our afternoon bus Sunday School, and 70 in the morning drive in crowd. We had split the congregation, separating the bus crowd to another service in the afternoon. God was still dealing with me about being "Biblical" and the more I studied, the more I learned that we were not as "Biblical" as I had thought. The more I learned of our Non-conformist Christian forefathers and the believers of the first century apostolic churches the more I realized the Baptists of my acquaintance were not following the truth, but had strayed - and that much of what we were doing was wood, hay, and stubble rather than gold, silver and precious stone (I Co 3).

I planned for '92 to be a big year for winning souls and church growth. We had started a 32' x 82' addition to the church. The city pulled our permit January 13th because the zoning officer allegedly didn't issue it properly. We appealed and won, and finished our building on the outside; but during this time my wife miscarried, finances became very tight, and due to new regulations, had to stop our bus ministry as our busses would not pass the new strict requirements for registration. My wife, two children, and I were living in a classroom in the church to save money, and God was dealing with me heavily about being "Biblical". The more I learned, the more I realized that to really be Biblical we needed to start over -- trying to change the establishment seemed impossible. I shared with the people I might be leaving, and asked them to pray with me about it; but instead of them being willing to call a new pastor and go on, they told me that they didn't want another pastor, and would leave if I did.

I began to share how I felt the Baptists had gone astray on "repentance", and "soulwinning methods", and "baptism". The repentance issue became a major controversy, and I was compelled to stay and try to establish the truth with whoever would listen. We had some long meetings and discussions about "living faith" VS "dead faith", and what it means to repent. The Baptists were saying that we just repent of "unbelief" (just making a profession of faith) ;and I was saying that we must repent of our sins and turn from disobedience to obedience. I was contending that one who really believes will follow in obedience, not just trust in a prayer they prayed to save them. Eventually, due to the fact that I was still quite young, and teaching things contrary to 60+ year old men with mega-churches, the people left. I sold the building, paid the debts, and set out to find the truth, and start over "Biblically".

In '93 we started the year by selling the church building too cheap, and ended it by purchasing a little farm house on 3.8 acres so we could live and study and start over. During this long and troublesome year we had gone back to NM to possibly start over there; but found that the people whom we thought were with us really were not. One day while praying God seemed to speak to me through two Scripture verses: Heb 11:7 ***By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house;*** -- I knew this is what I needed to do. I had been shown things that others were ignoring; and I needed to move with fear and follow God's program to save my household. God's program is a local Biblical church. The next verse was: ***Isa 51:2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.*** God was calling me alone with the promise of blessing if I followed His program. I didn't know yet where exactly I should plant my feet doctrinally; but I knew two things -- I must home-school and

discipline my children according to the Bible; and thus I needed to live in the country away from nosy neighbors who were schooled in modern day stupidity.

We put every last dollar from savings down to buy this rundown house on 3.8 acres contract for deed, and I began doing construction work to pay the bills. Back in the spring of '92, after my wife's miscarriage, we openly had shared that we were praying for twins - a boy and a girl, so our present boy and girl would have a brother and a sister not too far apart in age. One year later in March '93 we received twins - a boy and a girl. The people knew this was a direct answer to direct prayer, and it was a blessing for God to confirm our direction and steps at such a time of trial. While they all thought we were going off the deep end, they saw God giving an amazing answer to our prayers.

After many hard years of fighting the good fight of faith; we now have twelve children: Micah, Hannah, Malachi, Graceanne, Nathan, Noah, Titus, Abigail, Lydia, Ezra, Isaiah, and Marybeth. Micah is now married to a godly wife and has two children. We live in North Missouri, and are involved in evangelism and building up a Biblical first century apostolic church. After years of study and investigation we have written several tracts and pamphlets which we hope will help you see how we are different than modern day "churchianity". We have tried to smooth the road for those pilgrims traveling behind us so they can find truth easier than we did.

While living in Lewistown, IL ('93-'97) on our little "farm", we were able to settle down and just be a family -- no longer living in church classrooms, etc. I was able to study, visit churches, order books, and find out what it really meant to be "Biblical" like the FIRST CENTURY APOSTOLIC CHURCHES had been; like the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Ana-Baptists were striving for. We began to overhaul our doctrine and practice accordingly. This study guide primarily combats the heresy of modern day evangelicals and sets forth what their forefathers and the first century believers *really* believed. There are many points of doctrine and practice not covered in this study guide, but will be in other articles on the website. If you are honest and sincere, we invite you to study with us as we **CONTEND FOR THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS**.

In Jesus' Name, Mark Bullen

PHILOSOPHY OF BIBLE STUDY

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 3-4

There are two types of "Christians" in the churches today: (1) Those who profess to believe the Bible, yet only obey that which they want to obey based on personal preference, bias, convenience, etc.; and (2) those that believe the Bible and seek diligently to obey all that Christ intended for New Testament believers. The group that picks and chooses what to obey and what not to obey must find like-minded pickers and choosers who pick and choose what they pick and choose--thus, you have many denominations/groups of like-minded pickers and choosers. It is terribly hard to get anyone to leave their group. The only way is to get them to pick and choose different things, or become one of the believers who just seek to obey all Jesus taught through his Word. This faith and practice will be the same as that which the apostles handed to the first century churches.

I have found that those who obey all the New Testament are a small minority, but usually have wonderful fellowship, godly homes, and peace with God. I want to be in this group.

"ALL THINGS"

The commission Jesus gave to the church was to teach the gospel, baptize the believers, and then teach them to observe **all things** that Jesus commanded (Matt. 28:19,20). Most modern churches don't take this serious. The apostles taught the first century church to observe Jesus' commands. Many of the commands and teachings the apostles taught the first century churches are now **not** being taught or observed in churches today -- while a horde of beliefs and practices, which are not from the apostles are being taught and practiced! We see this as nothing else but **disobedience**: a rejection of Jesus as LORD, and a rejection of the Bible as our sole authority for faith and practice. The apostle Paul told the churches (which include us) three very important principles:

- 1. We don't have the right or permission to change what the apostles taught the first century churches.**
- 2 Thess. 2:15. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.**

2 Thess. 3:6,7 " Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Romans 16:17,18 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

2. We are to follow the apostles and use them as a ruler to measure other teachers' credibility. We are not to be so proud as to think we can improve on the apostles.

Phil. 3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (I Cor. 11:1 also).

Phil. 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

I Cor. 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

3. Those who changed what the apostles taught were grievous wolves. Any change to the apostolic pattern is a perversion. What we today are teaching and observing is either APOSTOLIC or from a GRIEVOUS WOLF or a combination.

Acts 20:29-31 "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Gal. 1:8,9 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Jude 3,4 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Romanists try from this foundation to argue for "oral tradition", thus excusing their additions to the Word, however, I believe A.R. Fausset said it well when commenting on I Cor. 11:1,2: **"Romanists argue hence for oral traditions. The difficulty is to know what is genuine apostolic tradition intended for all ages. Any that can be proved to be such ought to be observed; any that cannot, ought to be rejected (Rev. 22:18). Those preserved in the written Word alone can be proved to be such."**

"THE PHILOSOPHY"

In order not to be deceived, the Word of God must be the SOLE AUTHORITY in our lives. In order for it to be the sole authority, we must surrender our will to it, and obey it without preferring one thing above another.

I Tim. 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."

John tells us that if everything were written about Jesus' life that could be written, the world "could not contain" the books. Therefore, we see God hand picked what he wanted in the relatively small New Testament that we have. The Holy Spirit made no mistakes. If God saw it as important enough to include, so must we.

No matter how small the matter may seem to you, if you pick and choose in any area, then **YOU become the authority**, and **not** the Bible. You then become a **"hearer"** and not a **"doer"** in that one area, and this leads to self-deception.

James 1:22 But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

Matt. 7:21-27. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a

rock:....and it fell not:....And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:....and great was the fall of it.

All deception is because the Bible loses its rightful place of **sole authority**, and you have stepped in and become the authority by picking and choosing what to obey, and what to throw out. If you have some experience, or read of someone else's, and proceed to interpret the Bible according to that experience, then the experience becomes an authority. You must allow the Bible to interpret any experience, not use the experience to interpret the Bible. You must be willing to hold to what the Bible actually SAYS over and above all your theological training, presuppositions, etc. You must bow to what God's revelation states in its proper context even if it means loved ones will be in hell or "unsaved", etc. You cannot determine truth or error based on what you like or want to believe about God and His ways. We must believe that God has always and only done that which was right and appropriate in every situation. We must evaluate right and appropriate by studying what God has said and done, not by what we like or think.

I repeat, no matter how small or large the matter may seem to you, if you pick and choose in any area, you are offending God, and heading for deception! God's Word alone must be the authority -- that means no adding, and no subtracting! If we add, then the church excommunicates for wrong reasons. If we subtract, then the church multiplies unbiblically. If we don't add, and don't subtract; then we have proper multiplication, and proper division.

Who had all truth?

Jesus made it clear, as we will see later in the study, that to **believe** in him was to **hear** and **obey** him. Before Jesus died, rose, and ascended He gave the Apostles and disciples definite instructions as to what his plans were for his church. Additionally, He said He had many **other** things to tell them, but they couldn't receive them yet. However, he said, the Holy Spirit will come and "guide you into all truth".

John 16:12-14 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

It is clear that the Apostles had "all truth" when they wrote the Scriptures and made decisions for the life of the church after the Holy Ghost descended upon them at Pentecost. It is also vital to note that the FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST, which refers to all the doctrine he taught, was ONCE FOR ALL delivered to the saints; and that we are to EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THAT FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS.

God's truth may be progressively growing in your mind, but the FAITH, or doctrine of God's Word is not growing and changing! It was ONCE delivered to the saints, and we are to contend for THAT faith, and only that faith, which was ONCE delivered to the saints. "The saints" in this context refers to the Apostles. The Apostles are the saints who received "ALL TRUTH" from the Holy Spirit, and thus all the New Testament books are considered authoritative because they were written or endorsed by the Apostles. For instance: Mark was a companion of Peter and Paul, who endorsed his Gospel to be correct.

Ephesians 2:20 tells us that the church is built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, with Jesus the chief corner stone. The book of Revelation pictures the New Jerusalem, which is symbolic of the church, having twelve foundations, which are the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. So we see that all true doctrine was known and taught by the apostles. There is no new truth or revelations being given today to the church.

In our modern Bibles we have what we call the New Testament and the Old Testament. In the New Testament some Bible have red letters where Jesus spoke. Which part of the Bible did Jesus author? Just the red letters? Jesus did not write any Scripture; but He authored ALL of it. All the black letters were His doing just as much as the red letters. Jesus is the WORD, He inspired all the Word of God, and it is all consistent.

We are not to contend for any modern doctrines, or practices; but only contend for the FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS. This FAITH for which we are to contend was already delivered, and considered a past transaction when Jude wrote his book. God used circumstances to cause the Apostles to write GOSPELS and EPISTLES by the leading and power of the Holy Spirit, so that all the necessary oral preaching and teaching would also be written, so we in later generations would know the "all truth" that God gave to the saints, and not have to rely on the uncertain foundation of oral tradition. "Churchmen" have always liked to overcomplicate matters so the people feel completely dependent on them for guidance. If they convince the people that higher education, theological training, "secret knowledge", etc. is necessary to understand the Word of God; then they can maintain their power over the common people. They have in the past kept the Word of God

out of the common language; but now they just try to convince people that they cannot understand the Bible. Well, the way many try to explain it, I am not surprised people cannot understand it.

The Word of God is a clear revelation of God's will for man (II Thess. 2:15; I Tim. 4:16). It is the only foundation for faith and practice that is reliable today. All other writing and teaching is either true or false, based solely on how it measures up with the written Word of God. The foundation of the church is God's Word including the Apostles instruction in their writings. They are and were the only ones capable to make authoritative decisions on issues of faith and practice (Acts 15). Jesus never wrote any letters or books; but what he taught the Apostles was later written by the leading of the Spirit of Christ -- WITH US IN MIND! PRAISE GOD, WE HAVE AN ANCHOR THAT IS SAFE AND SURE! We don't have to rely on modern "scholarship" and "education" to lead us. The Bible is understandable to those who strive to understand with intent to obey and pray for illumination.

All of the "faith" made its way into written form by the leading of the Holy Spirit, and we are accountable to obey all the Word of God that is handed down to us without preferring one thing above another -- **Here, and only here, the Word of God becomes your sole authority; and you escape deception from the world, the flesh, and the Devil.**

When the Apostles died, and left the scene, the miraculous "signs of an Apostle" died with them (II Cor. 12:12). All writing of Scripture stopped when they died; and the early church pastors were to simply contend for the faith that HAD BEEN DELIVERED.

This "**Faith**" is what we are to surrender our will to, and obey without bias or prejudice. This "**Faith**" is made up of "**all things**" Jesus taught the apostles and what the Holy Spirit taught them after Jesus ascended.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The Apostle's job was clear: To preach the Gospel to all nations, baptize the repentant believers, and then teach them to "OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU." It is very important in laying a foundation for studies in doctrine that we don't miss these important foundation stones. We must realize that what we have in our New Testament Scriptures is all Jesus wanted us to have. It is the explanation of God's New Covenant -- the writing of God's Laws on our hearts. The New Testament Scriptures are the spiritual explanation of our relationship to God, His Word (including the Old Testament Scriptures), and His will for us now. We have "all truth" concerning our covenant with God in the Scriptures. We have "all things whatsoever" Jesus commanded the Apostles to give to us. And thus, all the Scriptural commands which applied to the church in the days of the apostles, apply to us now. It is the same covenant.

A preacher who excuses and skips over parts of the New Testament Scriptures is a false teacher. If I violate the contract with which I am purchasing a house, I lose the house. Even so, if we **knowingly violate** any portion of the new covenant, then we are forfeiting our inheritance -- we are no longer walking by faith, but are in rebellion. No man has the right or authority to put God's commands to New Testament believers in any order of priority; or tell people, "that is not a salvation issue". OBEDIENCE is a salvation issue; because, unless you are living in obedience to the light you know, you are not living by faith, but unbelief/obstinacy.

Our churches and families today must believe and practice just as the churches and families believed and practiced in the days of the Apostles, observing all things whatsoever Jesus commanded through the Apostles, and interpreting the Bible the way they did; or we have been led astray by one of the deceivers crept in unawares. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall in the ditch. Just because you are sincere, you are not safe. You had better not contend for your "faith" until you make sure it is THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS.

THE LAW OF ILLUMINATION

As we said earlier, one reason it is so important to "observe all things" is because there is a law of illumination that always applies. God gives light (knowledge). If we walk in that light (obey), then God gives more light. As long as we obey all the light God brings our way our heart is perfect before him, we are covered by Christ's atonement, and God continues to illuminate us. When I walk in all the light I have, even if it is not very much, I am walking by **faith**. God accepts this "walking by faith" by grace and counts it for righteousness. He knows I cannot produce perfect obedience, but He expects me to do what I **can** do.

2 Co 8:12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

I John 1:6,7 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

As soon as we resist some new light (new understanding of the Bible) that God brings to us, and refuse to accept or obey it, then we are walking in darkness. We cannot then receive any fresh understanding of Scripture or new knowledge of God until we repent and obey that light we tried to swerve around. Instead, we are headed for sure deception! Don't think this is taking the case too serious; for Jesus said the "last days' deception" would be so strong, that it could almost deceive those earnestly following all Jesus taught (the very elect). "Walking in the light" is synonymous with "believing in Jesus". And thus we must continue to walk in God's Light, or we open the door for deception.

When the Devil sees you resistant to some new light, he will take the opportunity to offer you an alternative. To receive this alternative is exactly what Adam and Eve did. God will chasten you, but if you persist, you will be cut off, and die spiritually (Rom. 6:16, 8:13, 11:22, Heb. 10:26-, etc.). You will not know you have died spiritually, because you will be deceived by the alternative you accepted to avoid simple obedience to the Word. This is scary business, and all these statements we are making will be proven from the Bible in our later studies. It will also be shown that this is exactly what the early churches of the first two centuries A.D. believed. Thus, those who refuse to obey "all things" are not to be trusted in their doctrinal statements, because they are violating the law of illumination. They may be propagating Satan's alternative. I believe Calvinism and Antinomianism are two alternatives Satan has authored to help man escape the responsibility and expectations put on him by God's Word.

Mark 4:24 "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given."

Jesus said in John 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

The phrase "will do his will" actually means "**wills** to do his will" or "**desires** to do his will". A direct translation straight from the Greek sounds like this: "**If anyone desire his will to practice, he shall know concerning the teaching whether from God it is, or I from myself speak**". Jesus here states the law of illumination: If any man **wills to do** God's will (all of it, without personal bias and preference), he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is of God, or if the speaker is just speaking it of himself. This is a principle that you cannot violate without deception. You must LOVE God's Laws, statutes, judgments, principles, commands, etc.; or you will be deceived. James states the same principle in James 1:22, "**But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.**"

Many other passages teach the same thing in many different words:

John 14:21,23 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him... Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Acts 5:32 ...the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

I John 2:3-5 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

I John 2:24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

Actually, in these last times we live in, deception is not the exception, but the rule. People want to have an easy, comfortable, convenient, religion, void of sacrifice and responsibility. One reason that deception is so rampant, is that people want it over the inconvenient truth. The second reason is because people have forgotten to test preachers. Both of these reasons stem from the Bible losing its proper place as sole authority for faith and practice and opinion - and people not **loving** to obey God's Word. The reason they like their false teachers is because the false teachers are offering them a way **out** of obedience.

2 Tim. 4:3,4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Let us look at these two reasons briefly:

1. The following verses teach that one main reason people are deceived, is because they want to be:

Jer. 5:30 "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"

Isa. 30:9-10 "That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:"

Also: Micah 2:11; John 5:43-44; II Timothy 4:3-4.

Jesus taught that to have full light, one must have a **"single eye"** or single motive (Matt. 6:19-24). If you secretly want "your denomination or system of doctrine" to come out on top, you are biased, and have a double motive for studying Scripture. You must not come to the Bible to "prove your case", but simply to receive whatever it has to give you, no matter where it leads you. He went on to say that if the light that is in you is actually darkness i.e. your belief is actually error, then "How great is that darkness!"

If you find that another denomination is right on one point with which your group disagrees, then change your mind on that point, even if that other denomination is wrong on ten other points where you are right. Don't bias yourself to truth, just because somebody you don't like is right on it, and you would have to admit error. God will not excuse you for resisting truth because it wasn't presented to you **"in the right way"**. On judgment day, your bias will provoke the wrath of God, no matter what excuses you come up with.

True Christian consistency is that of ever growing and changing, not being stuck in one gear for 30 years. If you can boast not having changed your ideas in 20 years, it could just mean you haven't learned any new thing from God in 20 years! It doesn't matter, by the way, if you find others who agree with your biased opinion -- even a major denomination; because God says in **Proverbs 16:5 "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished."** You may be able to join hands with many who believe like you, but if you are wrong, you are still wrong, and accountable to God for not seeking truth.

2. The second reason people are deceived is because they don't test the source. Jesus said, **YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUIT**. He didn't say you will know them by their sermons - even Satan can quote Scripture and say much truth with his subtle error. Jesus didn't say you would know them by their nice voice or delivery - See Romans 16:17,18. He didn't say you would know them by the size of their ministry - See 2 Peter 2:2. He didn't say you would know them by the number of converts they had - Converts to what? He didn't say you would know them by how sharp their books look on the shelf at the bookstore. **HE SAID YOU WOULD KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUIT**. The fruit spoken of is what proceeds from their **life**, as opposed to merely their **lip**. **Are they striving to obey all that Jesus taught? Are they striving to practice what they preach? Are they enforcing God's will and way where they have jurisdiction - in their home, church, and life? If we pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven"; we had better be enforcing that will in all areas where we have the authority to do so.**

If you see an apple on a tree, you know it is an apple tree. Even so, if you see a teacher who doesn't bare the fruits of faith and obedience, he is not a trustworthy teacher. If a preacher has nine things right, yet is **refusing to obey God's Word** in one area, he is bearing the fruit of disobedience. If I obey 99 laws, but break one, I still must be punished. If you see a preacher who sounds good, looks good, but produces rebellious ungodly children who are pursuing the world, then his fruit has revealed his true character. Look at the requirements in Titus and Timothy for a bishop and deacon:

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;...not a novice,...have a good report of them which are without;" I Tim. 2

"If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus 1:6-9

Notice it says a preacher must be **apt to teach, able by sound doctrine to convince the gainsayers, faithful**, etc.; but it never gives the requirement of producing many converts. This is a modern deception, which ignores plain statements of Scripture, such as II Tim. 4:1-5:

"...Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season...For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;..."

In this situation, who is going to have all the "converts"? If you compare Jude 12 (false teachers have no fruit); with II Peter 2:2 (many will follow them); you will see the fallacy of this foundation. Compare Romans 6:21-22 with 7:4.

ARE YOU TESTING FRUIT?

Many pick up a book in the religious bookstore, and read it. If it says what they want to hear, they endorse the author as a man of God. This is insane. They have never met the man, seen if his house is simple or extravagant; seen how his children act; seen how his wife dresses and obeys; seen if he spends his evenings watching TV or reading God's Word; and yet they endorse him as a man of God. Like one popular preacher, he may be using a ghostwriter who is "gay". People foolishly think they don't need to use Bible principles for making their decisions, or choosing their leaders, but are smart enough to get by without them.

If you see a pastor whose wife is wearing jewelry, costly array, and makeup; you can know they are violating the law of illumination, and the command to obey "all things". If someone is a pastor, they have surely read the Bible enough to come across I Tim. 2:9, but why are they not obeying? This is just basic baby food. To a first century believer, this is so basic, they would think I am wasting my time: but today it is a major controversy. Some will argue that "converts" are all that comprises the "fruit" of a teacher; but this is ridiculous. If this is true, then either the Pope or Mohammed must be right. Read II Timothy 4:3,4 again, and then tell me why this cannot be the fruit Jesus was talking about. Also see Matthew 23:15 - The Pharisees were very evangelistic, but what were they producing? A convert twofold more the child of hell than they were? A convert vaccinated by their false concepts, so they were much harder now to bring to repentance?

The fruit of an apple tree (an apple) contains the seed whereby other apple trees are produced. An apple tree is the **indirect** fruit of an apple tree, and is dependant on the condition of the soil, not the apple or the apple tree. So it is with believers. We produce the fruit of righteousness (includes witnessing); in this fruit is the seed which produces other believers, **if** the condition of the soil is right (soil is the heart). Just as when Jesus preached, if the soil is stony, shallow, full of weeds etc.; then the seed sown will not produce. This is not the fault of the preacher, if he is preaching the truth and praying for God's blessings. Will you fault Jesus? - See Luke 8:11-15.

Listen friend, if you are not willing to obey all things, then you CANNOT understand the deep things of God. If you put up a roadblock to obeying small commands, then you might as well stop here, because you are not ready to study doctrine. If you don't have your wife in her place: head covered, modest apparel, no jewelry or costly array, obedient, silent in the church, etc.; then you are not ready to study the deeper doctrinal issues; because you are not obeying the obvious commands. First, obey the obvious commands of Scripture, then God will illuminate you to understand the deeper doctrinal issues.

If you are living extravagantly, dressing in fashion, seeking the applause of men, then you are not ready to study doctrine. Until you "will to do all his will", and "obey all things", then you are not prepared to discern doctrine. It is just that simple. If you say, "I am willing, but I've never been taught some of these things", then you need to proceed with caution, and be sure your bias doesn't stop you short of the truth.

I wasn't taught all this as a young convert; but had to learn it by much prayer, crucifixion of my bias; and putting the Word of God as Sole Authority of my opinions and actions. If you are willing, and walking in all the light you have, then you are ready to proceed. Don't ever pass over the smallest New Testament command or moral Bible principle, because, when you do, the Bible ceases to be the authority, and you are heading into deception -- every time without fail!

TRUTH OR LIFE STYLE?

You are in a continual struggle between **Flesh** and **Spirit**, **Self-life** and **Christ**, or in simpler terms between **Truth** and **Life Style**. Either your **life style** will bow to **Truth**, or you will force "**truth**" to bow to your **life style**. Any compromise of **Truth** is a victory for **life style**. You cannot find a happy compromise. Jesus is either **Lord of all**, or He is **not Lord at all**. Any alteration of **Truth** becomes an error. You either live seeking and obeying **Truth**, or you seek to justify your **life style**. Justifying self and life style is not living by faith in Jesus Christ, and you will end up very surprised and eternally disappointed at the outcome of such a course.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark 8:35-37

What I am saying is this: **God will not cast his pearls to swine. If you prove yourself a swine by desiring the mire of the world more than the pearl of great price--the way of Jesus Christ; you will never get to truly know God or his truth.** You will be allowed to deceive yourself and condemn yourself; because you loved not the truth. You must love truth, pursue truth, obey truth -- for Jesus is the truth. You cannot contend for the faith once delivered until you are ready to live it and submit to it!

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2:10-12

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1 Tim. 4:16

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." John 3:19-20

How you respond to the truth of God's Word (the faith once delivered unto the saints), will determine your eternal destiny. You cannot **have** Jesus as **Savior**, yet **not have** him as **Lord**. You cannot have Jesus' cleansing blood without taking up the cross. You cannot have the Jesus who died for you, yet follow some modern day gospel. If you want the Jesus of the first century, then you must follow the faith of the first century.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

- Is God still revealing new truth to the church today?
- When did the Holy Spirit give "all truth"? To whom?
- What is the law of illumination?
- What are the two reasons people are deceived?
- Pick two of the listed verses dealing with people wanting to be deceived, and discuss their meaning.
- Why are converts not the "fruit" whereby you discern true and false teachers?
- What is the key to having full light from God?
- How do you know if the Bible is your sole authority?
- What happens when we throw out what we call "small" commands, such as "greet one another with a holy kiss"? Who becomes the authority? Where does this lead?
- Without using any helps, list all the New Testament commands you can think of. Are you practicing all these? Are you practicing them like the first century church did?

Section Two

RECIPE FOR BEING RIGHT

Someone once said to me while I was discussing my position on doctrine, "You can make the Bible say whatever you want it to say". Now, that is a true statement, **IF** you are approaching the Bible with bias. You can wrest the Scripture to "prove your point", and you can seem to prove many heretical ideas from over emphasis of one verse above another. But, does that mean we can never really **know** if we are right? Does that mean the Scriptures means different things to different people, and all are right? God Forbid! This is a lie of Satan that is floating around today because of our passive "everybody is OK" society. If you want to find truth, you can. You don't have to be wrong. God wants you to be right, and you can be.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." Mt 7:24-27

When people are not obeying ALL Jesus taught, they are building on the sand, and have no firm foundation; Therefore, they can't point their finger at anyone else - so suddenly, "everybody is OK". If I am trying to avoid too much scrutiny, I surely am not going to be calling for any spiritual audits.

"They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them." Prov. 28:4

Now you know why people have a problem with "contending for the faith". They don't like that "contending" word, because they are on sand. Those who are guilty of compromise and transgression are the first to vote for "liberty" and the casting out of "rules" or "law". Gospel Liberty is freedom **from** sin and satan's world system, not freedom to partake of sin and the world.

When brethren discuss doctrine, they should never have to fight or get hot over it. When tempers flare it is proof that we are not seeking truth together, but fighting for personal pride and opinion. The concept that "brethren should not dispute over doctrine" is a false piety, and placing "acceptance", "peace" or "passivity" over "the work of Christ", and "Truth". If brothers cannot hash-out doctrine, and find truth, then they are not right with God.

The Apostles settled their doctrinal questions by getting together and discussing the issue, not avoiding each other and assuming themselves to be right. People who say, "I just don't want to argue", actually mean, "I don't care if the other person is wrong or deceived", or "I don't want my opinion confronted with the facts". Both are wrong,

and thus we should be willing to argue for Jesus. He didn't avoid it on earth. Paul didn't avoid disputing over doctrine - he went to all the synagogues in every city he visited for this very reason. He "reasoned" and "disputed" with the Jews continually.

RECIPE FOR BEING RIGHT

A. CONFESS AND FORSAKE ALL KNOWN SIN.

You cannot claim to have the Holy Ghost illuminating your heart and mind until all sin is forsaken in the heart and confessed (Acts 5:32). A person cannot have Holy Spirit illumination, and discern doctrine if their "flesh" (carnal, selfish nature) is ruling their choices. The flesh must be crucified, or it will sway our view of things every time. It will cause us to choose the easy road, not the right road. **THIS IS SO IMPORTANT!** God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. We must be humbled in the dust, willing to lose our life, will, desires, ambitions, family, friends, money, ease, dignity, --everything!

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple....So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26-33

Jesus said many times, that we could not follow him until we were willing to take up the cross (instrument of death), and lose our own lives! Our love for temporal things; man's applause; bodily comforts and pleasures; riches; fame; friend's acceptance; family unity; or anything that stands in the way of obeying God's Word must be amputated from our life. Jesus proverbially made this clear in the following verse:

Mt 5:29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

B. DILIGENTLY SEEK AND OBEY ALL KNOWN TRUTH

Jesus promised if we would ask the Father for bread, he would not give us a stone. When God knows you are sincerely seeking His will, with no hidden motive; and have confessed and forsaken all sin; he will definitely lead you into "all truth" through his Word, by his Spirit. The principle of having a "single eye" in order to be full of light applies here (Matt 6); as well as the law of illumination, which we spoke of in the first chapter (John 7:17). Jesus knew exactly why the religious leaders weren't convinced of who he was -- because they didn't want to be convinced. As the old saying goes, "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still".

Life is like a many-tunneled cave: The only way to find the right tunnel, and make it to the other side, is to obey and follow every bit of Truth the Father brings us with fear and diligence. To use self-will and violate one small command of scripture, will cause us to veer off on a wrong tunnel. Those who rebel in the least, will surely be led astray of their own deceitful heart. We must hate and fear rebellion, pride, or self-will being in our heart.

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;" Heb. 3:12-14

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:6

"But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" James 1:22

Only those who are humbly seeking and obeying all the light they have are safe and pure before God. They are the only ones who are being filled with righteousness. A promise from Psalms that I have claimed many times in my life is **Psalms 32:8,9:**

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or the mule, which have no understanding:"

We need to pray, not only that God would teach us and instruct us in the way which we should go; but that we would not be as a horse or a mule (ignorant and arrogant), which have no understanding.

C. BE AN IMPARTIAL JUDGE.

What judge in any courtroom in the world could be considered **just** if he made a decision about a case after **only** hearing the defense? ...Or only hearing the prosecution? Even so, people who do not become neutral in their minds, and investigate all the evidence about a doctrine, cannot come to the truth; because they are seeking more than just God's truth. They are seeking to prove a certain side true, and so are not interested in the conflicting

evidence -- "Don't want to be confused with the facts". God will not help or honor an unjust judge. You must be completely honest and just in seeking truth.

You cannot build doctrine on emotion, or sentimental feelings. Just because Grama or Grampa believed this way, doesn't make it right. Just because you have good childhood memories in that denomination, etc.; doesn't make it right. Just because believing some teaching would shake your hope in loved ones being in heaven, you must seek truth alone and judge the teaching by the Word of God - no matter what it ultimately means. **Believing a lie does not make it true!** Believing you **are safe does not make you safe!** Believing someone went to heaven does not put him there. If you wish to be saved, you cannot hold to error just because it is easier.

Bias is a wicked thing. It is pride. It is the unwillingness to be taught of another whom you wish to think yourself superior to, or at least equal to. Bias says, "I saw one Christian who was dishonest, so Christianity must be wrong". It says, "I knew a boy who was spanked and grew up hating his parents, so all parents who spank their children, like the Bible says, will lose their children". Bias says, "If you don't believe in eternal security then you must be a Jehovah Witness". Bias says, "I like it, so it must be right".

People believe what they want to believe, and will usually always be quick to believe an evil report about someone who is living better than they are, or trying to get them to live better. This is bias, and will burn hot in Hell. Listen to Jesus' own testimony on this point:

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which sent me." John 5:30

Jesus' judgment was **just** because he had no personal selfish bias, He only sought the will of his Father. If you cease to seek your own will, and just seek the will of the Father, you will also find truth. If you don't, you won't.

D. ONLY BUILD DOCTRINE ON PLAIN STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE...

1. ...WITH BIBLE DEFINITIONS FOR ALL WORDS.

You need to allow the Bible to define its own terms, such as:

GRACE (Titus 2:11-14);

FAITH (James 2; Hebrews 11:6);

SALVATION (I Peter 1:9; Rom. 6:17-23; 13:11);

...and every other term. You cannot **assume** your definition of that term, which you have **always** understood, is correct. This is usually why people cannot understand why their doctrine is wrong, because "it sounds like the Bible teaches it"; However, when you change the definition of a term, it changes what the Bible verse says! If you have a faulty definition of **faith**, like the modern easy believism, then **faith** is simply a passive, dead **trust**, without obedience. This is not what the Bible means when it says, **faith**. The Bible defines **this faith** as **dead faith** (James 2).

GRACE is not that which **reduces** God's demands of us, and **allows** us to live worldly, selfish, and carnal without penalty. GRACE is that which gives us space to get up and get back on track with God's will. GRACE is that which **teaches** us and **empowers** us to live holy and righteous. This modern lenient "grace" is the turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness - Jude 3. If a father is gracious toward a child that is **trying** to please him, then it is noble and right. However, if that father is gracious toward a child who has a rebellious spirit, and is not trying to obey; then the father's action toward the child is not grace, but lasciviousness. Grace never makes sin less sinful. Grace never covers the unrepentant or a rebellious spirit. God's grace is toward the humble repentant soul who never wants to sin again.

We will cover many other words along with these more extensively in later chapters.

2. ...WITH PROPER TENSE OF VERBS.

There is much heresy being taught and defended from the Bible due to a wrong tense of a verb. In your King James Bible, most of the time (not always) when you see an "eth" on the end of a word, it is PRESENT PARTICIPLE or PRESENT CONTINUOUS action. BELIEVETH doesn't mean one act of belief, but present continuous belief -- "IS BELIEVING". HEARETH would be "IS HEARING". This makes a big difference in verses like John 3:16, 5:24. Those who teach this "one act of faith" salvation, erroneously use such verses, thinking they are defending their dogma. Nowhere does the Bible teach we are eternally justified by one act of faith in praying the "sinners' prayer". The Bible teaches we must "continue in the faith", "hold fast our confidence unto the end", etc. We are to believe with an obedient faith until we die or meet the Lord in the air.

It makes all the difference in Hebrews 7:25, when you realize that "come" is present participle - IS COMING. It is not a one-time act of "coming to Christ", but continuous "coming" to confess sin, and find grace to "endure to the end" that this verse is speaking of. There would be no relevance in Jesus' continued intercession if it were speaking of us "coming" to Christ only once. Compare with I John 1:7

3. ...WITH PROPER HISTORICAL SETTING.

This makes a big difference on issues such as the women's veil in I Cor. 11. You can argue all day long whether it is the hair, or a separate covering; but you can't argue with history. How did the believers of Paul's day understand this? Obviously they who knew Paul, and understood the common practice of "all the churches of God"; will also know what Paul is talking about.

This also affects such things as "modest apparel" -- What is it? What did the first century believers think was modest? Calvinism Vs. Arminianism is an issue that history affects. How did the early church understand "predestination" and "free will"?

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage is also affected by historical setting. What was the controversy Jesus and the Pharisees were speaking of. What did the Apostles do with remarried converts? How did Paul understand Jesus' teaching? Who was Jesus and what was His purpose according to Malachi?

We see many "winebibbers" today justifying their use of alcoholic drinks because "Jesus made wine"; but what kind of wine did Jesus make? If they would look, they would find the upright Jews only drank a wine-water mixture. One part wine to three parts water was commonly accepted, but greater dilution was also used. Only Barbarians drank wine undiluted or with a 1-to-1 dilution. J.W. Shepard says: , **"Jesus made real wine out of the water. But there was a great difference between the Palestinian wine of that time and the alcoholic mixtures which today go under the name of wine. Their simple vintage was taken with three parts of water and would correspond more or less to our grape juice. It would be worse than blasphemy to suppose, because Jesus made wine, that He justifies the drinking usages of modern society with its bars, strong drinks, and resulting evils"**

Historical setting is very important. Learning how ancient people groups, especially the Jews, understood and used different terms and phrases can be very helpful.

4. ...IN AGREEMENT WITH ALL OTHER PLAIN STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE.

Most heresy builds on an obscure statement of scripture and twists plain statements to fit the obscure statements. If you take all plain statements of scripture concerning any one topic, and put them together, they will always agree, and all obscure statements will then agree with this agreement of the plain statements. This is an easy way to find the truth on any issue. All heretical doctrines seem to agree with **some** statements (on first glance); but **not** with all statements on that subject. Those that seemingly agree will be found only to agree based on miss-defined words, wrong verb tenses, etc.

The big argument about when the Holy Spirit was given, could be easily understood to be Pentecost, rather than John 20:22, if people would just listen to Jesus in John 16:7, and Peter in Acts 2:32-33, and 11:15-17. To push your opinion of John 20:22 as the giving of the Holy Spirit, instead of the "promising" and "instructing" concerning the giving of the Holy Spirit, makes it contradict plain statements of scripture. You must compare scripture with scripture, but only with a humble hunger to know the truth **SO YOU CAN OBEY JESUS PROPERLY.**

You can never pick a verse out here or there and expect to understand doctrine. You must follow the general tenor of Scripture, not play this "my verse can beat up your verse" nonsense. All truth runs parallel, and there is not one verse that contradicts or cancels another verse -- they all fit in the program God intended.

5. ...WITH PROPER CONTEXT.

This is so important. Hebrews and Romans are very often abused on this, not to mention James and Galatians. I've heard some say that all the warnings of falling away in Hebrews were really warnings to lost people to "really" get saved, or to professed believers to make sure they "really" had it. This ignores the obvious context of warning "brothers" to "hold fast" what they **already had**. I've heard some foolishly say Hebrews was only written to Jews; but they fail to understand Jewish Christians were Christians! They were saved the **same way we are!** In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile. All that applies to Jewish Believers also applies to us as far as faith and salvation principles.

I've heard Romans abused and twisted to teach a "dead faith" salvation in chapter 4, because they missed the context and Paul's definition of FAITH and WORKS in 2:4-13; 6, 8, 11, etc. Most people who interpret Romans to teach Calvinism or Antinomianism are ignorant of the Jew-Gentile dilemma that Paul is dealing with. The

legalities and dynamics of the merge of Jewish Christians with Gentile Christians in one body is a major factor in Romans - You miss this, you miss it all.

You must understand "to whom" he is speaking; "what" is the topic; "what" is the problem; "what" is the solution given; and what is the train of thought from the beginning of the book? The context of Hebrews 11 is "saving faith"; and is set by 10:35-39. The context of James 2 is "saving faith"; and is set by the question in 2:14. The "context" is the foundational thoughts on which an argument is built -- "where is he coming from, where is he going, and what is he trying to prove?"

As I think about this, an example comes to mind. Once a preacher was trying to convince me of his "eternal security" doctrine. Because he was building on the sand, his points were sinking quickly. In desperation he turned to Ecclesiastes 3:14, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever:" and tried to say that since God saves us, it will be forever. However, the context has nothing to do with salvation; and if the proper definition is used for "salvation" (I Peter 1:9), none of us have really received the full product yet. This is a perfect example of heresy built on miss-applied context, and wrongly defined words.

Many confuse Romans 7 to be the experience of a believer; but they miss the context for chapters 7 & 8, which is set in 7:5 & 6 respectively. Sometimes it would be great if people would trash their college education or mental vaccination and just read what the Bible is saying.

6. ...WITH PROPER PLACEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

The best example for this point is in the comparison of Calvinism and Arminianism. Calvinism focuses on verses where the responsibility is God's, and by reasoning about them, they destroy the responsibility put on man in other verses. We should emphasize and meditate more on the verses where the responsibility is ours, to make sure we are fulfilling our God given responsibilities, before we sit and ponder about verses where the responsibility is God's. If you hold to Calvinistic interpretations of verses that speak of God's responsibility; yet are honest enough to also look at the verses where God puts the responsibility on man, and fulfill your God given responsibilities, then you will live and preach like an Arminian anyhow. You will have a contradiction in your belief and life, but still will be living right. For example: If you interpret the verses that speak of predestination to mean that God "unconditionally predestined" some to Heaven and some to Hell, so man has no part in his own salvation; yet, you fear God enough to obey, and believe the verses that plainly say we must make our calling and election sure, continue to the end to be saved, overcome to be saved, obey Christ to be saved, etc. then you will still live right, even if you interpret wrong on the predestination point.

God will not judge us for being too finite to understand all he does, but he will judge us for disobeying what he has given us to do! If God commands you to do something, YOU CAN DO IT with His grace and strength. If God commands all men everywhere to repent, then all men everywhere CAN repent and had better get started quick. Do not wait for God to do something He has told you to do. Do not tell people that God will do something for them without them doing what God has told them to do. God helps those who are striving to help themselves by obeying His Word.

7. ...WITH PROPER PLACEMENT OF AUTHORITY

The Word of God must be the authority; not your EXPERIENCE; not your DENOMINATION; not your COMMENTARY; not your OPINION or IDEAS. If you have an experience, and then try to fit it into Scripture, or try to make the Bible teach it; then your experience is the authority, and you are using it to interpret the Bible. Maybe your experience is not of God! Maybe it is your imagination? Then the Bible, when studied properly, would expose your error -- are you willing to be humbled in this respect?

If your experience is legitimate--great; but it still doesn't become authoritative -- the Bible taught it before you had it, and the Bible still teaches it. Jesus never taught us to put weight on an experience for building doctrine.

The foundation for doctrine is the Word of God. If you are not obeying all God's Word, then the Bible is not your true authority -- though you claim it is. You cannot study doctrine and be sure you are right until you wholly yield to the Bible as sole authority, crucify your ideas, and obey it all.

Peter makes a very interesting statement that applies here. In II Peter 1:16, Peter says: **For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.**

Now, after saying this, Peter proceeds to tell of his experience on the mount of transfiguration. After telling of his eyewitness experience, he says this in verse 19:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed,..."

Isn't it interesting that Peter put more authority on the Word of prophecy than on his eyewitness experience? He was an apostle, he was with Jesus Christ in person, and he still said the Word of God was more authoritative than his experience. You are not an apostle, you are not with Jesus, and you had better not build doctrine on your experience; but on the Word of God. Some have foolishly taught that we are to "follow the Spirit" above the written Word of God. Does the Spirit ever lead contrary to the Word of God? Some have used the verse, "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the Law" to mean, "If ye be led of the Spirit, you are not under the written Word of God". This is terrible heresy and foolishness; but is what happens when people violate laws of Bible interpretation.

8. ...BEING IN YOUR PROPER PLACE UNDER AUTHORITY

Ladies, you need to take heed here. You have not been given the position of studying, preaching, and leading the Church of Jesus Christ doctrinally. Ladies are more easily deceived, and tend to build their beliefs on emotional feeling, not logical evidence. God put women under men in this respect, and calls only men to lead the Church doctrinally. Let us look at the Word of God on this topic.

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." I Cor. 14:34-35

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam as not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." I Tim. 2: 11-15

Many heretical movements today stem from a dominant woman, or group of women. Dominant wives cause the home to derail in doctrine. Dominant wives produce sons with false doctrine. Many times when I meet families that are doctrinally in error, I also find a wife with a strong opinion. In fact, I can't think of one family that is doctrinally off, which has a submissive wife in her place. She is either fighting for her fashion, which keeps her husband away from Godly influences; fighting for her opinion, which tells her husband there will be strife if he begins to entertain possible other ideas; or she is wanting to take the lead, which causes him to hold opinions based on the desire to be independent and "the head", rather than holding opinions because he has been free to think it through without fighting for his position.

When seeking the truth, there will be times of great uncertainty -- shifting from one position to the next until all evidence has been tested and thoroughly examined. If a man doesn't have a patient and quiet wife, who will wait on him to thoroughly check it all out; then he will be forced to just settle for a position to end the uncertainty, and get his wife off his back. He may even take the "it doesn't matter" or "who cares" attitude to avoid his wife saying, "Why are you so wishy washy, I think such and such".

Generally, a woman will not seek out all the evidence, but will jump to quick conclusions, which bring security and are based on her emotional needs. This may be hard to hear, but it is true nonetheless. Granted, a humble sincere woman will understand spiritual matters better than a proud, insincere man; but this is not what we are comparing. We are talking about which one **God** has designed to lead, and which one **God** has designed to follow. What a shame that sometimes the follower must suffer because of a foolish leader. I've seen many wives wanting to follow truth, but hindered by a proud rebellious husband. MEN, God has given you responsibility and ability by His Grace to lead your home to heaven - Don't let your wife and children down! If you lead them to hell, you are leading yourself to hell!

Women need to be in their God ordained place, or they are sure to be deceived, and cause deception in their family. A woman in her place, with a godly meek and quiet spirit, willingness to be modest, and willing to follow her husband in the Lord, will actually encourage her husband greatly to seek the truth and patiently find it; knowing that she will be there when he gets done with the journey, and will appreciate and love his efforts, not fight against him. Nothing is more blessed than a godly submissive wife. Of course, this will only work with a godly, humble husband. Christian wives with unbelieving or apostate husbands will sometimes have to "let the unbeliever depart" (I Cor. 7) in order to follow Christ. In this case, the church presbytery is to act as her guide and authority.

With that said, Men, YOU must be under proper authority to be right with God also. You cannot be a Lone Ranger who can never submit to a church body or brotherhood; yet hope to find truth and please God. God's program is the CHURCH program. If you wish to be in God's program, you must be a part of a local Biblical body where there is ACCOUNTABILITY. This is God's way to save your soul. You need it, and you need to LOVE all God's ways to be saved. Your wife will usually be glad to follow you when she sees you humbly

following God's program and willing to be under accountability yourself. She feels safe submitting to a man who is submitting to God's order.

Much of understanding doctrine is a "heart" matter, and has much to do with you "knowing God". However, there are many sincere people who seek God for years, and yet are ignorant on some important points because they have never been confronted by someone who is right on the subject. I know, I've been there. You can learn much in a short time by seeking conversation with other believers who are obedient to Scripture, and may be farther than you -- This is the way God planned it. The Holy Spirit could have done the Apostle's job in Acts, but He works through human agency. Don't think you can bypass this avenue, and find "all truth" by just staying home and praying. When someone brings something new to your attention, you need to search the Scriptures like a good "Berean" to see if "these things are so". You need the body of Christ to perfect you. Jesus set up human church government by His wisdom and love for us. We need to honor Christ's design of human church government - provided it is being done according to the Word of God.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: Ephesians 4:11-13

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN IMPARTIAL JUDGE?
2. SHOULD BELIEVERS AVOID DISCUSSING DOCTRINE?
3. WHAT IS THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 7?
4. WHAT IS THE TENSE OF THE VERBS "COMETH" & "BELIEVETH", IN JOHN 6:35 & 37? HOW DOES THIS AFFECT THE INTERPRETATION CONCERNING "ETERNAL SECURITY"?
5. IS IT PROPER TO CONTEND FOR RIGHT DOCTRINE? WHY?
6. WHY CAN'T I UNDERSTAND A VERSE "MY WAY", AND YOU UNDERSTAND IT "YOUR WAY"?
7. WHAT IS "HISTORICAL SETTING?" WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
8. GIVE EXAMPLES OF BIAS.
9. WHY MUST THE FLESH BE CRUCIFIED?

Section Three

LEARN TO IDENTIFY FALSE TEACHER'S MESSAGES, METHODS, AND MOTIVES

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity (purity) that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." 2 Cor. 11:4.

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." 2 Cor. 11:13-15.

"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves.....For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Acts 20:27-31 (Paul).

"...there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:7-9

"I charge thee therefore before God....Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4:1-4

You can be sure the Holy Spirit knew what would be happening in our present day; and you can be sure that the very things false teachers did in New Testament times, are the very same basic things they are doing in our day. You can bank on the principles we are going to study--YOU HAD BETTER BANK ON THEM, OR YOU WILL BE LED ASTRAY BY FALSE TEACHERS.

A false teacher is not necessarily one who knows he is serving Satan. He may ignorantly be being used of Satan, due to his pride, selfish ambition, love of money, ignorance of scripture, etc. Yet, he is still working for the wrong side, and must not be followed. Pray for them, and try to change them. But, if they refuse to acknowledge their error, then reject them (Titus 3:10).

Some may appear to be doing some good and winning people to Christ, but if they are living or teaching error, they are also being a stumbling block. Modern evangelicals focus on the "starting line" of the Christian life, and ignore the necessity of making it to the "finish line" (enduring faithful to the end); hence, their evangelistic work is not that dangerous to Satan's cause. Actually, it is Satan's work in corrupting doctrine that has caused this foolish and dangerous neglect of the finish line. Therefore, Just because a ministry seems to be producing "professing Christians"; it still may not be saving them from hell - this is Satan's subtle plan. The "unconditional eternal security" teachings have been introduced by Satan for this very purpose. If I preach right words, but live wrong; then what am I teaching you to do? I would be teaching you to believe "right", but live wrong. If you believe a right creed, but live wrong, you will still go to Hell.

If a man is willing to be instructed, don't cast him off as a heretic -- you may learn you were the one in error. However, on the other hand, if a leader holds to false teaching or practice, you cannot follow or endorse his error - even if he is nice, and you like him. Most people believe the people they like - this could be a dangerous trap.

People have forgotten to test the fruit of teachers before they listen to them. Jesus didn't say, Ye shall know them by their sermons, books, looks, delivery, etc. He said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" --Are they striving to obey "all things whatsoever" Jesus commanded? If you think you are smart enough to discern truth from error, and don't need to test the source as Jesus said, then your pride is sure to snare you in error. If a teacher is not obeying "all things", he is a hearer of the Word, and not a doer; thus is deceiving himself. If you don't test fruit, then you are a hearer, but not a doer, deceiving your self also (James 1:22).

In our pseudo intellectual society, we have multitudes of preachers with many degrees, but no spiritual heat. We have thousands of "ministers" who have sought the ministry as a career, and are not God-called. They are hirelings, and thus teach the Bible and build a church in the same mind frame as a professor teaches chemistry; or an executive builds a corporation. They use the same sales gimmicks, "dress for success", practice politics, organize and promote to beat the competition, bend rules to please people, etc. etc.! You, as a disciple of Jesus Christ are obligated to boycott all such false teachers and false methods, and support the "Timothy" who are sticking by the Word of God, obeying "all things" Jesus commanded, and preaching the whole counsel of God.

False doctrine always appeals to the flesh. True doctrine leads to the crucifixion of the flesh, and submission to the Spirit of Christ. False doctrine usually stems from justification of flesh; the pride of "finding something new and different"; excusing life styles; avoiding the cross; fear of man; love of praise; love of security; love of self;

love of money; love of power; etc. You should be able to comprehend how man's selfishness could invent many ideas for self-promotion and love of life style. In order to know truth, the flesh must be denied and the cross-taken. Jesus was rejected by the "herd", and we must go with Him without the camp, bearing His reproach (Heb. 13:13).

There are many new "Jesus" figures being propagated along with new "spirits", and new "gospels". We must cling to the Jesus of the Bible, but we can only do this, if we obey the Jesus of the Bible. The best way to find the right church is to begin obeying all that the Bible commands to the New Testament believer - then find where you fit. As you grow, you may have to find new groups, so you are not hindered and led to compromise God's Word.

The reason I have written this pamphlet, is so you can have more discernment on the subject, though I have not exhausted the subject by any means. If we strive to be a "doer of the Word" then we will know the truth, and recognize false teachers.

FALSE TEACHERS MAY MANIFEST ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING TRAITS:

1. PRIORITIZE GOD'S COMMANDS IN THEIR OWN WAY, AND TREAT THE "LEAST" COMMANDS AS UNNECESSARY.

They teach "keep the main thing the main thing", thus excusing their disobedience, and compromise with worldliness. They fear being "too salty" for the sinner, so they water down their message to please fleshly men. They feel the need to be involved in sports, talk of worldly things, tell plenty of jokes, etc. to "become all things to all men". The preachers today are fleshly and worldly and lead their people to follow the ways of the World. They don't obey "all things"; but emphasize that which they themselves practice; while ignoring that which they don't want to do. Jesus taught that we should obey all the Word of God impartially.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 5:19

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." Matt. 23:23,24

According to Matthew 21:33-43, and other verses, God has left us in charge of his vineyard. He has given us clear instructions as to what fruit he wants produced. Being that it is not **my** vineyard, but **His**, would it be right for me to add some new varieties of fruit that He doesn't like, and at the same time delete some fruit that I know He has commanded? If it were MY vineyard I could; but it is not MY vineyard, so it is **WRONG** for me to do so. The kingdom of God was taken away from the Jews for **this very reason**, and yet many today think they can play the same game -- this is deception.

Those who don't teach the whole counsel of God are deceivers and grievous wolves in Paul's estimation. It may not seem so big to you, but Paul warned everyone night and day with tears concerning those who would change the "whole counsel of God" which he had delivered to the churches.

2. SEEK GLORY FROM MEN: USE TITLES SUCH AS "DOCTOR", "MASTER", AND "FATHER". PUT MUCH WEIGHT IN MAN MADE CREDENTIALS AND TITLES.

In the following verses, the word RABBI actually means DOCTOR OF THE LAW, SCHOLAR. Though false practice today doesn't use the term RABBI, it does use the term, Doctor. The Pharisee's credentials were displayed on the borders of their garments. To "enlarge the borders of their garments" would be equal to the lust for higher degrees among preachers today. If they have a bachelor's degree, they want a master's degree, and then a doctor's degree-- all for the praise of men, not God. This gives them higher position, and honors among men -- "uppermost rooms at feasts" etc. They speak much of themselves: Tell how much they pray, give, witness, etc. They exalt their own name.

"But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your

Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant, and whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Matt. 23:5-12

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" Jn. 5:43,44

"...walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. Jude 16

That last phrase in Jude is important to notice: **"Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage"**. How often do you see a preacher compromise his conscience to stay in the **"crowd"** for personal advantage -- paycheck, possible recommendations, future position, etc. We must stick with Brother _____, so our people will like us, or other preachers will like us, etc. Instead, we should seek to please God only. Paul said, **"if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10).**

"He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory:" Jn. 7:18

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not." 3 Jn. 9.

How often does a young man in an associate's position cut his message so the people don't get ruffled, and then get his compromising pastor on his case. Young men, I want you to meditate on Gal. 1:10, **"...IF I YET PLEASSED MEN, I SHOULD NOT BE THE SERVANT OF CHRIST"**.

3. ALLURE THROUGH THE LUST OF THE FLESH.

"For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption:" II Peter 2:18,19.

The church of the first two centuries A.D. along with the Apostles would throw an absolute fit to see the churches of today using circus, Hollywood, and theater tactics to draw crowds. With made-up immodest female singers; men with sensual voices, entertaining speeches and jokes in every sermon; fancy buildings to please the money minded; plenty of group activities; fashionable clothes; "the best choir in the state"; entertaining music specials; -- **ALL TO PLEASE PEOPLE IN A MEETING THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE FOR WORSHIPPING THE GOD WHO SAYS, "THAT WHICH IS HIGHLY ESTEEMED AMONG MEN IS ABOMINATION IN THE SIGHT OF GOD"**.

The justification of all the hoopla is the "promise of liberty" -- this is equal to when Jude says they, "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness"; which we will deal with next. "After all, it is working, isn't it?" Does the END justify the MEANS? If it draws a crowd, isn't that justification enough? See what Jesus said to the church in Revelation chapters 1-3.

If the price tag on salvation and church membership is too high, we will just mark it down on the clearance rack at 50% off - then we will sell lots! We will have a "blow-out" revival sale, and get 100's or 1000's into the kingdom. We will have a circus, give away hot-dogs, have a dog and pony show, -- Wow! what a revival! Mmm...I wonder why the Holy Spirit never gave Jesus or the apostles this wonderful idea?

What was also happening in the early church, which Peter is dealing with, is that some preachers were using "grace" and "liberty" to excuse all sorts of un-holiness and worldliness--which is exactly how churches excuse their worldliness, materialism, immodesty, disobedience, and unholy pursuits today. In doing so, they were alluring those who had heard the pure gospel of repentance, separation, obedience, and holy living. These who were "clean escaped from those who live in error" were being drawn away into this liberal thinking; and so were being entangled again in their old ways, and overcome by the flesh once again. Peter is warning the church about these liberal preachers who were promising liberty, while they themselves were servants of corruption -- their flesh.

4. TURN THE GRACE OF GOD INTO LASCIVIOUSNESS.

This overlaps largely on the previous point; but this deals with the underlying doctrine, not the activities justified by the doctrine.

There were two cannons pointed at the church during the lives of the Apostles. These were opposite positions, and yet the same underlying "self will" produces them both. The Jews wanted to put the yoke of the Jewish ceremony on the shoulders of the Gentile believers; which included the Sabbath, dietary laws, circumcision, and all the ceremonial laws--because they were in love with the outward form of their "ism". The Apostles shot this down, and taught that we in the New Testament are under a new covenant, referred to at times as "Grace", and not under Jewish ceremonialism. We are still under God's Moral Law, called the Law of Love, or Law of Christ. Paul made it clear he was still under the Law to Christ. The purpose of the New Covenant was to write God's Moral Law in our hearts by the holy Ghost so we would fulfill his righteousness in our life – See Romans 8: 4 *"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

Thus you had one side saying Gentiles had to keep the Jewish Ceremonial Law; to which Galatians is pointed; and you had another group saying that, since we are "under Grace", we can live loose, have fun, be worldly, disobey, and still go to heaven. To the latter group we have James, Jude, Peter, and much other Scripture pointed. The latter group we **are speaking of now**:

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 3,4

The word "lasciviousness" means "absence of restraint". It is the idea that because we are under "grace", and have "liberty", that we can be unholy, and worldly, and don't "have" to obey "all" the Bible commands to New Covenant believers. This is exactly what many church groups are teaching today. That is why they live like the world; with the world's fashion, costly array, jewelry, makeup, TV, fleshly music, beach parties, Bahaman cruises, public swimming, alcohol drinking, fancy costly homes, immorality, uncovered heads (women), etc. etc. etc.

This is exactly what the Baptists are teaching in their ETERNAL SECURITY doctrine. It is called ANTINOMIANISM, which means "without law". They teach that because we are under "grace", we are also not under "the Law of Christ". The Moral Law of God never changes, because God never changes. The Old Testament Law contained the Moral Law, but was mixed with the ceremonial law, which foreshadowed Christ (Col. 2:17). When Christ fulfilled that which foreshadowed him, it was done away, and the New Covenant was established in its place with God's Moral Laws still in force and made the basis of the New Covenant. Titus 2:11-14 tells us that GRACE doesn't excuse looseness, but teaches holiness! The New Covenant is based on the moral law of God, although it does not contain the ceremonial law given to the Jews. Jesus actually restored right thinking concerning the moral aspects of the Old Testament Law in matters of divorce and remarriage, loving our enemies, not avenging ourselves, and many other things -- See Matt. 5-7. Of course! It only makes sense that Jesus would clarify God's Laws before writing them on our hearts as the basis of the New Covenant. Malachi said He would do this!

Today, all teaching that says we don't have to obey "all things whatsoever" Jesus commanded; or don't have to obey all the Apostles commanded us; is the turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness. It is the promising of liberty (false liberty), which allures people through the lusts of the flesh. The true Gospel message is the message of the cross, which means crucifixion of the flesh, and mortifying the deeds of the body. See Romans 8:13:

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

What if we don't mortify the deeds of the body?

Paul says in a number of places that he didn't try to use "enticing words of man's wisdom"; but only preached the cross. He also lived the cross. He didn't pursue the fleshly things of the world, but lived simple and plain sacrificing for the Kingdom.

Here are some examples of this deceptive teaching -- not from the rankest liberals of our day, but from some preachers whom many would classify as "conservative" and as "fundamentalists".

The late Pastor Hyles, who insisted on being called Doctor Hyles, had a very large ministry in Chicago. He strongly propagated the false idea that he is right because of all his "fruit" (converts). He insisted that REPENTANCE is not REPENTANCE FROM SINS, but simply from the one sin of unbelief. In other words, if a sinner prays the prayer accepting Christ into his heart, he is saved eternally, even if he doesn't leave off his sins, and obey Jesus.

His famous illustration goes like this (from His book ENEMIES OF SOULWINNING, page 32):

"Let's suppose I get on that plane, and I am trusting the pilot to take me to Chicago. I do not know how to operate the plane, nor do I know the route to Chicago by air. There is nothing I can do to get myself to Chicago by that plane. I trust the pilot to get me there. So, we get up in the air thousands of feet high, and let's suppose I get a knife and cut up the seat in front of me. Now, where am I going? I'm still going to Chicago. Why? I repented of 'not trusting the plane to take me' to 'trusting the plane to take me'.

The stewardess comes and says, 'Mr. Hyles, what are you doing back here?' I say, 'I'm just cutting up a little bit!'. Then suppose I reach up and cut off a lock of her hair. Now where am I going? I'm going to Chicago. You see, how I behave on the flight does not determine my destination.

So, the stewardess goes to the pilot and says, 'Mr. Hyles, back in seat 14A is causing some disturbance. Look at my hair. Go back and look at the seat.' The pilot leaves the plane in the hands of the co-pilot and comes back to seat 14A and says, 'Mr. Hyles, what are you doing back here?' He looks at the seat I've cut up, he sees the lock of hair that I've cut off the stewardess, and I reach out and cut off his tie. Now where am I going? I'm going to Chicago. That was all determined when I got on the airplane. Now the truth is, I will not enjoy Chicago as much as I would have enjoyed it, nor will I go to the part of Chicago I'd planned to, but I'm still going to Chicago"

There is a prime example of last day's deception, and it is being circulated by this man all around our nation, and the world. He pushes "soulwinning", but I've been to his church and college to see how they do it, and it is all just a number game to prove he is right by all his "fruit". Think of this illustration in light of who the "pilot" of our salvation is -- Jesus. And who is the stewardess of our salvation flight, but the Holy Spirit. This is rank heresy.

Here is another example from a man who was highly praised among Independent Baptists, as was Hyles. Curtis Hutson, in his book SALVATION CRYSTAL CLEAR (pg. 313) gives this illustration to show that we don't have to make Jesus Lord of our life just to be saved - we don't have to obey him, just accept his salvation:

"It is one thing to trust Jesus Christ as Saviour and quite another to surrender one's life to the Lord. There is such a thing as the dedicated Christian life. And there are carnal Christians, according to I Corinthians 3, who have never yielded their lives to Christ. The yielding of one's life or making Jesus Lord of one's life is not a requirement for salvation. That is Lordship salvation and a perversion of the Gospel....Suppose I am going to jump from a burning building into a net held by four men. A mechanic is holding one corner of the net, a dentist one corner, an airplane pilot one corner, and an insurance salesman the other corner. I am going to trust them to catch me. Someone could say, 'Believe on Dr. Domansky, the dentist, and thou shalt be saved', but that doesn't mean I have to let him pull all my teeth in order to get saved. It simply means that I am going to have to trust him to catch me in the net. Someone else could say, 'Believe on Mr. Smith, the insurance salesman, and thou shalt be saved'. But that doesn't mean I have to buy my insurance from Mr. Smith to be saved. It simply means I must trust him to hold that net for me.

When the Bible says in Acts 16:31, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' it doesn't mean you have to make him Lord of your life."

There you have another example of the hellish doctrine of turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. You can have salvation, but don't have to obey Jesus as Lord of your life?! That is pure satanic lies from Hell!

This example is from a well-known "fundamental Baptist's" paper. Jim Vineyard publishes a paper, in which this sermon from Randy Taylor (an evangelist) was printed. The sermon spoke of believers who "repent", but never get right with God -- this shows their false concept of repentance. I want to give you two incredibly heretical quotes from this sermon:

"Repentance is not turning from sin. Repentance is not walking away from sin. No man ever turned from sin. You will not find anywhere in the Bible where it says, 'Turn from sin.' Repentance is changing your sin problem to what God says is right for you. Repentance is changing."

This quote is incredible in light of the fact the man took his text verse from Ezekiel 18 where it says SIX TIMES to turn from sin!

Vs. 21 says, "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins..."

Vs. 23, "...he should return from his ways, and live."

Vs. 27, "wicked man turneth away from his wickedness..."

Vs. 28, "because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions."

Vs. 30, "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions;..."

Vs. 32, "wherefore, turn yourselves, and live ye."

Notice the phrase in the quote, "to what God says is right for you"--this opens the door to the false philosophy that God has different "rights" and "wrongs" for different people. Thus "if I'm not convicted about it, then it is not wrong for me"; and "If you are convicted about it, then it is wrong for you" -- this is a lie of Satan. God's Word is for everyone!

Next quote from Randy Taylor,

"Therefore the Bible says, 'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' (II Cor. 5:17) Now, you can be saved all of your life and never be a new creature until you have a divine nature, a new nature."

YOU CAN BE SAVED ALL YOUR LIFE AND NEVER BE A NEW CREATURE? Didn't he just read II Cor. 5:17 that states clearly, "If any man be in Christ HE IS A NEW CREATURE"? Yet, people listen to this and love it, and get angry with me for saying anything about it - my own relatives are mad at me over this!

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WICKED ANTINOMIAN (ONCE SAVED- ALWAYS SAVED) HERESY STRAIGHT FROM THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION - CHARLES STANLEY'S BOOK, "ETERNAL SECURITY, Can You Be Sure?"

The following excerpt from Charles Stanley's book is his belief concerning Hebrews 6:1-12, where we have Paul clearly setting forth the scenario that a born again believer can allow his heart to be hardened (Heb. 3:12-14); and though having enough faith to start into the narrow way, he will not have the faith to continue to the end. He will lack diligence, faith, and patience in running the race (Heb. 6:11-12), and so turn away from Christ when the going gets tough. This man, due to the great light he possessed will not have another chance to repent, but will receive the sorer punishment spoken of later in Heb. 10:26-29. and will be damned --"whose end is to be burned" (Heb. 6:8)

Charles Stanley believes that a Jew (or any believer) can be fully converted to Jesus as the Messiah, be born again, and follow for a while; then turn away and deny Christ; but still go to heaven and be saved. Everyone who stubbornly holds to the antinomian heresy of "Unconditional Eternal Security" must ultimately agree with Stanley, or else deny man's free will (as a Calvinist) -- there is no other choice. Here are Stanley's own words:

"The persons described in these verses were genuine, born again believers. As followers of Christ, they had experienced the Christian life in its fullest sense. They had seen the power of God at work in their lives and in the lives of others. Then for some unexplained reason they began doubting the claims of Christ. That continued until finally they turned their backs on all that they at one time embraced and returned to Judaism... By turning their backs on Christ, these Jews were in essence agreeing with the Jews who had Christ arrested and ultimately put to death. If He was not THE Christ -- and apparently they did not think He was -- He was a false Christ and deserved to die. The phrase "to themselves" is the author's way of pointing out the groups attitude. Insofar as they were concerned, Jesus deserved to die.

Since they had at one point publicly professed Christ as their Savior and thus the Messiah, their public denial would bring shame on those who maintained their belief in Christ. Outsiders would conclude that there must not be much to Christianity if those who at one time said they believed changed their minds and went back to their former religion.

If one takes seriously the original context of the writer's statements, it is clear that this solemn warning in no way threatens the security of the believer. Actually, it is evidence for the believer's security. If a Jew, who was awaiting the coming of the Messiah, could find salvation through Christ and then walk away from Him without the threat of losing his or her salvation, what do the rest of us have to fear? No other group had more revelation concerning the coming of the Messiah. Their whole culture was centered on God's law and His promises about ultimate salvation from sin. For a Jew to come face to face with the claims of Christ and to accept them for a while and then walk away seems unforgivable. But our ways are not his ways -- and it's a good thing they aren't!

The writer of Hebrews offers a serious warning. It is a dangerous thing for a believer to turn his back on Christ. To do so is to run the risk of drifting beyond the point of return -- not a return to salvation, but a return to fellowship with the Savior."

My heart breaks to know that so many people believe this devilish twisting of the Scripture. It reveals something about their heart, because the Bible isn't that hard to understand. People believe this simply because they want to -- it fits the way they want to live--they want salvation without obedience and death to self.

We will not belabor you with more illustrations, but let it be said that this type of heresy is everywhere around us from ANTINOMIANS, CALVINISTS, AND ARMINIANS, who come at it from different directions. There are Calvinists, who say God makes his saints persevere in righteousness, yet they themselves live very worldly, and call that righteousness. Then you have Arminians who say we must repent of all sin, and live holy (which is right), yet their sin list is as short as their miniskirts -- suddenly nothing is sin anymore. All three camps have the same basic deception; if not in their written doctrine, like the antinomians; then in the life that flows from their loose interpretation of their doctrine.

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:" Rev. 3:17

5. WREST SCRIPTURE FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES

This is where the deceivers come up with their heresy.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." II Peter 3:14-16

It is very interesting how this verse fits with Jude 4. Here Peter speaks of the longsuffering of the Lord (grace of God), spoken of in Paul's epistles, being wrested, or twisted out of contextual meaning to the people's destruction. It is the grace of God in Paul's epistles that is being twisted or wrested out of its proper meaning, which produces the Antinomian doctrine of eternal security, and so forth. Martin Luther, who helped in the formation of Calvinism and Antinomian thought, disliked the epistle of James, and called it an epistle of straw -- because it contradicted his interpretation of Paul's epistles concerning faith (faith without works is dead, according to James).

The Antinomians wrest Romans 4:8 to say that God refuses to acknowledge sin in the life of one who has "accepted Christ". When actually it simply means the same as verses 6 & 7. It simply means that when I am forgiven of past sins, due to repentance and faith in Jesus, my record is cleared of past transgression, which is an imputation of righteousness without me having done right. It is God not imputing my sins to me (but washing them away); and it is the same transaction as verse 6, "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." It is the same transaction in different words. It only deals with past sins, because at the moment I am saved that is all I have committed. See. Romans 3:25 "sins that are past".

Another illustration quickly is the treatment of I John 3:1-10. John Rice, a leading fundamental Baptist (Antinomian) from the past, says that it is the "born again part of the Christian which doesn't commit sin", therefore we can never judge who is saved, and who isn't. The only problem is, the context of the whole passage is that God's people not be deceived by false teachers. The way to know a false teacher is by his "fruit" or "life": so St. John says, **"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil;"** In the light of the context, John Rice's interpretation cannot be true, for then we could not use what is said to avoid deception -- for we could not see the inside "born again part" of any man.

The purpose of this interpretation (this wresting of scripture) is to make it fit with his eternal security doctrine.

6. THEY DON'T OBEY ALL THINGS...

...or are hypocritical in their obedience -- do it to be seen of men, not because they really practice it themselves.

"He that committeth sin is of the devil;" I John 3:8

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works: for they say and do not." Matthew 23:3

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I John 2:4

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. ...Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:15-21

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:19,20

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." II Cor. 11:13-15

Notice that last verse where it says these "ministers of righteousness" shall have an **end** according to their **works**. Obviously their **works** were not as **righteous** as their "message" declared them to be.

7. GREAT SIGNS WITH WRONG DOCTRINE -- A WRONG JESUS, AND A WRONG SPIRIT.

There are many "great preachers" today boasting of great signs to "prove" they have the power of God, but they are preaching a different Jesus than we have revealed in God's Word. These signs will be so great they would deceive everybody, if that were possible. Jesus' sheep that are abiding in his light, cannot be deceived, but if they don't abide diligently in his light, they will also be deceived. Thus we have Jesus' words in Matthew 24. Read the whole chapter. Today you see women who have "healing" power and stand in the church and teach and usurp authority over the men, and do it all with uncovered heads; yet they want you to believe their "gifts" prove they are from God. This is the same trickery that Simon of Samaria used to bewitch the Samaritans.

You can be sure the Holy Spirit will not empower anyone to disobey Scripture. God is not the author of confusion.

8. THEY WILL ADD TO JESUS' COMMANDS

"As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." Gal. 6:12

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." Col. 2:20-23

Here is where the Judaizers came in that we hear about in Acts 15, Galatians, Colossians, and other places. They were telling the Gentile believers they had to be circumcised, and keep the ceremonial Law of Moses to have a righteous standing with God. This is "legalism". Saying you have to obey ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER Jesus taught is **NOT** legalism. Legalism is the belief that I can atone for my own sins by keeping Moses' Law, rather than following Jesus and depending on His atonement. Believing one has to obey Christ (and thus show his faith) in order to receive Christ's gracious atonement is different than believing that your obedience to a creed or law will atone for your own sins apart from Christ - or in order to help Christ. The Bible states clearly that we must **obey** Jesus to be saved.

Heb. 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

The idea that "Christian liberty" frees you from obeying Jesus and his apostles is absurd. The concept that being under "grace" and not under "law" frees you from being a "doer of the Word" is simply nonsense. Teaching that you have to obey Jewish law in circumcision, diet, Sabbath keeping, etc. is what Paul is writing against in Galatians. The Apostles settled the issue in Acts 15.

"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well." Acts 15:28,29

This doesn't nullify all the commands of the Apostles in the New Testament; but rather, "these necessary things" are "entrance requirements" not the complete package. They were added to help peaceful and productive relations to prevail between Jews and Gentiles; and certify that Gentiles made a clean break with idolatry.

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Gal. 5:6

Also read Romans 14, and Col. 2:14-23. But keep in mind that the same person who wrote these things also commanded modest dress, head covering, and many other New Testament commands, which false teachers nullify by miss-using these passages on "liberty". The only liberty Paul is speaking of is the liberty from Jewish ceremonial law, and to the repentant -- liberty from condemnation for sin. He is not speaking of liberty from God's Moral Law or the things he himself commanded.

Many churches excommunicate for reasons contrary to scripture. The Amish and the Roman Catholics are an example of people who add to the commands of the New Testament through their traditions; and as the Pharisees, they "teach for doctrines the commandments of men".

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats,..." I Tim. 4:1-3

At the same time, we also have the Baptists, and the Protestants who **forsake** "APOSTOLIC TRADITIONS" which they are bound by Scripture to obey:

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" II Thess. 2:15

9. THEY SACRIFICE TRUTH FOR PROSPERITY, ACCEPTANCE, AND PLEASURE.

II Peter and Jude speak much of this.

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." Jude 11

"Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;... " II Peter 2:15

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Titus 1:10-12

"...Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself....But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." I Tim. 6:5-9

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I Jn. 2:15

How often do men sacrifice truth to stay in a church position, a college (to get that degree), or a "fellowship" of preachers? This is a dangerous thing to do, because it is exactly what Balaam did. If we reason long enough, we will justify it, just like Balaam did. Instead, we should be jealous for truth above family, friend, money, and our own life!

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:33

10. SPEAK WITHOUT FEAR AND REVERANCE

READ Jude 8-16 and II Peter 2:1-22

They spoke evil of Paul in his day. Martin Luther spoke pridefully in calling James an epistle of straw. They speak with pride today. Dennis Corle, an evangelist, told my father in law concerning me, "As long as he is stuck in first John, there is no hope for him." Stuck in I John? Is that not the Bible? This was after I had challenged his doctrine by simply asking him questions after one of his services -- where he got upset (because he couldn't defend his eternal security against plain scripture) and called me a male donkey right in the church lobby in front of all the people. His partner preacher Keith Gomez seconded the motion. I asked them if that was from the Holy Spirit, to which they said it was. This is just an example of the pride and fearless conduct of false teachers. Do I say this to boast and uplift myself? No, I am telling you the plain truth of Scripture concerning false teaching and false

teachers today. The men couldn't take time to talk to me later, for they had a hunting trip planned with their "preaching engagement".

Obviously, multitudes of people have a hard time taking the truth of the Bible and applying it to real life today, or they would see right through the thousands of false teachers today who are fleecing the flock, rather than feeding the flock with pure truth. My heart grieves to the point of anger, when I see people unwilling to be enlightened, but press on to their own destruction -- not to mention the destruction of their children.

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished." Proverbs 22:3

FALSE TEACHER'S MOTIVES :

"To draw away disciples after them" Acts 20:30

"They serve their belly" Romans 16:18; Phil. 3:19 AND ARE OFTEN OVERWEIGHT

"For filthy lucre's sake" Titus 1:7

"They love to have the preeminence" III John 9

"They are deceived themselves" Matt. 15:14; Acts 18:24-26

"They are servants of Satan" II Cor. 11:13-15

There are many other things about false teachers, which could be said. The Bible, when read with prayer and a single eye will answer every false teaching. In the early church the Apostles fought the Gnostic's teaching of "eternal security", that Jesus hadn't come in the flesh (I John 4), and the teachings of fate (predestination-Calvin style) from the Philosophers of the day. They had many heretics, just as we do. The key is to look at their life in light of the Bible. If they live extravagant, worldly, fleshly, etc.; then you don't follow them. EVEN IF THEY SEEM GOOD IN OTHER AREAS, OR SOUND GOOD IN THE PULPIT. JESUS SAID, YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUIT -- NOT SERMONS, TALK, BOOKS, SIZE OF MINISTRY, ETC.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. FROM II PETER, JUDE AND I JOHN; SEE IF YOU CAN FIND ANOTHER COMMON CHARACTERISTIC OF FALSE TEACHERS WE DIDN'T ELABORATE ON.
2. ARE ALL FALSE TEACHERS DECEIVING PEOPLE ON PURPOSE?
3. HOW CAN BIBLE COLLEGE BE THE DOWNFALL OF YOUNG PREACHERS?
4. WHAT VERSES TEACH THAT PREACHERS SHOULDN'T LIVE IN EXTRAVAGANCE?
5. WHAT EVIDENCES FROM PAUL'S LIFE SHOWED HE WAS TRUSTWORTHY?
6. WHAT DOES "RABBI" MEAN?
7. WHAT DOES II PETER 2:3 MEAN, WHEN IT SAYS FALSE TEACHERS SHALL "MAKE MERCHANDISE OF YOU"? GIVE A MODERN DAY EXAMPLE.
8. EXPLAIN HOW II PETER 2:13,14,&19 FIT WITH MATTHEW 7:15-20
9. HOW DOES MATTHEW 23:15 FIT WITH TODAY'S "NUMBERS" CRAZE? HOW COULD "SOULWINNING" BECOME PART OF THE DEVIL'S GAME? WHAT DAMAGE COULD FALSE SOULWINNING METHODS BRING TO PEOPLE?
10. HOW CAN WE KNOW THAT A MAN'S NUMBER OF CONVERTS DOESN'T MEAN HE IS A TRUE TEACHER? II PETER 2:2 II TIM. 4:3,4

Section Four

VISITING A CHURCH - FIRST CENTURY, A.D.

During the first century A.D. there was great turmoil; for God's Son, Jesus Christ, had come as promised for thousands of years by Old Testament prophets; and had set up the New Testament or New Covenant between God and mankind. The Apostles of Jesus Christ had the responsibility to proclaim this new Gospel Covenant and its requirements to all men.

Rather than working through a nation of people (Israel) to reach men with the truth; Jesus set up the New Testament Church. Through this body of believers Christ works on earth. We are his hands, feet, voice, -- his body on earth.

In the nation of Israel God always had a remnant of faithful believers; but unlike the nation of Israel, the Church **is** to be the **remnant** -- citizens of Heaven, not of earth. Groups who profess to be followers of Jesus and part of the true Church; yet do not live according to Jesus' teachings and commands, are really not part of Christ's Church. According to Scripture, if a person wasn't living holy, they were put out of the church, so the assembly would remain holy as the body of Christ on earth. (I Peter 2:9; I John 2:4; I Corinthians 5:1-13)

Though there were continuous assaults on the church by Satan's false prophets and false professors; these were not to be tolerated within the body, but judged, and disciplined out of the church. If a believer began to waver and wander from the right path, they were confronted by the brethren. If they didn't repent to be restored into fellowship, they were put out of the fellowship, until they did repent. Paul had taught them, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"; so they were taught to put away from themselves evil doers.

Because Satan is alive, the churches were not without trouble. However, they were victorious in these trials as long as they followed the Apostle's teachings. Those assemblies who strayed from the Apostle's teachings were shunned by the faithful assemblies, and became apostate. Though they remained in existence, and were sometimes very powerful, they were not a true "Church of Jesus Christ". In Revelation Jesus warned churches to repent or come to this fate. Many churches today are very successful in the eyes of man; but have already been rejected by Jesus, and so are utter failures in reality.

There are thousands of "churches" today claiming to be a true "Church of Jesus Christ"; but only those assemblies who hold to "all things whatsoever Jesus commanded" and all the Apostle's teachings and commands in the New Testament are eligible to make such a claim. Don't follow the wicked Romish church to study church history. Follow the history of the faithful martyrs and preachers who held to the Scriptural faith and life.

When painting a picture of "visiting a first century church"; I am going to focus on the normal church situation, not the times of trial and controversy. We will not focus on the Laodiceans, Diotrophes, nor the leaven that was continually put away from the body. It would be unfair to the faithful, self sacrificing, God fearing, holy living believers who were the pillars and backbone of the churches that evangelized the then known world; died at the stake; were cast to lions; and faithfully served Jesus -- it would be unfair to them to focus on the trouble-makers that they had to deal with. I would not want to be lumped together with people and problems that grieve me, and are a disgrace to what I stand for. We should not be so proud and wise in our own conceit that we can't appreciate the valor and purity of the first century believers. When we look at Peter's life: to focus on his failures, and not rejoice in his victories, only reveals the wicked heart within us.

We are going to visit one of the faithful churches, and see how different they were from what we see today. The things that we will notice, will be the "norm" for all the churches: Things they all had in common, when not in the midst of a great trial.

VISITING A FIRST CENTURY CHURCH

It is the first day of the week, which is Sunday. To the believers, this is the "Lord's Day". It is the day Jesus rose from the dead; the day He repeatedly met with them when He appeared to them at different times before His ascension; the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost; and the day the disciples met to break bread, and take up the collection. Sunday is the day they assembled together to break bread in remembrance of the Lord's death until He returned.

Paul had gone to the Jewish Synagogue and preached to the Jews as was his custom when visiting any Gentile city where there was a Jewish Synagogue. Those who believed were eventually separated into a body of believers that included Jew and Gentile. These believers met on the first day of the week, rather than the Jewish Sabbath, which was Saturday. This wasn't easy, as normal business went on, and many may have been expected to work, or maybe needed to work; but this day was special, and was given to the Lord.

This day they were to meet at a brother's house. In the beginning they did not have meeting houses, nor would they have been allowed to have them. As we see them gathering to this brother's house, we see the women dressed plain and simple: no jewelry, costly array, makeup, or fashionable attire. We see their heads veiled with hanging scarfs: no cut, permed, fixed hair. This was not so unusual, as no self respecting women in those days were ever caught without their heads veiled in public--only the loose women did that. These Christian women covered their heads for a spiritual, not just a cultural reason. All the churches of God held the custom that women cover their heads as a part of feminine modesty, which symbolized being in their God given place under authority. It would be a shame for a Christian woman to do spiritual business immodestly without the proper symbol of her place under authority.

The Christian women were not coming to church to show off their new dress, talk about their career, or learn the latest gossip. Instead, they dressed simple, modest, and plain. They were keepers at home, where they worked hard to teach and train their children -- not send them to heathen schools. They kept silent in the church assembly (except for singing), and if they had a question, they asked their husbands at home -- for he was a spiritual leader, who studied and knew the Bible, not a couch potato watching the TV; or workaholic who had no time for God.

As we enter the house we don't see "Home Interiors" from wall to wall, but simple, practical furnishings. We see Christian brothers greet one another with a holy kiss of charity, and extend the right hand of fellowship to one another. The sisters likewise greet one another in the Lord. They have not come together to be entertained by music or a funny speaker; for they would have been appalled at the thought of "Christian entertainment" in or out of God's assembly. There is no room in a holy God fearing life for the vanities of this world.

Singing (the fruit of our lips) was a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God; and also for admonishing one another; but never for the glory of the flesh, or the entertainment of men. They didn't come to get an emotional massage; for vain mirth was also unknown to their meetings. This was a special and sacred time to remember Christ as he had asked them to; and exhort one another to continue in the faith, and endure to the end with the glorious expectation of inheriting Christ's Kingdom.

They have come together on the first day of the week to break bread (the Lord's supper), as they did every week. During this sacred and glorious time, they would worship the Lord in psalm, hymn, and spiritual song. All the brothers would be welcome to take part, according to their spiritual gift, in giving a word of doctrine, sharing an exhortation, or suggesting a hymn. All things were done decently and in order, but not in dead formalism with one man running the whole show.

If any spake another language, they were to keep silent unless there was someone who could speak both their language and that of the assembly, and thus interpret. In this case the visitor of another language could share a word also.

The bishop was to oversee and exhort the people. It was his responsibility to see that things were in line with the Word of God, and that the sheep were fed. If you were there, you would rejoice to behold their order and steadfastness in the faith of Christ. You would never hear someone talk about the "preacher's kid" being the brat of the church; for a man couldn't be a bishop, without having his wife and children in order first. A bishop and deacon had to meet all the requirements of Scripture, not just have a degree from some college or give a smooth, entertaining, sermon.

This Sunday there was a special joy in the meeting. No, there was no visiting quartet or special singer. This would have been thought abominable to these believers. You would never see a woman up in front of the church dressed up and fixed up showing off her voice, and distracting from the pure worship of Jesus Christ -- it was only the work of antichrists to set themselves up in God's house to be worshipped instead of worshipping God.

No, this week there was no carnival type campaign to draw carnal men by means of the lust of the flesh. Only false prophets allured through wantonness and the lust of the flesh -- so Peter had told them.

No, this was not super-bowl Sunday, where everyone wondered if their team would win. The games in the stadiums were for heathen idolaters, not followers of Jesus Christ.

This week, the beloved Brother Paul was passing through town, and would preach to them today. He would not have any funny stories, fancy illustrations, or great swelling words of man's wisdom. He had purposed to preach nothing but Christ crucified. For he knew the preaching of the cross is the only thing that really matters. Now, the

preaching of the cross, wasn't just the one Jesus died on; but the one we all must die on, if we are to follow Jesus. We must be crucified with Christ; crucified to the world, flesh, and Devil; and given wholly over to God. Paul's speech was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Paul preached and warned us all with tears that we should not cast off our confidence in Christ Jesus, which hath great recompense of reward; that we should guard against those who wish to change the whole counsel of God, which he had presented; and that we should exhort one another to continue in God's grace. He pressed us earnestly that through trial, and problems with false teachers we must endure in our love for Christ (lest it wax cold), and in our love for each other (lest we be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin). He warned us of the Gnostic heretics who deny Jesus having come in the flesh, and were turning the grace of God into lasciviousness - in teaching our physical performance didn't affect our spiritual condition. These Gnostics taught unconditional eternal security, man's unconditional fate (predestination), and that Jesus' Father wasn't the God of Abraham. They taught that man was so depraved, they couldn't repent; but Paul affirmed that what God had commanded, we were able to do by his grace. It was our choice, and we would be held accountable for it.

Finally, he stressed the exhortation that we have need of patience, that after we have done the will of God, we would receive the promise of eternal life in Christ's Heavenly Kingdom. He affirmed the words of Peter that the way to be secure was not to believe in unconditional eternal security; but to commit the keeping of our souls to God in well doing -- to abide faithful in Christ.

After this they prayed in one accord. The men praying in all earnest uplifting holy hands, and all rejoicing for the word of exhortation. Then they talked a great while, and finally had to part to their own homes after breaking bread together.

If Paul hadn't been there, one or more of the other brothers would have preached to the people, as the Spirit led. At the departing, it was obvious the love these people had one to another. You could tell they were grieved to part one from another. Each gave the other a final exhortation of many different sorts: One told his brother to "be not forgetful to entertain strangers, because thereby some had entertained angels unawares". Another told his brother to remember to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, for without this man's religion was not pure and undefiled before God. Another asked his brother to pray for him that a door of utterance would be opened unto him so he could preach Christ to those around him. Another confessed some faults to the brothers to pray with him to be healed. This went on until they had all parted and gone home with hearts rejoicing and yet serious with the great responsibility to be sober and diligent to seek the Lord and be ready for Jesus to come. They also knew that before Jesus would come, there was going to be a great apostasy from the faith, and an antichrist system set up - which happened in the Roman Catholic system. The believers carried a heavy responsibility to defend the true faith against all the heretics of the day.

God forbid that Jesus should come and find them asleep, and then they would forfeit their opportunity to enter in with him to the wedding; or that they should recant in time of persecution and torture -- for all this they needed to be sober and ready.

One brother, during the meeting, had shared some persecution he had been receiving; and was lovingly reminded he must return good for evil, and love his enemies. To this he admitted he needed prayer to stay faithful.

In this meeting there was no music, but the fruit of the lips of God's people. The early church followed the format of the meetings of the synagogue, where there was singing, no instrumental music, and much reading and study. There was no regard for any credentials of man from any Bible College; for there were none. The reliance was on a man's spiritual walk and gifts, not his supposed head knowledge. The only knowledge that was honored, was the true knowledge which produces the fruit of righteousness and holiness in the life of the believer.

I mentioned before that the women kept silent in the service. However, outside the church meeting, the mature Christian ladies taught the younger to love their husbands, and love their children. This was not done in word only, but also in deed as they daily set this example before them. You would never find a woman teaching in the assembly, serving as elder, leading singing, singing specials, or asking questions during the meeting. She could ask her husband, who could later ask the brethren. None of the brethren held "degrees" or were elevated above another in being called "doctor", "master", "rabbi", or the like. They were all brothers filling their proper roles in the body, and Jesus was the only "head" and "Master". When everyone is content to fill their role, and all know how to keep rank, then there is harmony and productivity in the body.

During the meeting, every brother gave forth the offering he had laid by him in store that week as the Lord had prospered him. This was used to take care of the widows within the church which had no younger family to do it; to support missionary work; to help the poor brethren at home or in other churches; and to help support the bishop, so he could give himself continually to ministry work and prayer, like the apostles. Many bishops followed Paul's

example, and helped support themselves, because their church was small, or the people were struggling just to make it themselves. There was not a "clergy"- "laity" distinction, as all the brethren were "disciples"; but there was a Bishop (what we would call a pastor) and deacons (what some might call associate pastors) who were godly elders that oversaw the proceedings. They did this more from the power of influence, than of the authority of position - though they did have authority when standing on a biblical principle to make decisions for the body.

Yes, this is a simple picture of the order of the early church. On the Lord's Day, you would not find them at the market buying or trading, plowing their fields, or doing business. No, they didn't observe it as a Jewish Sabbath; but as the Lord's Day, doing his work. You surely wouldn't find the Pastor and "special speaker" going to the local steak house after church. This would have been a disgrace and a shame. The people had crucified their affections and lusts, and were not fashioning themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance. It is wrong to support a business that keeps people from being able to observe the Lord's Day in order to feed you. Their money was Jesus' money, and they didn't spend it frivolously -- too many brothers and sisters were in need; and too much of God's work needed to be done to spend their money vainly and frivolously in feasting like the heathen. Often some would even fast so they could afford to help a brother in need.

They were holy, separated people, but not "stuck up". They welcomed the poor man in his rags. They preached to the publican and harlots, as Jesus and the Apostles had taught them, and were always ready to help the repentant. James had told them to never treat a rich man who came to their meeting better than a poor man in rags. Nor did they come to church to show off their riches and fashion. They lived simple and plain in protest to the worldly minded fashion and money hungry society around them.

They labored under adverse conditions, and history shows their success and heroic existence. They were truly hated of all nations, because they testified, like Jesus, that men's deeds were evil, and must be repented of. Many of them died and sealed their preaching with their own blood, just as the Apostles who taught them, and Jesus, their Lord. Their holy lives were a continual prick to consciences around them. This provoked persecution and mocking. They were calling men to reconcile with God on God's terms; and this often ignites hatred and resistance from the rebellious.

IS THIS CHRISTIANITY LOST?

Not at all! Jesus will have a faithful remnant until he returns. There are believers today striving to live by the example of the early churches. God has always had a remnant of faithful followers. You can trace their existence often by the blood of martyrdom; but always by a life of holiness and godliness in submission to Jesus Christ.

These believers are scattered through the world. You won't find them on the "Christian" TV, or radio. You won't read about them in the "top ten" best sellers at the "Christian book store". You will know them by the simple, holy life they are trying to live. Usually the most visible thing is the women's modest dress and veiled head. The men also dress modest, plain, and when doing spiritual business always uncover their heads; but this is not so noticeable.

I'm not saying that all churches with head veils on the women are like first century churches; but if these factors are not there, then you can be sure they are not like first century churches.

God has a remnant today, as he always has. I am a part of a group that strives to live by New Testament example plus nothing, minus nothing. We are not perfect, as they were not either; but are striving for perfection, just as the early churches did. If you are a true follower of Jesus, you must separate from practices and groups that do not follow New Testament example; and walk in all the light God gives you. If your church is willing to change and follow the New Testament example, then stay with it, and help it; but if not, then you must leave. We would invite you to come and help us strive for this goal.

You'll not find many things you find in modern day churches. You won't find "child evangelism" or "child baptism"; but you will find child training by parents who fear God. These parents won't send their children to a public school; but see it as a God given responsibility to bring up their own children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As stated earlier, you won't find Calvinism, "eternal security", youth activities (family activities instead), or sinful lifestyles tolerated and excused. You won't find anything (we hope and pray) that you wouldn't find in the first century faithful churches. And, by God's grace, you'll find everything you need to grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You may not find a big crowd, as a remnant is never agreeable to the main stream. You won't find the fleshly security of endorsement from the "big names" of the day, as even Jesus didn't receive that; but actually spoke against it. We are to go with him without the camp bearing his reproach, even as he has born our sin and reproach.

But, if you truly want the straight and narrow way, we do have the Word of God, the company of the faithful remnant through the centuries, and the faith once delivered to the saints. Until Jesus comes, let us be watchful, lest he come and find us sleeping!

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Luke 3:9

STUDY QUESTIONS:

- 1. Name some things you would find in the first century churches that are absent in most churches today.**
- 2. Name some things that you would find in churches today that would not be allowed in the apostolic churches of the first century.**
- 3. What are some things that the Gnostics taught?**
- 4. What were the first church meetings patterned after?**
- 5. Did the first century churches have trouble with false teachers and rebellious members? How did they deal with them?**

Section Five

BIBLICAL SALVATION

DANGEROUS MISCONCEPTIONS ANSWERED

Introduction

GOD'S WONDERFUL PLAN TO SAVE SINNERS FROM DAMNATION

Every man is born with a God given moral conscience; and a consciousness that there is a God. They know in themselves when they come to the age of understanding and their conscience matures that there is an absolute difference between right and wrong. They know by creation and the conviction of God's Spirit that there is a creator to whom they must give account:

Romans 1:18-20 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Romans 2:5-16, "... the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God. for as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. for when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

If you will not fight against the light you have, then it will bear witness that the Bible is truth. Thus believing the Bible, you can be led to salvation and given new life in Jesus Christ.

Acts 17: 24-31 "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth... And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:"

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

John 1: 9 "[Jesus] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

THE BIBLE TEACHES:

God created all things good; but God did not want man to have a fixed behavior pattern like animals who live by instinct. He wanted man to have the ability to reason and choose (free-will) so man could love and serve God by choice, not as a puppet or robot. In order for man to be free to choose he must know about an alternative to obedience, and this was supplied by a forbidden fruit on a forbidden tree. The knowledge of evil or an alternative to obedience is necessary for holiness to have virtue by reason of it being by choice. The Angels are called "holy", but this requires them to have the freedom to choose along with the knowledge of an alternative. God did not create evil; but of necessity all holy being must know of an alternative to holiness or their holiness has no virtue. To make a long story short, the first man, Adam, chose to disobey God, and brought upon himself and all his descendants the curse of death and separation from God. Man's rebellion marred his nature, so that he is naturally selfish and naturally wants to be his own god.

Ro 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Eph 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Man's rebellion against God was his desire to be his own god, make his own rules, and do that which pleased himself, rather than what was right, holy, and benevolent -- which is the basis of God's laws, actions, and nature. God is the Creator, and the only one with the Character and Ability to maintain righteous government, so it is His responsibility and right to govern. His way is a win-win situation for everyone - man's way is "me winning at someone else's expense" - a win-lose situation. God knows what is best for His creation and demands we obey, lest we cause pain and death.

God could have justly executed the penalty of the Law and killed Adam; but God designed a way to save all men who would repent, and return to a proper relationship with God and His righteous government. God planned to pay for man's sins by the sacrifice of a man who was indeed "God manifest in the flesh" and called the "Son of God" — Jesus Christ. Then He made Jesus Christ the Lord and judge of all men. Those who love and obey Jesus, God forgives; but those who won't, receive the penalty of God's Law. Jesus is the administrator and High Priest of God's salvation program.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Is. 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him (Jesus) the iniquity (trespasses) of us all.

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

Because Jesus Christ was sinless, and died to pay for our sins; He is the perfect Judge and Lord for mankind. He now invites men to repent of their rebellion and come under the canopy of His administration. He has the power to pardon, cleanse our record, and help us to live a holy life. He, as our priest, has power to keep our record clean as we continue to walk in obedience and confess to Him when we fail. God has never expected fallen man to be perfect (saved by our own works), but expects him to repent and do his best to obey. When God sees this repentance and faith, he graciously pardons — this is salvation by grace through faith. Christ expects us to walk the best we can with the light we have, and repent when we fail.

I John 1:7-9 ...if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin...If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Heb. 5:8,9 Though he (Jesus) were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he (Jesus) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

I Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,

Hebrews 7:24,25 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost (to the end) that come (continually) unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Those who repent and follow Jesus are promised God's Spirit to dwell with them, comfort them, and help them to do right even when it brings pain, separation, and persecution. This plan is seen in Acts 2:38,

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

God's Spirit, who has convicted me and called me to repentance, now enables me to renounce my selfish/fleshly ways, overcome them, and obey the truth God's Word teaches me. ("Flesh" means the natural selfish inclinations and appetites).

Romans 8:13,14 "...if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

When I accept Jesus as my sacrifice for sin, and as my King and Lord; I am accepting God's plan and standard of holiness over my own way. I am then putting my faith in God's holy government, and not my self-government. Jesus is God's perfect standard, and thus, He is God's chosen King and Judge for all men. To accept Jesus means to follow and obey Him as the manifestation of God's will and ways. This is why Paul preached what he did in Acts 26:20 and 17:30,31

Acts 26:20 "Repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

Acts 17:30-31 "God...now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Putting my faith in Christ means living according to his teachings and example. Without this, I am still in rebellion, and cannot be forgiven. Those who remain in their rebellion to God, or go back to it after repenting and turning from it, will suffer their due punishment in Hell.

Romans 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

2 Peter 2:20-21 "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

Once we turn to follow Jesus, and are baptized into a local body of believers, we are to continue following Jesus by faithful obedience to the end of our life. As Jesus performs his heavenly priesthood for those who walk in the light, their records are kept clean. In this way our obedient faith is counted to us for righteousness (Romans 4). What wonderful grace God displayed in producing this plan to save a repentant rebel who deserves Hell. If I but continue in His gracious plan, I am promised eternal bliss with Him in His Kingdom!

Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

1. Humbly confess your sin to God, and ask forgiveness.
2. Renounce your way, and ask Jesus Christ to be your LORD and Savior
3. Get baptized into a Bible obeying church body in Jesus' Name.
4. Strive to obey all Jesus taught through His apostles in the New Testament; submit to the church leaders as they submit to the Word of God; and humbly confess to Jesus when you fail.
5. Strive to overcome your old ways and become what Christ intended for you to be.
6. Learn your place in the local church and work to build up the local assembly.
7. Persevere in obedience in hope of promised eternal life.

1 Peter 1:13-17 "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who

without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"

Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

2 Cor. 6:17-7:1 "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Romans 6:17-23 "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Matt. 24:9-13 "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Hebrews 3:12-14 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;"

Hebrews 6:11-15 "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."

WHY DON'T YOU REPENT, CONFESS YOUR SIN TO GOD, ASK FORGIVENESS, AND TURN YOUR LIFE OVER TO JESUS CHRIST TO FOLLOW AND OBEY HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART...

CHAPTER 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING RIGHT ON SALVATION

Is there anything more important than being right on salvation? Can a person afford to ignore the many passages of Scripture which warn of false teachers, deceivers, and misleading doctrines?

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

Matt. 7:15

Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Matt. 15:14

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Acts 20:29,30

For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. 2 Cor. 2:17

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; 2 Cor. 11:13-15

Notice from these verses that Paul was outnumbered by truth corrupters even in his day (This is why the "older is better" idea of Bible manuscripts is not always reliable). Also notice that if the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch. There is no promise to those who are following false teachers that they will be safe! God expects us to read and obey the Bible on our own, not just follow the herd. Anyone who is sincerely seeking the truth from the Word of God will be taught of the Holy Spirit, and led to men of greater understanding, like Cornelius.

For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Ti. 1:10

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 3,4

The word lasciviousness basically means "absence of restraint". It is possible to teach the grace of God in such a way as to encourage loose living, and destroy the fear of the Lord. Those who teach "salvation without repentance" and "unconditional eternal security" are doing this very thing.

The Bible tells us in Rev. 12:9 and other places that Satan is the grand deceiver. Jesus said that he is the father of lies. Now, you need to have enough sense not to discredit Christianity and the Bible because of all the deceivers and liars there are around. You must be diligent to read and think for yourself with a humble and obedient heart, so God can lead you to the truth in spite of all the deception around you.

MOTIVATION OF FALSE TEACHERS

We must be very careful about judging men's motives; however the Bible does give a number of motives that could be possible:

...to draw away disciples after them. Acts 20:30

They serve their belly -- Rom. 16:18; Phil. 3:19

For filthy lucre's sake -- Titus 1:7

They love to have the preeminence -- 3 Jn. 9

They are deceived themselves -- Matt. 15:14

They are sincerely wrong -- Acts 18:24-26

It really doesn't matter to you what their motive is if they are leading you wrong concerning salvation! There is no promise in the Bible that you will escape the wrath of God just because you were sincere. Sincere in our eyes, and sincere in God's eyes are two different things. True sincerity, like Cornelius had, will be honored by God in that they will be given the opportunity to find the truth. If you are sincerely seeking God's truth, then carefully read our doctrinal series with prayer and your Bible.

If you ever find a verse that doesn't seem to fit with your system of belief, do not just pass it by -- check it out! The most dangerous thing you can do is twist the Bible to fit your prejudices.

HOW IMPORTANT IS SALVATION?

Jesus said that if your right eye led you into sin, or caused you to stay in sin; it would be better to pluck it out and cast it from you, than for it to send you to Hell. He said that if your right hand caused you to stumble concerning salvation, you'd be much wiser to cut your hand off and be saved, than to have two hands and go to Hell's tormenting fire! Salvation is more important to you than your eyes, hands, and feet. Salvation is more important to you than all the world. Jesus asked, What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

LITERAL HELL

Another reason salvation is so important, is because there is a Judgment day, and a place called Hell! The Bible teaches that the unrepentant will be in the Hell prepared for the Devil and his angels, which is described in Rev. 20:10,

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

WONDERFUL KINGDOM

Jesus will someday rule with a rod of iron in righteousness, and I want to be there! I want to live in his Kingdom, where there is no crime, sin, liquor, drugs, immorality, sickness, death, sorrow, and injustice. I do not want to miss out on Christ's Kingdom, because someone didn't teach me the truth! The reason for this study is because I don't want you to miss out either.

...We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13

AMERICAN DILEMMA

We have a dangerous system in America that is drowning men in destruction and enslaving them to deception. You could call it the "build an empire" game. Young men get fired up for the Lord in their young years. They see the "big" preachers come by and display all their glory. The young men, thinking this is God's way, set out to become one of those "big" preachers, or at least become loyal followers of them. They never stop to question the system's doctrine or practices, because they are continually reminded of the "great success" -- which is a "sure" sign of God's power and blessing. And, "who are they" to question it?

When they finish Bible college, and go into their own ministry, the pressure is on to "build a church" and "build a name" -- for the glory of God, of course. The Holy Spirit, if in them at all, has an awful hard time just getting their attention. They are not in the gear of double checking their doctrine or studying history to be sure they haven't been slipped a wooden nickel; they are only concerned about the "numbers" in the pew. I know from experience that my heart was sincere, but I was more pressed with reaching the lost with the "gospel" I had, rather than making sure I had a pure gospel.

It is a merry-go-round that is hard to get off; especially as a young pastor of a young church trying to stay afloat. I feel for those out there on that merry-go-round, and I hope this study will rescue some of them who don't have time to study it all for themselves.

When I tried to lead my church out of the deception into pure doctrine, the response I often heard was, "How can Bro.---- be wrong, look at how God has used him?" or "Look at his big church". I would tell them that if success is the criteria for judging pure doctrine, the Pope must be right.

Paul made it clear to Timothy that the time would come when people would **not endure** sound doctrine, but would heap to themselves teachers to tickle their ears with fables. It is obvious that when this took place, those who taught pure doctrine would not appear as successful as the hirelings with their fables. For the sincere believer, who knows God, this nonsense is repulsive, but to the carnal man it is quite appealing. He doesn't want a church of **Smyrna**; but rather a church of **Laodicia**. If God doesn't do "big" things for him, he has no use for God.

There is coming a day, and now is, when the true prophets of God will have to stand alone and preach God's Word to a small remnant, if any at all. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

CHAPTER 2

THE HUMAN AND DIVINE ASPECTS OF SALVATION

This could be the key to understanding everything that happens in the Christian life. If you can fully understand this principle, then you can easily understand this whole study, and God's plan of salvation. There is a big difference in what God has said **He** would do, and what God has told **me** to do. **I cannot expect God to do his part, when I'm unwilling to do my part; and I can't expect him to do what he has told me to do.** The majority of the confusion about salvation is misunderstanding the difference between the human and divine aspects of salvation.

THE DIVINE ASPECT

The divine aspect is the part that God does, promises to do, and only can do. The divine aspect is what I can expect from God. God's part in my salvation is **PROVISION** and **PERSUASION**. God's spirit strives with men to repent and avail themselves of God's provision; but God never makes their decisions or choices for them.

Atonement, redemption, regeneration, justification, adoption, forgiveness, etc. are all God's part of salvation. I could not do any of these for myself. I could not pay for my sins (atonement); purchase my soul from condemnation (redemption); make myself alive spiritually (regeneration); clear my record in Heaven (justification); acquire the right to be a child of God (adoption); or put my sins out of the mind of God (forgiveness). This is all God's part, and it is wonderful to rejoice in God's part, but not to presume that he will do all this without my cooperation and compliance. All God's promises in salvation are conditioned upon my obedient faith. God commands me to do what I can do, which is repent, submit, and believe His Word.

THE HUMAN ASPECT

The human aspect is what God has commanded us to do:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;... Titus 2:11-14

Notice God's Grace that brings salvation has appeared to **all** men for the purpose of telling us our part! Paul preached that God commands all men everywhere to repent. Paul preached that lost men should feel after God and find him (Acts 17:27-31). Romans 1 tells us that we should take the light of creation and inner God consciousness and find the truth of God. God expects men to be active in seeking salvation from him, not passive in waiting on God to do what he has told them to do! You can be sure that if God has commanded it of you; **you can do it!!**

We are to obey our part in faith that God will do his part.

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come... Acts 26:6,7

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Heb. 10:36

If one would say, like the Calvinists, that the sinner has no part in his salvation, then he either believes God wants some to go to Hell, or he is a Universalist, and believes that all will be saved; but all will not be saved! Men who go to Hell, go there because they did not do their part! The Bible makes this clear from Genesis to Revelation.

CALVINISM?

The Calvinist teaches the T.U.L.I.P. "T" is for Total Depravity -- man cannot obey God or repent, even though God has commanded him to, and threatens him with Hell if he doesn't. This system teaches that man's depravity is more like physical depravity than moral depravity. It says that man cannot repent: just as a dog cannot repent of acting like a dog. This is obvious error -- is it "just" to torment a dog in Hell for messing on the lawn, barking, eating vomit, and cheating on its "mate"? Of course not! A dog lives by a dog nature -- instinct. Man's is a moral depravity that has to do with choices he makes, and choices he can repent of! The ability to repent makes man accountable for his actions before a holy God. Who would ever punish a retarded boy for acting retarded? That is physical depravity. God punishes for moral depravity -- the fact that we follow our carnal inclinations to selfishness; but do not have to! The curse of sin has produced much physical depravity; but that is not why we are punished, and it is impossible to repent of physical depravity -- God commands us to turn from our morally depraved choices. What God commands men to do, they can do -- This is self evident.

You see, God did not create/cause evil originally, or make anyone rebel. He is not the author of sin; but, in order for holiness to have virtue, it must be by **choice**. Thus, there must be another **option**. The knowledge of this option is essential to give holiness true virtue. I believe in order for the angels to be more than puppets, God gave them the knowledge of the option -- rebellion, selfishness. Now they are "holy angels" because they do right by choice. Satan chose to rebel against the righteous will of his Creator and then influenced one third of the angels to follow him. This is how evil entered the universe as more than a concept. God created beings capable of reasoning and choosing, and then gave them knowledge of the choice; but God warned them not to make that choice, because it would bring death.

In the Garden of Eden, God placed a forbidden tree in the midst of the garden. This was their **option**. As long as they willingly obeyed God, they were holy. They didn't need to know the depths of sin to have an option, they just had to know there was an option. When they were influenced to make the choice of rebellion, they became

morally depraved. Our morality has to do with our choices for selfishness or benevolence -- God is holy because God is benevolent by choice. Our holy nature, in the image of God, was flawed by our first parents, which left us selfish by nature; but by God's grace, we can repent! The grace and light of God which is given to all men makes all men accountable. We have moral responsibility because we have moral ability.

Our morality is easily influenced by others--thus man's moral depravity, through parental influence, demonic influence, examples around us, etc. has reached new depths. Man was separated from God by sin, so the greatest influence on man is Satan, who plays on the heartstrings of his pride and selfish lusts. Therefore, man's depravity looks almost physical; but men like Noah, Abraham, etc. show that man can resist the evil influences and follow God's still small voice. In Heb. 11:7, God says Noah "**condemned the world**" by his obedient faith; however, this can only mean his example shows other men **could do better also**. What Heb. 11 says about Abraham (11:8; James 2:22,23), and Moses (11:24-27) would be of no virtue if God made them do it against their will or gave them some component (faith) that God didn't give the others.

It is impossible to believe Calvinistic doctrine and preach Biblical salvation. If a Calvinist in theology, one must be Arminian in methodology, or he cannot preach like the Apostles. **They** commanded all men to repent, turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. They didn't tell them to wait for the Holy Spirit to enable them.

The next letter in the Calvinistic TULIP is "U" -- Unconditional Election: That God chose before the world began who would go to Heaven and who would go to Hell without regard to anything the person did. Then God created some people as "vessels of destruction" to be evil and go to Hell; and others as "vessels of mercy" to be repentant and go to Heaven. The Calvinistic view of election is warped in the creation of the idea that man is a puppet, and is only doing what God had already planned for him to do.

This concept slanders God with injustice, unloving, and deceitful practices. It also seeks to relieve man of his responsibility before God; put the responsibility for man's wickedness on God; and thus make it God's fault, and ultimately God's sin.

Many Jews were elect at one time, but cut off, and then replaced with non-elect Gentiles, who became the elect -- this is seen in Romans; and this is what Paul means when he says of the once elect Jews, who had been cut off, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants...." God had predestined the Jews to be a part, but many missed out. Peter tells us to make our calling and election sure -- I have a part to play in my being elect and staying elect.

ROMANS 9

In Romans 9 there are some misunderstood presumptions held by Calvinists. The case of Jacob and Esau is simply God influencing men with "free will" to fulfill a promise to Abraham, and make a pure seed for the lineage of Christ. God's choice to use Jacob was before they had done good or evil, but not before He knew what they would be like. This had nothing to do with their personal salvation; but with whose descendants God would use. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" was written in the last book of the Old Testament, and **only** has to do with their **descendants**. God told Rachel that two **manner of people** were in her womb, and that the elder would serve the younger. Esau never did serve Jacob - this referred to the "manner of people" in her womb. Paul is simply showing the Jews that God has a right to use one person and refuse another for His purposes according to His own discretion. The main point being that "nobody has a claim on God's grace, mercy, gifts, callings, etc. -- God owes no man anything; but all He does is grace, not obligation. The Jews felt that God was obligated to them as the physical seed of Abraham, which is why Paul tells of others (Esau, Ishmael, etc.) who were also circumcised sons of Abraham that God **didn't** choose.

Verses 14-16 are not inconsistent with man's free will, and God judging man according to his choices. Does God harden little children at the age of accountability -- or sinners who have resisted his light for years? Does God show mercy or compassion unconditionally,-- or just according to his own discretion? Read II Thess. 1:10-12; Romans 2:1-11. When God says, "My spirit will not always strive with man ", and "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." (Romans 10:21 -- same book, one chapter later); I think we can see this a little clearer. Yes, it is God's choice who will receive mercy; but God's choices are righteous! I had better make sure I am "willing and running" according to his promises and not my own presumptions! **God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. God is no respecter of persons.**

Pharaoh is a good example of this. Compare what happened to Pharaoh with Romans 1:24, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts," God hardened Pharaoh's heart by easing the pain of the plagues, which encouraged Pharaoh to rebel -- as he already wanted to. The word "harden" in Pharaoh's case is the same as the word "encourage" in Isa. 41:7. Just as it says in Romans 2:3-5, God's goodness can actually cause sinners to be more hardened in their way. He often uses this to show his power to others so

they can be saved. God also hardens hearts as a retributive judgment upon the rebellious and proud - II Thess. 2:10-12, which would also fit Pharaoh's case.

Verses 19-27 are only discussing whether it is right for God to use someone like Pharaoh for his own purpose of "declaring his name throughout the earth" for the salvation of souls. In verses 20-23 God doesn't make someone a vessel of mercy or vessel of wrath *before* they are born, and *against* their will; but this is a *process during life*. That is why we are to make our calling and election sure! That is why "many are called, but few are chosen"! Just as God judged wicked Pharaoh (who had cruelly oppressed God's faithful) to demonstrate His power, and establish Israel; so God judged rebellious Israel (who rejected their Messiah) to open the doors to the Gentiles and establish the church.

It is very clear that God called those who refused (10:21), and it is very clear that those who missed out, did so because they "stumbled over the truth" and did not **submit themselves to the truth and righteousness of God** (9:32; 10:3). Why would God hold out his hands to a disobedient people if Calvinism is true (Romans 10:21)? The Calvinist's interpretation of this chapter sets it against everything else taught in Romans -- of course, they will try to twist the plain passages to fit their interpretation of a not so clear passage. **THE EARLY CHURCH HELD THE VIEWS I HOLD ON THIS PASSAGE, ACCORDING TO THEIR WRITINGS.**

The next letter in the TULIP is "L" -- Limited Atonement. They teach that Jesus only died and made atonement for the "elect". This is easily refuted by John 1:29; 3:16; I John 2:2; Titus 2:11; Acts 17:24-30.

The next letter is "I" -- Irresistible Grace. They teach that, because man is totally depraved, and God has made unconditional choices, man only does what God's grace does in him, and not of his own volition or choice - basic puppetry. This force keeps these people living right to the end, which is where the "P" comes in -- Perseverance of the Saints. This whole system is obviously corrupt from the roots. When is the last time you saw a Calvinist persevering in holiness?

God doesn't want or make puppets! The Bible is full of verses that show it is man's responsibility to repent, follow, obey, and continue! I dare anyone to read the Bible and underline every time the responsibility is put on man for his actions, and every time God reacts according to man's choices and actions!

Martin Luther shares with us the absurd conclusion that Calvinism brings: **"This is the highest degree of faith-to believe that He is merciful, the very One who saves so few and damns so many. To believe that he is just, the One who according to His own will, makes us necessarily damnable."**

SYNERGISM VS. MONERGISM

You may not be familiar with these terms, but these terms represent two foundational "camps" of theology. Within each camp there are differences, but ultimately it all boils down to "God does it all" or "God has given man a part to play, the ability to play his part, and will judge him for what he does with his moral ability and moral responsibility".

Monergism: Self-willed churchmen, in an effort to escape the clear Biblical teaching that man is responsible to repent, submit, believe, obey, and persevere in holiness, have attributed man's actions and abilities wholly to God's irresistible workings within them. However, when you take their conjectures to the logical conclusions, you find the following absurdities. In the final analysis Monergism teaches that God chooses unconditionally to save some men and damn all others. This He accomplishes by irresistible forces, and man is only the passive receiver of God's activity. Therefore if men go to heaven, it is because God chose unconditionally to send them there; and if men go to hell, it is because God chose unconditionally to send them there. Man has no responsibility because man has no ability, free-will, or choice in the matter. God's workings with men are irresistible and always effective. If God wanted all men to repent, believe, obey, and live holy; and the world to be full of godliness and love, then that is exactly the way it would be. God has foreordained all the good and evil that is happening, will happen, or ever has happened. God planned every murder, rape, adultery, persecution, war, crime, etc. before the foundation of the world, and everything has been just according to plan ever since. No, they won't tell you this on their websites, but it is what they believe. No matter what slick words and phrases and miss-used Scripture they quote, ultimately they believe that God is responsible for the minute details of activity in creation (everything is predestined). This can only mean that man has absolutely no responsibility, no ability, no choice, and hence no blame or true guilt - all was planned before man, without man, apart from man; and man plays no active role. If they reject this evaluation, then they must admit that man DOES something of his own free will which was not predestined by God (chosen by God, and therefore God's action - not man's.) **MONERGISM IS ERRONEOUS DOCTRINE.**

Gospel Synergism: Though Monergism is a word not found in the Scriptures; Synergism is a Scriptural term and principle. In the Greek it is Sun-ergos, from the same two Greek roots as our word "Synergism" [Syn – “together” & “ergo” work, labor]. The Greek word used in the Scriptures from whence we get our word synergism is strong's #4904 sunergov sunergos, soon-er-gos' from “Sun” – close union & “ergo” – work, labor. It is found in the New Testament in the following places:

Ro 16:21 ¶ Timotheus my workfellow,

1Co 3:9 For we are labourers together with God:

2Co 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy:

2Co 8:23 Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper

Php 2:25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier,

Php 4:3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

Col 4:11 And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

1Th 3:2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

Phm 1:1 ¶ Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,

Phm 1:24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.

3Jo 1:8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

The principle is clearly taught in the next two passages:

Phil. 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh [energeo] in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Col 1:29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Before the flood God says, “My spirit shall not always strive with man” -- God strove with those who resisted, and with Noah, who cooperated. When Jesus wept over Jerusalem He expressed His will as: "How often would I have gathered..."; and declared man's will to be in opposition with, "**Ye would not**". Jesus was striving, but there was no synergism, only opposition.

Gospel Synergism teaches that God created man with moral responsibility in that he has the power of choice. He can disobey God or obey God. God sits as the moral governor and judge of man. God will render to every man according to his deeds. Since man fell and is under condemnation, God graciously provided a plan of salvation for "whosoever will". God has made the provision, but man is responsible to partake of that provision. God actively convicts, draws, and graciously seeks to persuade men through His Spirit, Word, and ministers; but man can resist, rebel, and obstinately choose his own destruction. Therefore, man is responsible for his rejection or acceptance of God's salvation program. If men go to hell, they are to blame. God does not command men to do things for which they have no ability, and then condemn them to hell for not obeying. Men are responsible to do all that God has commanded them to do. Responsibility can only mean they have ability. Without ability there is no responsibility, guilt, or blame before a just and holy God. The Bible clearly states concerning God's righteous judgment: Romans 2:6-16 **"God...Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;...In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."**

I have read much of monergist's materials, and am continually amazed at the twisting of words and meanings to deceive the hearts of the sincere seeker, to confuse the issue by introducing concepts foreign to Scripture, and by exalting authorities other than Scripture. The worship of academic training as the way to understanding God's

Word to common men is also amusing. They highly esteem what man highly esteems to draw away disciples after them; but miss what God highly esteems, which is holiness and humility of heart and life. Understanding God's Word is a Spiritual matter, not an academic matter. If one can read the Word of God, obey, pray and earnestly apply themselves in this, they will gain more understanding of the concepts of the Word than most college professors. Obedience is the key to understanding Scripture, not only academics. Study is important, but obedience is more important. You can gain much good from learning the Greek, the historical setting, and the Jewish Phrases; but obeying the commands will open the door for Holy Ghost illumination, which will do more to save the soul and open the concepts of Scripture to the mind than any college studies.

See Psalms 119:99-100... "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."

James 1:22 gives the simple way to avoid deception: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." If these "Scribes" and "Rabbis" would seek to obey the Word of God BEFORE they set themselves up as teachers, they would not be deceived or deceiving others.

Ac 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

When speaking to a Calvinist or Antinomian (two systems of "unconditional eternal security"), you may hear them tell you they are not "Hyper-Calvinists", but Monergism is Monergism is Monergism. Either God has chosen to create man with ability to reason and make choices of his own, or God has predestined every minute detail of man's actions and choices. Either man has something that he himself did of his own ability, or God has done it all. One man charged me with not making a proper distinction between "Hyper-Calvinism" and other Calvinists. I asked him, "According to Calvinists what did God NOT predestinate? According to Hyper Calvinists what did God NOT predestinate?" He did not answer the question, because it obviously shows there is no real difference between the two.

An example of their foolishness is as follows: They accuse Synergists of saying: "God, I give you the glory for everything, except my faith - for that is what I did, and I get the glory for it." Now, consider their shallow thinking: Say I have a wife that is so pure, honest, faithful, and wise that I have the utmost confidence in her. If I have faith in her - is that to my glory or her's? Can I boast of the faith I have in her as being to my glory? If I boasted of my faith in her it would only tend to her glory, not mine. She is the one who initiated the faith, not because she controlled me, but because she won my confidence by her conduct. Now, If you don't have faith in her, that only reveals your ignorance - you don't yet know her very well. If I, due to selfish lust and sin in my own heart, decide to reject the light I have and leave her and slander her good name - I obstinately reject the faith and praise due to her; and instead try to justify myself by slandering her character - Is this ultimately to her shame or mine? Having faith in her is my duty to one who has earned it. Having faith in her only reveals that I am rightly considering the evidence before me. This is the same with faith in God and His Word. When I have done that which is my duty to do, I am instructed to say, "I am an unprofitable servant, I have only done that which is my duty to do".

To believe God with full confidence is our duty, and anything less is trespass - because He has so fully manifested His righteousness in all that He has done and created (Romans 1:18-21). For man to boast of his faith in God, as something which would bring glory to the man, is the utmost folly. Therefore, for monergists to assert that, if "faith" was our own act, we would then boast of it, and get the glory for it, only reveals their lack of understanding. Romans 1:20 says that man is "without excuse" for not believing in God. Surely Monergism would be a good excuse! Predestination would be a good excuse! If I have free will, and God has given plenty of evidence, then I am truly without excuse for not exercising faith in Him.

Much of Monergist's terminology actually surrenders their case. While claiming Monergism, they actually teach Synergism. Toplady in his hymn "Rock of Ages" says, "nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling"; but this is Synergism. "To the cross I cling" - now is that God's doing or man's? Synergists don't believe they atone for their own sins either, but we do believe we must cling to the cross of Christ for His atonement. Just because the man doesn't have anything in his hand to bring, he, to the cross, still has power to cling.

In Philip Schaff's History of the Christian Church, while speaking of Augustine (354-430), whom many believe to be the father of Monergism, he says of Augustine's autobiography, "...in it every Christian my bewail his own

wanderings, despair of himself, throw himself unconditionally into the arms of God, and lay hold upon unmerited grace." Look at all the things that this person does: bewails his wanderings, despairs of himself, throws himself unconditionally into the arms of God, and lays hold upon unmerited grace. This is nothing but the teaching of Synergism. A Monergist would have to say, if he were honest, "God made this person bewail the wanderings that God himself predestined and caused, God made him despair of the inability God chose for him, then God made him throw himself unconditionally into the arms of Jesus, and thereby God made him feel he received grace when only he received the next step of predestination." It really isn't grace, being that God need not extend grace to himself, nor is it gracious to accept that which I myself chose and did.

Monergism robs God of His grace, longsuffering, wrath, and love: I say this because if monergistic predestination is true, then this world is a drama and God is every actor on stage. It is like a chess game and God is playing against himself. His love is to himself, He is longsuffering to himself, gracious to Himself, and angry at Himself - - This cancels out His attributes as false and hypocritical. To be patient with my own design and program is ridiculous. To be angry at what I chose and did is foolish. Hence, we see that Monergism is a myth, and Monergists don't really believe it.

WHY I CANNOT ACCEPT CALVINISM

In a sermon on "Free Grace", John Wesley charged Westminster Calvinism's doctrine of predestination with "making vain all preaching, and tending to destroy holiness, the comfort of religion and zeal for good works, yea, the whole Christian revelation by involving it in fatal contradictions...a doctrine full of blasphemy...it represents our blessed Lord as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, a man void of common sincerity, as mocking his helpless creatures by offering what he never intends to give, by saying one thing and meaning another." He said it destroys "all the attributes of God, his justice, mercy, and truth, yea, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil, as both more false, more cruel, and more unjust."

Satan has always used as his best weapon the very words of God wrested and twisted from their original purpose with added assumptions and false interpretations (false prophets). It is amazing how those so concerned with predestination and foreknowledge can be so *short-sighted*.

Satan quoted Scripture to the Lord Jesus, (Matt. 4:6 "And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.) and what he quoted was true, BUT HE QUOTED IT WITH A SUGGESTED FALSE ASSUMPTION OF WHAT JESUS COULD DO WITH IT. There is a relationship between what is SAID, and WHAT I AM SUPPOSED TO DO WITH IT — What can I assume? What can I expect? What other principles come to play here? Does this take away my responsibility, or must I exercise my will in obedience? If I fail, is it God's fault or mine?

To focus on verses that speak of what God does or knows, and then, by reasoning with my finite mind, decide that I have escaped from the responsibility God puts on man, causes one to become extremely imbalanced. I do believe in the foreknowledge, election, and predestination of the Scripture, but not as the Calvinists (SEE #8). I admit I don't know all God foreknows or how exactly he predetermines to act; but I do know what God has said about human responsibility. God will never condemn a man because he cannot figure God out (as nobody can); but God will condemn a man for not obeying the clear commands of God's Word (as everyone can). To take high and lofty concepts in the Word of God that we dare not assume the ability to thoroughly define; and then teach an unconditional eternal security is presumptuous at best.

It is easy to understand how God would, in order to obtain the "precious fruit" he is working for, create a world and free moral agents who could fall, suffer from sin, and therefore more appreciate God's righteousness and love. That it may have been a necessary step to obtain what God wanted is easy to see — if we are dealing with free moral agents whom God wants to have a love relationship with. However, if we are speaking of people without free will, then it becomes a vain and empty enterprise.

Every Bible Scholar believes that God is Sovereign, but how does this relate to Angels and men, who are represented with a freedom to obey or disobey — who are rewarded for obedience and judged for disobedience? Is God capable of sovereignly creating free moral agents over whom He is the great governor and judge? Yes, sovereign does not mean that God is the *doer* of all that is done, but that God is the *judge* and *ruler* over all as he sees fit. Is it wise scholarship to take things we can never fully comprehend or understand, and by our limited and finite reasoning, overthrow concepts that are blatant, obvious, repeated thousands of times, and inescapable — like:

- Man is responsible for his actions before a just and righteous Judge
- God's judgments are justly based on man's obedience or disobedience
- God is represented as pleased with obedience and displeased with disobedience
- Man is commanded to repent, obey, seek God, and believe God's Word
- God is represented as... desirous of man's good and salvation,
 - o ... Angry at man's refusal to submit and believe
 - o ... Saddened at man's destruction (Ez. 18, etc.)
 - o ... As calling those who won't listen (Rom. 10:21)
 - o ... As "provoking his people to jealousy" in order to save them (Romans 11:13,14 w/10:19)
 - o ... As blessing those who will listen,
 - o ... Warning those who are in danger of falling,
 - o ... Providing salvation for whosoever will...
 - o ... As merciful, patient, gracious, forgiving, etc.

All of these obvious and often repeated truths are turned into mockery, hypocrisy, and deceit by the false doctrines of Calvinism. God cannot be patient, merciful, gracious, forgiving, loving, etc. unless He is dealing with free moral agents, otherwise he is patient with himself, merciful to himself, gracious to himself, forgiving himself, loving himself, angry at himself, and punishing people for no sin of their own. This is a mockery of the basest sort. If Calvinistic interpretations be true, then it is all a show, and God is every actor on the stage — all just a drama with no other meaning than God's pleasure. O, but doesn't the Bible say it was all created for God's pleasure? Yes, but do you think so lowly of God that such a shameful show would please him? Do you perceive God as this vain and shallow? What kind of lunatic do we presume to paint God up as? One who sits and laughs at his own jokes, and cries at his own stories? Unless God indeed created man in God's own image with freedom to choose right or wrong, then God is just playing chess with himself.

It is the work of Satan to throw back on God the ultimate responsibility for Satan's fall, the angel's fall, and man's fall. Irenaeus quotes Justin Martyr as saying, "Before the advent of the Lord, Satan never ventured to blaspheme God, inasmuch as he was not yet sure of his own damnation, since that was announced concerning him by the prophets only in parables and allegories. But after the advent of the Lord, learning plainly from the discourses of Christ and His apostles that eternal fire was prepared for him who voluntarily departed from God, and for all who, without repentance, persevere in apostasy, then, by means of a man of his sort, he, as if already condemned, blasphemes that God who inflicts judgment upon him, and imputes the sin of his apostasy to his Maker, instead of to his own will and predilection." No, this man is not infallible, but the fact that early Christians believed such is quite interesting, and this is what we would expect from that subtle serpent - Satan. The early Christians had wonderful explanations about predestination and foreknowledge when combating the Gnostics and pagans who taught "fate", which is basically what Calvinism teaches. Luther himself admits that his teaching is the same as the pagan Romans, and freely quotes them to back up his doctrine. Even Luther saw the fatal contradictions in his doctrine when he says, "This is the highest degree of faith — to believe that He is merciful, the very One who saves so few and damns so many. To believe that He is just, the One who according to His own will, makes us necessarily damnable."

The claim of "proper hermeneutics" is also misleading. Let me give you an example from some antinomian notes on Romans sent to me, "'Analogy of faith' means that Scripture is to be interpreted in light of Scripture and in accord with Scripture. The infallible rule of the interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself. Any verse must be understood in light of the overall teaching of the Bible and it cannot contradict what the Bible clearly teaches elsewhere. The Bible cannot contradict itself." So far we all say, "AMEN"; but now let's see where this man goes with it, "Example: Hebrews 10:26-30 at first glance may appear to teach that a true believer can lose his salvation, but by analogy of Scripture we know that his cannot be so (John 10:27-30; John 6:37-40; etc.)." Now, do you see how we could turn around and use the same "good" rule for the opposite side? We could say that, "At first glance John 10:27-30 and John 6:37-40 may appear to teach unconditional eternal security, but by analogy of Scripture we know that this cannot be so (Hebrews 10:26-30; Romans 11:22; etc.)." So much for "proper hermeneutics".

In light of our present discussion, I'm going to paste some points made on another occasion:

SOME ISSUES THAT CALVINISTS NEED TO PONDER:

1. Explain "man not having free-will", and "God's will always being done" in the light of the following passage: Mt 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

1. --Is Jesus being honest? Would he have gathered them if they were willing?
2. --Was it the will of God that they be willing or unwilling?
3. --Did they have power to exercise their will contrary to God's will?

2. Explain Proverbs 23:13,14 in the light of unconditional predestination:

13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. 14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell

--Does child discipline really have anything to do with whether or not your child goes to hell?

--What is the use of child rearing, evangelism, and prayer, preaching, etc. if it all is unconditionally predestined one way or another, and man is passive in it?

3. Look up all the times God instructed the Children of Israel concerning "free-will" offerings, and tell us how this could be. Was this mockery? Is every command to obey, submit, repent, believe, etc. mockery? In the light of Calvinistic predestination, how is it not mockery?

4. Explain Calvinistic predestination and "sovereignty" in the light of Genesis 6:5-7

" And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. "

- How could God repent of His own Sovereign will?
- How could God be displeased, if everthing was going according to plan?
- Didn't God know exactly what would happen, and how?
- Did God's Spirit striving with men not have the desired effect? (Gen. 6:3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man,)

5. Does it do any good for us to pray? What about the "LORD's prayer" Lu 11:2 " And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."

- --Is God's will done in earth as it is in heaven?
- --Why do we pray for his will to be done in earth as it is in heaven?

6. Is God a "respector of persons"? The Bible says, NO; but unconditional predestination & election; limited atonement, etc. says that God is a respector of persons - He chooses some men, and rejects others without any regard to their actions, but simply His choosing of their persons. How can you explain Calvinism in light of this?

ROMANS 2:5-11 "...the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God."

Col 3:25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

1Pe 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

7. Consider the following verses:

- Joel 2:13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

- Jonah 3:10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Two very important things need to be seen here:

1. Calvinists say God created “evil”; but it must be understood that “evil” often and usually means “harm” — “natural evil”, not “moral evil”. These two verses are an example. God brings harm upon people in righteous judgment. This is not SIN or WICKEDNESS, but righteous judgment, because He is the judge and Lord of the earth.

2. The Lord is represented as acting in relation to man’s choices. Are we to believe this? Is this just part of the false drama? We may not understand how God’s foreknowledge fits here, but what we cannot understand CANNOT BE USED to destroy the clear and plain revelation of God’s Word. Was Joel’s message true? Did it depend on the people? Verses such as these could be multiplied by the hundreds where God puts the responsibility on man and claims to act according to man’s choices. I believe God is being truthful with us, and is not just playing chess with himself.

8. The Bible says clearly that a man may indeed PERISH for whom Christ died:

Romans 14:15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. **Destroy** not him with thy meat, **for whom Christ died.**

Adam Clarke “From this verse we learn that a man for whom Christ died may perish, or have his soul destroyed; and destroyed with such a destruction as implies perdition; the original is very emphatic, mh-ekainon apollue, uper ou cristov apeyane. Christ died in his stead; do not destroy his soul. The sacrificial death is as strongly expressed as it can be, and there is no word in the New Testament that more forcibly implies eternal ruin than the verb apolluw, from which is derived that most significant name of the Devil, o apolluwn, the DESTROYER, the great universal murderer of souls.

Vine’s Apollumi: signifies to destroy utterly — to perish, same word used in JOHN 3:16 &

I Cor. 8:11 “But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak **brother perish**, for whom **Christ died?**

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

Just listen to what the Bible is clearly saying! One may indeed perish for whom Christ died -- One who was a brother and on the narrow road before you made him stumble -- thus Calvinism falls flat.

ANTINOMIANS -- MODERN BAPTISTS

Antinomians also mix up the Divine Side and the Human Side of salvation. Antinomian is a name that means, "without law", or "anti-law"; due to the fact they believe "dead faith" (James 2) will save a man without his obedience to Christ -- the "Law of Christ". They believe that grace means we do not have to obey God’s moral laws. Rather than delivering us from sin, they think grace delivers us from the need to obey God’s Law. I was raised with this teaching. If you asked someone from my boyhood church, "Must one strive to live in obedience to Jesus to be saved?"; the quick answer would have been, "No, salvation is by grace". This is the turning of God’s Grace into lasciviousness.

They teach that when a person accepts Christ as Savior, his future sins are all forgiven, and he can never be held accountable for them. They are "under the blood". They believe that one act of faith (receiving Christ) will perpetually justify them -- without ever having to live in obedience. Instead of believing that "I am justified today because of today’s obedient faith (which is true -- I John 1:7,9); they teach, "I am justified today, whether living in rebellion or not, because of an act of faith ten or twenty years ago when I 'got saved'."

They basically teach that God will do his part without me doing my part. From this point, they change repentance to only a change of mind, or turning from unbelief; but not a change of life to obedience from disobedience. They make no distinction between ignorant sin, and presumptuous sin. They teach that you get saved now, and later you become a disciple - when you decide to get obedient; but this doesn’t affect salvation -- only rewards. They teach that Jesus’ good works are imputed to us, so we don’t need any of our own -- mishandling of Romans 4. They

teach "rebellious believers" are taken to Heaven early as "punishment" - mishandling of I Corinthians 11. They abuse Romans 7 by making it the experience of a believer and many other heretical ideas, which are refuted in this publication, and in the TRUTH VS. ERROR section.

In every case the Calvinist and the Antinomian has to preach Arminian doctrine if they want to tell sinners and saints what **God has told us to tell them**. It is hard for an Antinomian to get through I John and James; because they were aimed directly at their Antinomian Gnostic forefathers. The Gnostics concluded, as do modern Antinomians, that our "spiritual position in Christ" is not affected by our physical performance (obedience or rebellion). John wrote against them by saying, *"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."*

The Bible says I am to walk in the light so that my sins are continually cleansed in the blood of Jesus (I John 1:7). As I walk by this "faith which worketh by love"; and Jesus' blood cleanses me; I am counted righteous before God -- my living obeying faith is counted for righteousness. I read God's Word and pray to gain strength for the battle. Calling upon the name of the Lord and confessing sin is the course of walking with God that brings the promise that I shall not be ashamed or confounded. In obedient faith I endure to the end-- thus dying in faith I overcome and lay hold on eternal life. This is called "passing the time of my sojourning here in fear" and "working out my own salvation with fear and trembling". NO, I don't boast in doing my duty, but after I have done all those things commanded me, I say, "I am an unprofitable servant, I've only done that which was my duty to do".

Being that God has placed conditions on his forgiveness and the atonement; and, being that God has put the responsibility on man to meet those conditions; it is thus possible for men to lose their inheritance in the kingdom by turning back to rebellion and unbelief. We are not justified by one act of faith; but continuously justified by continuous faith. Therefore, when our living faith stops or becomes dead faith our justification stops. If God can't get us to repent and go on in the light, we will eventually die spiritually and be condemned. I Cor. 11 tells us that God chastens us so we won't be condemned with the world. **MEETING GOD'S CONDITIONS IS MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY**. The prize of eternal life is through a strait gate and at the end of a narrow way of righteousness.

EVANGELISM

One great danger that I see is when people do not tell the sinner what his part is; but only tell them what God's part is -- as though God will do his part, whether they do theirs or not. Listen! There is no promise of forgiveness to the disobedient! There is no promise of Jesus' continually cleansing blood for those who walk in darkness! There is no promise of inheritance to those who do not overcome! There is no promise of salvation to dead faith or false repentance!

If you tell sinners God loves them and will forgive them if they admit they are sinners and ask for God's free gift of eternal life; yet you do not tell them God demands they forsake their sin and submit to Jesus in faith and obedience as Lord and King; then you are leaving them with the impression that dead faith will save them -- it won't! People will readily admit they are not perfect, and have sinned; yet not be willing to forsake their sinful way, and submit to Jesus as their Lord and Savior. It is **POISONED CANDY** to tell sinners all the wonderful promises of God in salvation, and then imply he will do all of this without their repentance and submission to Christ in faith and obedience! Salvation is by grace, and absolutely free; but God will not give this free gift to those who are still in rebellion to him. God will not forgive those who do not accept Jesus as King and therefore submit to him in faith and obedience.

God is the rightful King and ruler of all men. Man has joined Satan in rebellion to God, and brought upon themselves the same sentence of banishment. They are counted enemies of God's righteous government. However, God, by his infinite love and grace gives his Son, the heir to the throne, to suffer the punishment of all the rebels.

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.
II Sam. 14:14

Since Jesus has paid the debt, God can righteously forgive and restore his banished to him again -- but wait!! They left by choice in rebellion to his government. What if they do not want to come back? Will the King grant them amnesty and justify them while they remain in rebellion to him? Will the King restore them to full citizenship while they remain enemies of his Kingdom? Will the King pour out his love upon them while they are saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us"? No! If he did, he would be committing a crime against righteousness and his other faithful subjects. There will be no rebels in Christ's Kingdom. God will only forgive and save the

broken, humble, submissive, repenting sinner. God is not saving us from His law and government; but will save those who wish to come back to live under His law and government.

HUMAN AND DIVINE ASPECT IN THE NEW HEART

I was witnessing to a young man one time who told me he didn't think he could be saved. He said he had tried it many times, yet it never worked for him. Basically, what happened is that he had the impression many preachers give: that if I pray "the prayer", God will give me a new heart and change me whether I do anything or not. It never worked for him.

I explained to him that God commands us to turn from sin and follow Jesus in obedience, trusting that God will then do his part. God is not going to repent for us! When I was converted, I went home and broke up my records and tapes, and began to follow Jesus. I can look back and say, "Jesus completely changed my life". However, Jesus didn't tear up my tapes and records, change my dress, change my friends, and bad habits -- I did! As I obeyed his command, He worked in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God gave me a new heart; but on the other hand, I made me a new heart -- look at the Scripture in **Ez. 18:30-32**,

Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Here we see God telling the people to make themselves a new heart. In Ez. 36:26 God tells them HE will give them a new heart and spirit. Then, in verse 37 God says, "**I will yet be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them;**" God promises the new heart, but we must go after it by prayer and repentance and self discipline.

Romans 12 commands us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Thus, it is our responsibility! Just because God promises grace to help, doesn't mean it is his responsibility. To say we can't do as we have been commanded is childish rebellion.

In Jude it says we are "preserved" in Christ Jesus. Then in verse 12 we are commanded to "keep" ourselves in the love of God. The Greek word behind "preserve" and "keep" is the same word. It is our responsibility to "keep" ourselves "in" Christ so we can be thus "preserved". We are preserved in Christ the same way we are preserved by walking in the light or coming to the throne of grace to find help. God makes the provision and we are preserved as we meet the conditions. Notice how John says we are preserved:

Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. I John 2:24-25

God says He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; and also, He would have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth; however, God's will is obviously not being done, because God has chosen to let man make his own choices! God is doing all He can justly do to save man; but has chosen to leave the responsibility with man to respond. If God could save men against their will without violating his own justice, He would; but God has chosen not to -- He doesn't want robots! If God's grace was irresistible, as Calvin taught, then all men would be saved, because that is what God wants. If God made some get saved and not others then he would be deceitful to say he wants all to be saved. You see, God uses his great influence on man, but this is not irresistible; and is only used negatively (II Thess. 2:11,12) after man has refused God's positive influence and mercy in trying to get them to repent.

The only two foundations possible for the unconditional security doctrine is 1. God is willing to override man's free choice and insure he continues in the light, so his sins are continually cleansed. Or, 2. Man is justified perpetually by one act of faith, so his future sins are forgiven at the moment he believes, therefore he doesn't need to continue in the light. Both of these possibilities are unbiblical heresy. God's condition's are clear, and clearly our responsibility -- real life proves this so. These people who believe that God will keep them preserved in Christ without their efforts are clearly not now being preserved this way in holiness and obedience! So, they wish us to believe that God can keep them saved, but He can't keep them spiritual? Yes, and I have some lake property in Cuba for sale, too. GOD'S PART IS PROVISION, AND PERSUASION -- OUR PART IS REPENTANCE AND LIVING OBEYING FAITH.

In the beginning, He made the human race with the power of thought and of choosing the truth and doing right, so that all men are without excuse before God. Justin Martyr 160 AD

CHAPTER 3

CONVICTION

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. Is. 58:1

The Greek word for conviction, used by God in the following verses, is more than just a feeling of guilt, or a personal belief or standard. The Greek word *Elegcho* means to show someone their sin -- prove guilty. It means to convict in the legal sense, like an attorney before a jury. It is used in the same sense as being convicted of a crime -- prove guilty and summon to repentance.

The underlined and bold phrases or words are the English translation of the Greek *Elegcho*

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and **tell him his fault** between thee and him alone... Matt. 18:15

And they which heard it, being **convicted** by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. John 8:9

Which of you **convinceth** me of sin? John 8:46

And when he is come, he will **reprove** the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: John 16:8

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to **convince** the gainsayers. Titus 1:9

But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is **convinced** of all, he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. I Cor. 14:24

But Herod the tetrarch, being **reproved** by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done... Luke 3:19

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be **reproved**. John 3:20

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather **reprove** them. Eph. 5:11,13

Them that sin **rebuke** before all, that others also may fear. I Tim. 5:20

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; **reprove**, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 2 Tim. 4:2

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and **rebuke** with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Titus 2:14,15

This witness is true, Wherefore **rebuke** them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Titus 1:13

...despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art **rebuked** of him: Heb. 12:5b

As many as I love, **I rebuke** and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Rev. 3:19

There is another Greek word used for "rebuke"; but it is a softer, less effective rebuke -- *Epitimao*. The Greek word *elegcho* is successful and effectual because it supplies the evidence to prove the case.

PREACHERS MUST CONVICT

Preachers and soul-winners must convict (*elegcho*) in order to bring repentance and change in a person's life. You say, "The Holy Spirit is supposed to do that". The Holy Spirit will convict; but usually works through human vessels. Read the verses again. The light of your example, of Scripture, of printed preaching, of verbal testimony, etc. is used by the Holy Spirit to convict. He commands us to do our part.

Without true conviction, there can be no true conversion! The preacher must use evidence to prove the case. He must shatter all the excuses and hiding places where sinners hide and justify their way. This is not a fun job, and is the very reason Jesus and the apostles and all great preachers and prophets have been hated of men. When the woman of Samaria asked Jesus for the living water, he immediately changed the subject to deal with her sinful life, and need of repentance. When Jesus comes again in judgment, he will be doing this very work, not to salvation, but to damnation:

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Jude 15

The word CONVINCE in this verse is an intense form of elegcho. If we can convince men of their ungodly deeds before the judgment, persuade them to repent, and submit to Jesus; we can save them from Hell! Unbelief and faith are acts of the will, not only of the intellect. Sinners are in rebellion to God, whether they fully realize it or not. They must be told, warned, and summoned to repentance. We will never see true revival and repentance until we pray and work for CONVICTION!

CHAPTER 4

REPENTANCE

There are some subtle lies being taught about repentance. This is also covered in our TRUTH VS. ERROR book. Jack Hyles teaches that repentance is not from **sins**, but just from **unbelief** -- this is subtle and dangerous. It is quite convenient for him with his "easy believe" soulwinning program. I went to his college and could tell a few stories about this nonsense.

Curtis Hutson taught that repentance was just a **change of mind**, but not a **change of life**. This is foolishness also. Others say that repentance is, indeed, a change of mind and life; but then they don't change! It is all just talk and concept! They never **require** the fruit meet for repentance; never exercise church discipline; nor even expect their preachers to meet Bible qualifications. **WHAT YOU LIVE IS WHAT YOU BELIEVE!** Jesus' major complaint against the Pharisees was that, **"they say, and do not"**.

Hebrews 5:9 says Jesus is the **"author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"**. Where does this leave those who don't obey him? Jesus says, **"If a man keep my sayings he shall never see death."** What about those who don't keep his sayings? You cannot continue down the broad road, and expect to be saved as one on the narrow road -- there must be a U-turn somewhere -- this U-turn is called repentance!

People will easily admit they have done wrong, and are not perfect, and usually will pray a little prayer asking God for his free gift (Jack Hyles' soulwinning program); but if you confront them with the necessity of giving up the old lifestyle and following the teachings of Jesus Christ, they will slam the door in your face!

METANOEO (met-an-o-eh'-o) VS. METAMELLOMAI (met-am-el'-lom-ahee)

The word used in the New Testament for repentance when referring to salvation is always metaneo. Metamellomai is used for repentance when someone changes their mind in regret, but not necessarily because they see the former direction as wicked; but usually because of the outcome. Metamellomai is what Judas did before he hanged himself. It is what God would not do in Heb. 7:21. It is what Paul did in 2 Cor. 7:8; but it is not used in commanding men to repent for salvation. When God is said to repent, he has changed his mind because of mercy -- not because what he was doing was sinful.

Metaneo is changing the heart and mind because of the sinfulness of the way -- to reconsider. It is illustrated in Ez. 36:22-37 as God tells what New Testament repentance would be like.

Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.

The Bible evidence of repentance is **"works meet for repentance"** -- faithful obedience to Christ. We are not to imply that the sinner clean up by himself and then come to Christ for salvation; but that, in a moment, he let go of the sinful way, turn to the Savior, and begin to walk in the light he has: willingly obeying new light and forsaking newly realized error as he grows. He does not become immediately mature and perfect, but instead of practicing sin in disobedience; he now is declaring war on his old habits, and practicing obedience to the best of his ability through Christ!

Repentance, then, is the result of faith. For unless a man believes that to which he was addicted to be sin, he will not abandon it. And he must believe that punishment looms over the transgressor. He must believe that salvation belongs to the one who lives according to the commandments. Otherwise, he will not reform. Clement 195 AD

We were not created to die. Rather, we die by our own fault. Our free will has destroyed us. We who were free have become slaves. We have been sold through sin. Nothing evil has been created by God. We ourselves have manifested wickedness. But we, who have manifested it, are able again to reject it. Tatian 160 AD

CHAPTER 5

SAVED AND BORN AGAIN

Am I saved when I am born again, or am I born again so that I will be saved? You thought they were the same event; however, if you want to understand many Bible passages correctly, you must understand the difference.

The term "born again" speaks of the moment I repent, believe, and receive the Holy Spirit. The term born again speaks of "regeneration". It is the starting line of my life in Christ. The term "saved" is quite different. I enter the salvation state at conversion (when I am born again); but I am not actually "saved" until I finish my course, and have kept the faith. I must "die in faith" to be sure of being "saved". "Saved" refers to being ultimately saved into Christ's Kingdom; however we are also called saved when we have entered the process at conversion.

Jesus said salvation was through a strait gate and at the other end of a narrow way:

Matt. 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

It is obvious to the sincere seeker of truth that LIFE is at the end of the narrow way, not at the entrance. Though once through the gate you are "saved" from the broad road, you are not completely SAVED until you finish the course.

1. Verses where "saved" is used for those who are converted, but still on earth.

I Cor. 1:18, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

2 Tim. 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling,...

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...

2. Verses where being "saved" refers to ultimate salvation.

Romans 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Romans 5:9,10 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Romans 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

I Peter 1:9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

I Tim. 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Acts 15:11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

MANY OTHER VERSES: Rom. 8:24; I Peter 1:5; Heb. 1:14; 2 Tim. 3:15; I Thess. 5:8,9; II Thess. 2:13; Heb. 9:28; Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Luke 13:23; Acts 2:21; I Cor. 3:15; 5:5; 15:2; I Peter 4:18; Heb. 10:39, and others.

If you will study carefully, you will realize we are to believe to the end to be saved ultimately; follow and obey to the end to be saved ultimately; and overcome to be saved ultimately. Heb. 11:13 speaks of those who "died in faith", this is our goal!

The reason I call myself saved when I am converted or born again; is because I am in the salvation state -- I am on the narrow way. If I die in faith, I am sure to be saved. Romans 8:24 says we are saved by hope; but we don't yet see what we hope for.

CHAPTER 6

FIRST CENTURY BAPTISM

In the New Testament it seems that only those old enough to believe in Christ of their own intelligent choice and be instructed in the faith were baptized after they repented of their sins and professed faith in Christ. This is called "believers' baptism". Some have put forth strong arguments for infant baptism replacing circumcision; however, this would have been an easy argument for Paul to use against Gentiles circumcising their children if it was true -- He never used it.

The Jewish Christians practiced Christian Baptism AND Jewish Circumcision (Acts 21); which proves that one did not replace the other. For the first twelve years after Pentecost only circumcised Jews could be baptized. This could possibly include children when the parents embraced Christ; or, as a Jewish youth at twelve or thirteen had their first Passover, children of Christian parents might be baptized at that time when old enough to learn and embrace the faith. Children were considered "clean" or "set apart" to God by having at least one Christian parent, not by being baptized as a baby (1Co 7).

In the Bible, baptism was initiation as a follower of Jesus Christ, as well as a rite of ceremonial cleansing. It pictured the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, washing of regeneration, death to the old life, and resurrection to new life, and the putting on of Christ Jesus. It was initiation as a disciple of Jesus Christ and entrance into the visible church and communion.

In the Bible people were baptized after they were taught the Gospel message and professed faith enough to become a disciple of Jesus -- thus enrolling themselves in "learning to observe all things Jesus commanded" (Matt. 28:18-21). Some were baptized and later proved to be false professors. This makes it clear that the water doesn't save, but is our act of faith to trigger God's promised blessings to those who believe. Baptism is not essential to salvation, but willingness and desire to be baptized is essential to salvation. You may not be able to, but you'd better do your best to obey.

The apostles never counted a convert that wasn't baptized. They never declared anyone a believer who delayed baptism. They didn't coax their converts into baptism, but commanded them to be baptized, just like they had commanded them to repent in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins. Many modern Baptist preachers have an actual program whereby they coax people into the baptistery -- I have the books. This is a perversion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The reason they have to do this is because their false repentance and easy believism has not produced a true convert.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

If you will carefully compare verses, you will see that the baptism of the Holy Ghost happens when we believe, and typically when we are baptized with water. We are baptized *with* water in faith of God's promised forgiveness and baptism *with* the Holy Spirit. Baptism without true faith is meaningless; but faith without obedience in baptism is also dead -- God's plan is for us to show our faith by obedience. Follow closely in these verses:

1. Mt 3:11 John came commanding men to repent and show it by being baptized *with* water. John told the people Jesus was coming after and would baptize *with* the Holy Spirit -- which was promised by God in the Old Testament.

2. Jesus told his disciples that AFTER HE LEFT, he would send the Holy Spirit to dwell IN them, not just *with* them. (Jn 14:16,17; 15:26,27; 16:7,8; Lk 24:49; Ac 1:4-8; 2:32,33; 15:7,8)

God promised the indwelling Holy Spirit as a NEW COVENANT in the Old Testament; therefore we find Jesus speaking of it as the "promise of the Father". Jesus received this promise from the Father after he resurrected and ascended -- Jn 16:7; Ac 2:32, 33:

Ac 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

3. In **John 20:22** Jesus instructs his disciples about receiving the Holy Spirit, and what would happen after they received him; but they didn't receive him at this time. Jesus made it clear the Holy Spirit would be sent *after* he departed -- Ac 1:4 "Which ye have heard of me" (Ac 2:33). What happened on Pentecost is what John the Baptist was speaking of; what Jesus had told the disciples about; what the Father had promised; and is equal to the power in Lk 24:49 and Acts 1:8 (Note: Ac 2:33 & 15:7,8)

4. **Acts 2:14-17:** Peter tells the people that what they see is what God promised in the Old Testament (the New Covenant). In Ac 2:38 Peter tells them how to get it!

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

5. Acts 10:43-48: In order to show Peter that God would receive these Gentiles, God gives them the Holy Spirit *before* they are baptized. You can see this was a surprise by Peter's statements in 10:47 and 11:15-17. Cornelius received the *same* gift, when he believed, that the apostles did on Pentecost.

6. If you will compare Ac 15:7-9 with Rom 8:9,15,16 and I John 4:13; you will understand that the Holy Spirit is given as the **seal** of God's acceptance. In Eph 1:14, 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; and Romans 8:23, the word EARNEST tells us that the Holy Spirit is our pledge from God that He has accepted our repentance. Rom 8:9 tells us that those without this indwelling Holy Spirit are not born again. Those who repent and believe show it by baptism -- when God sees sincere faith and repentance, He pours out the Holy Spirit upon the believer to indwell and regenerate him. This is our comfort after our mourning (repentance), our assurance of forgiveness, and the BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. He gives us the present help to overcome and endure in obedience to Christ. See John 4:10; 7:38, 39.

7. Acts 19:1-6 When these people told Paul they had not yet received the Holy Spirit, he immediately asked them, "UNTO WHAT THEN WERE YE BAPTIZED?" This shows that Paul saw baptism with water in close relation to baptism with the Holy Spirit. "If you were not baptized in Jesus' name to receive the Holy Spirit, unto what then were you baptized-- or for what purpose?" He then re-baptized them in Jesus' name so they could receive the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals like to misuse the question Paul asked here, but they don't re-baptize like Paul did. These people were Jews, and that is why they had the sign of tongues.

The case in Acts 8:15 is similar to Cornelius', in that it was not considered "standard procedure" at the time of the writing. I believe God opened the doors of the New Covenant to Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world by the Apostles hands; thus establishing their authority. This is seen by Pentecost (Ac 2:14); Samaria - six years later (Ac 8:14-17), and Cornelius - twelve years later (Ac 10; 11:15-18).

8. Those who erroneously teach that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit has to be evidenced by the "speaking in tongues" overlook some important points:

- A. I Cor. 14:21 makes it clear that "tongues" were for a sign to Israel -- It fulfilled O.T. Prophecy.
- B. I Cor. 12:29, 30 makes it clear not all believers speak with tongues, so it can't be evidence of salvation.
- C. Bible "tongues" are natural languages -- Ac 2; and I Cor. 14:10.
- D. What happened at Corinth was not of the Holy Spirit, or Paul would not have had to straighten it out, set down regulations, and rebuke those doing it!

Much more could be said, but it will be covered in later publications.

Mode of Water Baptism

The following notes reveal the reasons of my change of mind from a strong immersionist to the practice of pouring. I set out to prove the affusionists wrong; but discovered the evidence was on their side. I am very aware of the history of immersion having been raised a Baptist and studying the subject thoroughly.

What is Baptism?

- It is "ritual washing" as opposed to "actual washing"
- It is "ceremonial cleansing" as opposed to "actual cleansing"
- It is "symbolic purification" as opposed to "actual purification"

Actual purification is by the blood of Christ and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit

Titus 3:5-6 "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**; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;"

John 1:19-27 The Jews expected the coming Christ or Elijah to Baptize

1:19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? 23 He said, I am the voice of one

crying in the wilderness, *Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.* 24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, **Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?** 26 John answered them, saying, **I baptize with water:** but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

Compare with Mt 3:11 *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:*

Baptism was not a new concept to the Jews – they saw it as a rite of purification

Messiah would baptize – where did thy get this idea?

Mal 3:1 *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.* 2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: **and he shall purify the sons of Levi,** and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

Isa 32:15 *Until the **spirit be poured upon us from on high,** and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.* 16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. 17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.

Isa 44:3 *For I will **pour water upon him that is thirsty,** and floods upon the dry ground: I will **pour my spirit upon thy seed,** and my blessing upon thine offspring:*

Isa 52:13-15 *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.* 14 As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: 15 So shall he **sprinkle many nations;** the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

- This is where the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading when he met Phillip.
- When was this fulfilled? How?

Joel 2:28 *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my spirit** upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:* 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I **pour out my spirit.**

Ez 36:24 *For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.* Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean:** from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

- **When and how was this fulfilled?**

Ez 39:29 *Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have **poured out my spirit** upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.*

The Jews understood that baptism was Ceremonial cleansing and purification.

John 3:25 “purifying”

“Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about **purifying.** 26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same **baptizeth,** and all men come to him. 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

Compare Jn. 2:6 “manner of purifying”

“And there were set there six waterpots of stone, **after the manner of the purifying of the Jews,**”

- This is how the Jews washed and bathed (2 Sam 11:2)

2 Kings 3:11 *But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which **poured water on the hands of Elijah.***

- They didn't immerse their hands or they would have fouled the water.

Compare Luke 11:37-38

11:37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. 38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

- **“did not baptize himself”** in the Greek the word is **“baptizo”**
- **Do they foul their water supply by immersion? or do they pour water over their hands?**

Mk 7:4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

- **“unless they baptize”** again it is **“baptizo”**

Mk 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

Mk 7:4,8 **“washing”** **“baptismos”**

So, the Bible defines “Baptizo” as “washing”, and a rite of purification well known to the Jews, who did this by pouring water over the object – thus it was baptized WITH water, not IN water.

1. Jesus' Baptism – Not for repentance, but for ordination and anointing as Prophet, Priest, and King

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. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Compare: Lk 20:1 And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders, 2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? 3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: 4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? 5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? 6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. 7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. 8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

John's Baptism of Jesus was Jesus' earthly anointing and authority to minister as He did.

- He was 30 yrs. old – the age of a priest at his anointing
- John was the son of a priest, and of the priestly line.
- Daniel 9:4 “anointing of the most high” dates to Christ's baptism

How was this done?

Ex 29:4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water. 5 And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: 6 And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. 7 Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him.

- **Washed and anointed**

Lev 8:4 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 5 And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done. 6 And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. 7 And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith. 8 And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim. 9 And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses. **10 And**

Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. 11 And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them. 12 And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.

The washing was done at the door of the tabernacle in the audience of the people – most likely wasn't the whole body, but a ceremonial washing – like baptism. It was probably done similar to the cleansing of the Levites:

Nu 8:5 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. 7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.*

Ex 30:17 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 18 Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. 19 For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: 20 When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: 21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.*

They would not immerse the dirty hands or feet into the laver and foul all the water, but have someone dip the water and pour it on their hands and feet (see above 2 Kings 3:11)

Examples of ceremonial washing by sprinkling

Nu 8:5 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. 7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.*

Nu 19:18 *And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave:*

Psalms 51:7 *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

This hyssop was dipped in the water and used to sprinkle the unclean – it was considered as a ceremonial “washing”.

Heb 9:13 *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:*

John baptized with water, but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost

What Mode did Jesus use? What did the water baptism signify?

- **Ac 1:4-8** Baptized with water -- Baptized with Holy Spirit – the little Greek word “en” must be translated consistent with **both** “water” and “Holy Spirit” baptism for they are a parallel; and we know without doubt what the mode was in Spirit Baptism.
- “Holy Spirit is **come upon** you”
- Tit 3:5 “washing...and...Holy Ghost...**shed on us**”
- Ac 2:1-4; 16-18 “**sat upon**” “**pour out upon you**”
- Ac 2:33-38 “**shed forth**” “be baptized...and ye shall receive the...Holy Ghost”
- Ac 8:16 “As yet he was **fallen upon** none of them”
- Ac 10:37,38; 44-47; “God **anointed** Jesus”, “**fell on**”, “**poured out**”
 - “forbid water... being brought in to baptize”
- Ac 11:15,16 “**fell on**” “baptized **with** water...baptize **with** Holy Ghost”

Peter was reminded of John's words, John's baptism, and the Pentecostal outpouring when he saw the Holy Spirit poured out upon Cornelius and his friends.

- Ac 19:2-6 “unto what then were ye baptized?” “...if you weren't baptized to receive the Holy Spirit, unto what then were you baptized?”

The parallel is inescapable!

What did the water baptism of John signify?

- Pouring out of the Holy Spirit

What mode did Jesus use to Baptize with the Holy Spirit?

- Pouring

Jesus was the Christ (anointed one) – when was his anointing?

- At His Baptism Lk 4:18; Ac 10:37,38

We are called Christians (little anointed ones) (I Jn 2:27) - When is our anointing?

- At our Baptism

Why would the mode of “baptized *with* Water” be different than “baptized *with* Holy Spirit” when water baptism was to signify and parallel Spirit baptism?

We are baptized to signify the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all believers as the earnest of our inheritance.

We are identifying with Christ’s life, teaching, suffering, crucifixion, and burial in faith of being resurrected with HIM.

Some additional thoughts:

- “**Baptizo**” is a word that deals with RESULT, not MODE: Like the word “paint” or “wet” or “wash” -- these words deal with result, not mode.
- In Extra Biblical Greek literature when this word is used, we are told that the element is always moved and put on the object. The object is not dipped into the element

Baptism in the name of a person is identification as a disciple of that person’s teaching and example.

- **1Co 10:2** *And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*
 - They had come under Moses’ leadership and teaching.
 - What was the mode? Sprinkling and pouring – only the Egyptians were immersed.

Same with **1 Pe 3:20-21** Those in the ark were separated from the old life by water pouring over them and washing the world away. Only the wicked were immersed, not Noah.

Baptism as a disciple of Christ is identification with His life, teaching, stand, rejection, crucifixion, death, and burial, in faith that we will then also share in his resurrection and glory!

- See Rom 6:1-11; Col 2:11-13; Gal 3:27 & 5:24; I Cor 1:13; 10:2 & 12:13
 - Water baptism pictures being baptized with the Holy Spirit
 - The mode of Spirit baptism is pouring...
 - ...But the RESULT of Spirit baptism is:
 - Crucifixion with Christ to the world and flesh (Gal 2:20 & 6:14)
 - Washing of regeneration
 - Circumcision of the heart – “made without hands” (Col 2)
 - Entering into Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection
 - Being placed into the body of Christ (I Cor 12:13)
 - Putting on Christ (Gal 3:27)

“**Buried with Him by baptism into death**” has led many to use immersion as a mode of baptism; and this idea is possibly where immersion came into use as a mode. It doesn’t seem to be the original mode used by the apostles, which was *before* they understood Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, as we have demonstrated. All early Christian art shows baptism by pouring. Jesus was not “**buried into death**”, but **crucified**. In our baptism we are “putting on Christ” (Gal 3:27) in **every aspect** of his **life** and **death** (Gal 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Phil 2:5-8; Heb 13:12, 13)

Jewish burial was not in the ground, but in a tomb. Greek and Roman burial was by cremation. Being immersed in water does not picture Jesus’ burial any more than pouring water on someone. When we bury people, we do it by

pouring dirt over them, not immersing them in the dirt; but this is useless arguing, for the Jews did neither. They entombed, which is what “buried” means in the Bible. The preparation for burial or entombing was **pouring** oil – **anointing the body** with oil and spices with cloth to mummify. This is interesting in light of the following verses.

Mt 26:12 *For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.*

Mk 14:3 *“...there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head... 8. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.”*

Joh 12:7 *Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.*

Joh 19:39 *And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. 40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.*

Water baptism did not symbolize “death, burial, and resurrection”; but Spirit baptism RESULTED in regeneration, which **was** a death, burial, and resurrection to new life. The **MODE** of Spirit baptism was pouring, the result was spiritual regeneration. To say we, in our baptism, *put on Christ*, is correct; to say we were *crucified with Christ* is correct; to say we *died with Christ* is correct; to say our *old life is buried, and now we walk in newness of life through his resurrection* is correct; to say we were *circumcised in heart at baptism* is correct; but the **mode** of water baptism doesn’t have to **picture** all these, as it pictures the reception of the agent (The Holy Spirit), which **produces** all these.

The first time in history we find immersion used as the mode of baptism it is **not** to picture the death, burial, and resurrection, but as *a religious Gentile bath*. It was trine immersion forward (unclothed), accompanied by the “sign of the cross”, “anointing with oil”, “blessing the water”, and other superstitious rites.

Constantinople I 381, 2nd Ecumenical Council

*Those who from heresy turn to orthodoxy, and to the portion of those who are being saved, we receive according to the following method and custom: Arians, and Macedonians, and Sabbatians, and Novatians, who call themselves Cathari or Aristori, and Quarto-decimans or Tetradites, and Apollinarians, we receive, upon their giving a written renunciation [of their errors] and anathematize every heresy which is not in accordance with the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of God. Thereupon, they are first sealed or anointed with the holy oil upon the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, and ears; and when we seal them, we say, The Seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost. **But Eunomians, who are baptized with only one immersion**, and Montanists, who are here called Phrygians, and Sabellians, who teach the identity of Father and Son, and do sundry other mischievous things, and [the partisans of] all other heresies—for there are many such here, particularly among those who come from the country of the Galatians:— all these, when they desire to turn to orthodoxy, we receive as heathen. On the first day we make them Christians; on the second, catechumens; on the third, we exorcise them by breathing thrice in their face and ears; and thus we instruct them and oblige them to spend some time in the Church, and to hear the Scriptures; and then we baptize them. (Canon 5)*

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE): Trine (Triune) Immersion

Eunomius (circa 360) introduced single immersion “into the death of Christ.” This innovation was condemned. Apostolical Constitutions, 50, says, “If any presbyter or bishop does not perform the one initiation with three immersions, but with giving one immersion only into the death of the Lord, let him be deposed.” Single immersion was allowed by Gregory the Great (circa 691) to the church in Spain in opposition to the Arians who used a trine (not triune) immersion (Epis., i. 43). This was exceptional.

I would accept those with believers baptism, even if by immersion, because **MODE** is not the most important issue, but the application of water in Jesus’ name to a **truly repentant believer**. Continuing in this repentant, obeying, faith is even more vital to the salvation of the soul. If one understands immersion as a **whelming with water**, rather than a **dipping into water**, then the symbolism is not totally lost.

CHAPTER 7

CONFRONTATIONAL EVANGELISM

If you will read Luke 16:15-31, you will find a man, who, during his life, cared not for the things of God. A rich man who didn’t care about lost souls around him, or his own lost soul. Yet, after dropping into Hell-fire, he suddenly got a clear perspective of soul-winning! In fact, he had a better understanding of evangelism than most Christians today.

Notice his words in **Luke 16:27-28**:

"I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they come into this place of torment."

It seems so simple, doesn't it? Why don't Christians bear the cross and do it? Abraham says the brothers have Moses and the Prophets -- this means they have those preaching Moses and the Prophets - Scriptures of that day continually read in the Synagogues. The contention between Abraham and the man in hell is not about whether someone should testify to the five brothers, but whether it would make a difference if someone rose from the dead. This man in Hell had the proper idea! If we could get a look at Hell, it would all come clear to us what our duty is. To testify to lost men, lest they also go to that place of torment! What if you were in heaven or hell, and knew you had lost loved-ones on earth -- would you want someone to TESTIFY to them the truth of God?

The Greek word used for TESTIFY is an intense form of the Greek word for witness. Martureo (mar-too-reh'-o) is the Greek word for witness, and is where we get our word MARTYR; which simply means WITNESS - the ultimate witness. The word used for TESTIFY is the Greek word DIAMARTUROMAI (dee-am-ar-too'-rom-ahee), which is an intense form of the word martureo. It means to PROTEST SOLEMNLY -- TO TESTIFY. We are going to look at every time this word is used in the New Testament, and I want you to notice it is always verbal, confrontational evangelism or exhortation to believers. It is what Jesus commanded. It is what caused much of the persecution to the Christian Church. It is where we often fail, and why we are not more persecuted today!

1. In Acts 2:40 - After Peter tells the people to repent and be baptized; he gave them the complete "Gospel" in verse 40, **And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation.** Peter did it!

2. Acts 8:25 **And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem...** The Apostles did it! What did Philip do when he went down to Samaria (Acts 8:5-12)?

3. Acts 10:42: **And he (Jesus) commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.** Notice the message! Notice the method! Notice the command!

4. Acts 18:5 **And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.** Here is that word again used by the rich man in Hell. I WANT YOU TO SEE THAT THEY TURNED THESE PEOPLE OFF, AND MADE THEM MAD! Look at verse 6, **And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.** Now, if I did that, I would have many more critics than I already have. Maybe these "silent prophets" need to read their Bible!

5. Acts 20:21,23,24 **"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ...and the ministry, which I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God"**. Notice the message! REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. They were preaching repentance and "Lordship Salvation". The ministry that Paul had was that of TESTIFYING THE GOSPEL.

6. Acts 23:11 **And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.** Jesus approves of confrontational testifying!

7. Acts 28:13 **And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging: to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.** Paul says we will be a savor of life to some, and a savor of death to some. Not all will believe, but we must testify to all that we can. (2 Cor. 2:14-16) Do we like the controversy that it causes? NO, but we are accountable to God to warn the wicked (Ez. 3:17-19; I Cor. 9:16). We should never try to provoke unnecessary controversy, but should appeal, warn, and testify the Word of God with common sense and love.

In the rest of the New Testament you will find this intense form of "witness": this "testifying" in regards to preaching to believers. This is a sermon in itself to these soft spoken, smooth preachers; who are afraid to convict or anger anyone. In I Thess. 4:6; I Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:14; 4:1; you will find the same Greek word the rich man in Hell used to describe how he wanted someone to speak to his 5 brothers. THINK ABOUT IT! How do you think he wanted his brothers approached! How would you want your brothers approached, if you were in hell, and knew they would soon be there too?

In I Thess. 4:6 we have Paul "testifying" about modest dress and conduct. In I Tim. 5:21 we have Paul "testifying/charging" Timothy to rebuke those that sin, and also to do the other things Paul commanded without preferring one above another -- This should be preached to pastors who leave out the head covering, and other things they say are "unnecessary".

In 2 Tim. 2:14, Paul is telling Timothy to "testify/charge" the people that if they deny Christ, he will deny them (2:11-14).

Last of all, in 2 Tim. 4:1 we have Paul "testifying/charging" Timothy to preach the pure Gospel even when people want to hear fables -- like "Eternal Security", "Doesn't matter what you wear", "TV is fine", "Dress as you please", "Repentance is just from unbelief, not your sins" etc. etc.

SO... THAT RICH MAN IN HELL WASN'T TOO FAR OFF WHEN HE ASKED SOMEONE TO GO AND TESTIFY TO HIS 5 BROTHERS. WHAT ABOUT YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AND PARENTS? HAVE YOU TESTIFIED TO THEM?

I believe this is a major part of that cross Jesus called us to bear in Mark 8:34-38. It takes "denying self" to be a "testifying" believer to lost and "saved" people; to brother and sister, neighbor and friend -- to love and rebuke in love while hated like Stephen. Jesus said his testifying cause the world to hate him even with all the good deeds He did (healing the sick, raising the dead, and working miracles of many sorts), -- it must have been pretty straight forward and convicting.

The early church brought on most of their persecution by this testifying! If they had hushed and lived quiet lives they wouldn't have been persecuted near as much! Jesus said, **"The world hates me because I testify that the deeds thereof are evil"**. The disciples were hated and killed because they preached all over and "turned the world upside down" rebuking sin, and calling men to repentance and faith. The early Christians were killed by those they "turned off".

John Wesley was riding along a road one day when it dawned on him that three whole days had passed in which he had suffered no persecution. Not a brick or an egg had been thrown at him for three days. Alarmed, he stopped his horse, and exclaimed, "Can it be that I have sinned, and am backslidden?" Slipping from his horse, Wesley went down on his knees and began interceding with God to show him where, if any, there had been a fault. A rough fellow, on the other side of the hedge, hearing the prayer, looked across and recognized the preacher. "I'll fix that Methodist preacher," he said, picking up a brick and tossing it over at him. It missed its mark, and fell harmlessly beside John. Whereupon Wesley leaped to his feet joyfully exclaiming, "Thank God, it's all right. I still have his presence."

The sinners haven't changed, and neither has Satan. We don't expect persecution, because we don't TESTIFY TO MEN THAT THEIR DEEDS ARE EVIL, AND PREACH REPENTANCE TO THEM. Those who go door to door often present a "no repentance", "easy believism" message. They often go with faces painted with makeup, immodest clothes, jewelry; and just invite people to church. Some who have right doctrine don't go door to door just because they don't want to be associated with the first folks we mentioned -- so the world continues to go to Hell with that rich man!

The Easy-believe crowd are out making FANS, not disciples. It is easy to get people to be "pro-Jesus" or "Jesus fans"; but it is very different to BE A DISCIPLE and then MAKE DISCIPLES -- Very different! I was raised with the FANS-MAKING-FANS concept of Christianity; but now I am a part of the DISCIPLES-MAKING-DISCIPLES group. It is much harder, but IT IS RIGHT! Fans don't have to obey, just sit on the sidelines; but disciples must obey and follow -- Try telling people this at the door next time....And, uh, by the way, take off your jewelry, makeup, fashion clothes, fancy tie, styled hair, etc.; put on a head veil (ladies), modest apparel, and TESTIFY that they must give up all sin, and follow Jesus in obedient faith! Then you will understand what it means to bear the cross!

"His blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn him, you will be innocent." For this reason, out of fear, we are very earnest in desiring to witness according to the Scriptures--but not from love of money, of glory, or of pleasure. Justin Martyr 160 AD

CHAPTER 8

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

This should be obvious, but since some call "Lordship Salvation" heresy, it is important that we understand the message of the Gospel was not built around Jesus being just a Savior, but a King! The word Gospel means Good News ; the Gospel of the Kingdom is simply the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST!

John the Baptist preached that men should repent and prepare for the Kingdom, and the King that was coming. Jesus preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". Jesus sent his disciples out to declare the Kingdom of Heaven. The Apostles continued to preach the same message after the resurrection -- Acts 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 28:23.

The subject of the Kingdom is not heard enough today. Jesus is not presented to the world as King and Lord; but as some feeble, emotional mother figure who is begging people to accept him so he can serve them. Jesus was promised as King, born as King, preached as King, was rejected as King, and must be accepted as King!

PROMISED AS KING

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. Zech. 9:9

Jesus comes as King, and Jesus offers salvation as King. In the position of King he saves. To believe on a lifeguard to save you does not mean you must continue to follow him; but to accept Jesus or believe on Jesus as King means submission to his authority. Kings are submitted to, or rebelled against. Jesus is presenting himself as the King who has salvation. You cannot accept him as Savior, and not as your King!

BORN AS KING

Jesus was born King of the Jews! The wise men came from the east to worship the promised King! The scribes knew from Is. 9:6, and Micah 5:2 that Jesus the King would be born in Bethlehem as King.

PROCLAIMED AS KING

Jesus presented himself as King -- this is what outraged his enemies. Jesus gave parables such as Luke 19:14; and Matt. 25:31. Jesus' disciples were always asking him when he would set up the kingdom on earth, and wondered what position they would receive. The disciples argued about who would be the greatest in the kingdom. Remember what Jesus said would happen to those who said to the king, "**We will not have this man to reign over us**" (Luke 19)?

REJECTED AS KING

There is no doubt that Jesus presented himself as King just from the response of his enemies. They said, We have no king but Caesar! Listen to them in Luke 23:2,

And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.

The big issue at the crucifixion was not whether Jesus was trying to keep people out of Hell; but whether or not he was King! Jesus expected his disciples to recognize him as the promised King. He is a loving, compassionate King; but nevertheless, he is King. The accusation put over his head on the cross was not, "This is Jesus the Savior of men"; but it said, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews". Kings are submitted to or rebelled against; and men must choose -- they cannot be neutral.

HE MUST BE ACCEPTED AS KING

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him. to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name: John 1:11,12

Jesus came as King, was rejected as King, and , therefore, must be accepted as King! When one accepts Jesus as his King, he then submits to him. When one receives Jesus as King, Jesus gives the gift of salvation to them. Remember Zech. 9:9? If the King comes with salvation, those who rebel against the King will not receive it! Only those who choose Jesus as King, and believe on him as such, will receive the free gift!

Salvation is the free gift of the King; but it is not given to rebels and enemies until they repent and submit in faith. The fact that the King does not give his free gift to rebels, does not mean that surrender, or submission to the King in any way earns or pays for the gift! Jesus is the rightful King that man has rebelled against. We deserve to be hanged for treason! Thank God! Our King loves us! Will forgive us! And give us eternal life if we come back like the prodigal son did to his father. Hallelujah!

Preachers no longer proclaim Jesus as King, so people don't know to receive him as King; and thus much faith is dead faith! Much professed belief is from a rebellious life! In Acts 17:7, the big uproar was not over Jesus as a great teacher, or as Savior; but as King! The preachers were preaching Jesus as King!

Jesus cannot be accepted as Savior and rejected as King!! He saves in the office of King, or not at all. You don't have Jesus as Savior at salvation, and then later recognize him as King -- that is not Bible! Those who teach this are false teachers! If you don't believe on Jesus as the King that saves those who repent of rebellion to him, and submit in faith; then you don't believe on the Jesus of the Bible! If you reject Jesus as King now, you will not enter into his Kingdom later!

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."
Romans 14:9

These people who say the receiving of Jesus as Lord means we want them to be sinless and perfect, are not using their heads. I submit to Jesus as King and Lord, and confess him as such; but I still fail my Lord at times. Jesus being my Lord, does not make me a puppet, just a striving servant. The only reason preachers don't preach this, is to cover up all their false converts who go on in rebellion and are not striving to obey and serve Jesus. Those who are converted will not live in rebellion to Jesus; but will follow to the best of their strength and knowledge.

I don't understand how this could even be an issue, when Paul tells us in Romans 10:9,10 that confessing Jesus as our Lord is necessary to salvation. Do these preachers want us to be hypocrites in professing Jesus as Lord, yet not living according to our profession? Why would anyone want to argue about Jesus being Lord and King? If a lost man only wants a Savior, but not a King; then he will go to Hell for rebellion to God!!

There will be no rebels in Heaven, who do not want to serve Jesus as King and Lord. Only those who love Jesus as King and Lord will enjoy serving him in Heaven! Only those who serve him and love him as King and Lord now, will love him and serve him then! God does not give us a new heart desire and attitude on the way to Heaven, but just a new body. Our heart attitude and desire toward Jesus is supposed to be changed already at repentance and the new birth.

Peter preached on Pentecost that Jesus was both Lord and Christ. Some say this is splitting hairs about terminology; but I've been in the churches and colleges who call me a "Lordship Salvation" heretic for this; and it is not splitting hairs! If it is, it is a big enough hair to send you to Hell!

These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, chosen, and faithful. Rev. 17:4

HALLELUJAH!

CHAPTER 9

ETERNAL SECURITY AND OVERCOMING

The teaching of unconditional eternal security is very dangerous. I was told to ask Jesus into my heart at five years old, and then told I was safe and secure for Heaven, and could never lose my inheritance there even if I lived a wicked life. Had God not led me to true repentance and conversion; and then a better understanding of the Bible; I might have lived according to this heresy like many people I know. What better way could there be to distract runners from winning the race, than to tell them that the starting line is really the finish line? To convince soldiers that the battle is over and won; they don't need to fight; and their life is not in danger is a fool-proof way to defeat them

When people who are taught this heresy doubt they are really saved, the reply their preacher gives is, "Well, you prayed the prayer didn't you?". Why don't we hear, **"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" II Cor. 13:5**

The security that the Bible teaches is that those who **desire** to please God will have the power to do so. Those who **desire** to follow Jesus to the end, are offered grace to overcome; and those who **strive** to overcome, will be confirmed. The Bible security is God's promise of abundant provision to sustain us in the battle – a battle for our soul – a battle with real casualties – a battle where my life and soul are really at stake.

There are three main positions on this subject of eternal security. I want to briefly look at each, so you understand the basics of them.

CALVINISM: John Calvin, a reformer of the 1500's, believed and taught basic reformation doctrine: That men must "continue in the faith" and "persevere"; but that it was God's irresistible grace that "caused" them to do so.

Those who were "unconditionally elected", called by God's "irresistible grace", and saved by Christ's "limited atonement", were also kept by God's irresistible grace in faith and obedience to ultimate salvation. Thus, those who fell away only revealed they weren't part of the "elect". This concept violates man's free will and the plain teaching of Christ in Luke 8:13. God is not willing that any should perish; therefore he would use his irresistible grace on everyone -- if this were true. If this were true, it would be God's responsibility to keep us, and the Bible would not have warnings and commands to men to endure, continue, overcome, etc. If God's grace were irresistible enough to save us and keep us, it would also keep us from carnality, sin, etc. When the responsibility for man's obedience is put on God, then it is his fault when we disobey. If the responsibility for man's repentance and faith is God's, then it is his fault that people go to Hell; and he can't justly condemn them.

Neither do we maintain that it is by fate that men do what they do, or suffer what they suffer. Rather, we maintain that each man acts rightly or sins by his free choice...Since God in the beginning made the race of angels and men with free will, they will justly suffer in eternal fire the punishment of whatever sins they have committed. Justin Martyr 160 AD

ANTINOMIANISM: This old heresy teaches that man is perpetually justified by one act of faith, so future sins are forgiven and cleansed at conversion. Thus, it doesn't matter what you do after you "ask Jesus to save you"; because a forgiven person cannot be condemned. The Holy Spirit refutes this misconception in James and the whole New Testament.

From this heresy, repentance becomes only a change of mind for a moment, or a turning from no faith to dead faith that "trusts" presumptuously without obedience. Thus, according to them, Jesus' High Priestly advocacy in Heaven is useless -- You don't need to forgive sins twice! Thus "walking in the light", "sowing to the Spirit", "continuing in the faith", "confessing known sin", etc. is unnecessary and meaningless.

This heresy means unconditional security for those who commit one act of faith in "receiving Christ", whether they live by faith or not. If this is true, then you don't have to obey Christ, live godly, resist temptation, follow Jesus, or anything after you are "converted". They say if you don't, God will chasten you, and eventually kill you and take you to Heaven anyway, so you don't make him look bad on earth any more (Their abuse of I Cor 11). Any honest student of Scripture cannot accept this "TURNING THE GRACE OF GOD INTO LASCIVIOUSNESS". This is a terrible twisting of God's Word. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" The Antinomians think so! This heresy is taught by modern Baptists. This is the same heresy Peter speaks of in 2 Peter 3:16 -- The unlearned always find refuge in twisting Paul's epistles. Because Paul is battling Judaism, his language is conducive for Antinomians to wrest. Read 2 Peter 2:18,19.

BIBLE SALVATION: (sometimes called Arminianism) James Arminius opposed John Calvin and taught man's responsibility before God. He taught man had free will or choice, and thus it was man's responsibility to repent, believe, obey, endure, etc. Man is thus responsible for not doing these things, and accountable to God, and in danger of Hell. Arminius did not invent this doctrine, but just defended his conception of what God's faithful had always believed from the times of the apostles. That Jesus died for **every man**, and calls **all men** to salvation and to repentance. God's grace is **not** irresistible; and the perseverance of the saints is not automatic or unconditional or God's responsibility. Man must believe on Christ with a living, obeying, continuing faith of his own free will and choice to be saved. Continual justification is based on continual faith. God's part in salvation is PROVISION and PERSUASION; but it is not his responsibility to make man's decisions for them or choose who will make the decision. God made man with free will, and therefore God holds them accountable for their actions and judges them accordingly. This system of doctrine is what the Bible teaches.

I was raised Antinomian, then went to Calvinism, but was never satisfied until I came to the Arminian position. It is hard for those raised in one position to move to another, but if you study your Bible enough, God will lead you. For a while I held the idea that all true believers would definitely persevere, and those who didn't, weren't saved to begin with. However, Jesus' plain words in **Luke 8:13** are to the contrary. If Jesus said they "**for a while believed**"; then for a while they were "**believers**". This means they were on the narrow way, and then fell away because of temptation. Judas, and some others (John 6:64) never did believe, it seems; but this is not the only scenario taught in the Bible. If only the false believers are the ones who will not endure, then every time the Holy Spirit exhorts us to "**hold fast our profession**", "**continue in the faith**", "**hold fast our confidence**", etc. He is telling **false believers** to hold on to their **false faith, false profession, and false confidence**. It is clear that all the exhortations listed below are to believers: Romans 6:16; 8:13; I Cor. 3:16,17; II Cor. 6:13-7:1; Gal. 6:7-9; Eph. 5:1-7; I Tim. 4:16; II Tim. 2:12; Heb. 3:6,12-14; 4:11-16; 5:7-6:15; 10:22-39; 12:12-25; James 5:19,20; I Peter 1:9-17; 4:17-19; II Peter 2:18-22; 3:14-17; I John 1:6,7; 2:5 compare with 2:24-25; II John 8,9; Jude 20-24; Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 21:7,8; 22:7,12-14.

Many times the Apostles included themselves by saying "we" or "us", as in I Cor. 9:27-10:14, and in Hebrews.

The conditions for salvation are clear in the Bible, and it is clear that it is man's responsibility to use God's provision of grace to meet the conditions God set on Christ's atonement and advocacy. The Antinomians can say the conditions don't exist; and the Calvinists can say the irresistible grace of God makes us meet the conditions, but the conditions are there, and the responsibility is put on us to meet them. So, no matter what you are, you'd better get busy following Jesus in obedient faith if you want to go to Heaven -- FOR HE IS THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION UNTO ALL (AND ONLY) THEM THAT OBEY HIM; AND OBEYING HIM (IN JESUS' DEFINITION) IS "KEEPING HIS SAYINGS". John 8:51, 14:21-24; I John 2:3-5.

You say, "What about salvation by grace through faith?" That is exactly what I believe; but you need to have Bible definitions of "faith" and "grace", not some man's. Titus 2:11-15 gives us a good look at "grace". Grace is in the PROVISION and PERSUASION aspects of salvation. Grace does not do our part for us; nor does grace overlook our part, or cancel it.

Faith and obedience are synonymous when it comes to God giving us a command or condition. Every time in Hebrews 11, the great faith chapter, their faith is seen in an act of obedience. God testified of Abel's obedience and counted him righteous. Enoch diligently sought God and pleased God, and it was called faith. Noah moved with fear and obeyed God; and by this he became "heir of the righteousness which is by faith"! Can't you see it? Abraham's faith in many acts of obedience was "imputed for righteousness", and called FAITH and FAITHFULNESS. Jesus is not a bank vault where you deposit your soul, and go your merry way. He is the King we trust, and therefore obey and serve.

For what reason was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he worked righteousness and truth through faith? Clement of Rome 96 AD

If a person begins following Jesus, and then begins to practice known sin, or continue one that God has recently shown him to be sin; then his record in Heaven is defiled. God begins to chasten him, and gives him space to repent, so he won't be condemned with the world (I Cor. 11:32). If this man repents, while God is chastening, then his soul is saved from death (James 5:19,20). If he despises the chastening of the Lord, and persists in rebellion, then he will die spiritually (Romans 6:16; 8:13; Gal. 6:7-9; Heb. 6,10,12). I believe God will do all he can justly do to bring a person back before cutting him off. I also believe that if a person resists enough to be cut off (Romans 11:22); then he will never come back (Heb. 6). They already had all God has to offer, what more would bring them back? If the Holy Ghost from within could not persuade them, then how will he persuade them from without? Jesus taught this in Luke 8:13, as well as Matthew 18:21-35; 24:9-14,44-51; and John 15:1-11.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT IT MEANS TO BELIEVE ON JESUS

Due to the terrible deception of "easy believism", this chapter is necessary. Believing on Christ has been reduced to praying a prayer, and then expecting Jesus to take me to Heaven someday, whether I follow him in obedience, or not. Sinners are being told that faith without works is alive, and will save. They are not told that there is no forgiveness without genuine repentance. They are told to trust with a passive faith the Bible calls "dead faith" (James 2), and led to rely on Jesus, when they have no right to rely on Jesus without repentance and faith that obeys.

If a number of entities are equal to the same object, then they are also equal to each other. If there is only one way to Heaven, then all the promises of salvation must be equal to all the other promises. If we remember that the term SAVED primarily refers to ultimate salvation into Heaven, rather than the moment of conversion, we will understand what it means to believe on Jesus.

IF...

1. Matt. 10:22 Enduring to the end = saved
2. Mk. 13:13 Endureth to the end = saved
3. Jn. 8:12 Followeth me = saved
4. Jn. 8:51 Keep my sayings = saved
5. Jn. 10:27 Hear and follow = saved
6. Jn. 1:12 Receive him = saved

7. Jn. 3:3 Be born again = saved
8. Acts 2:38 Repent and be baptized = saved
9. Acts 3:19 Repent and be converted = saved
10. Acts 16:31 Believe on the Lord Jesus = saved
11. Acts 26:20 Repent and turn to God and do works meet for repentance = saved
12. Rom. 10:9,10 Confess Jesus as Lord and believe in the resurrection = saved
13. Rom. 10:13 Call upon the Lord = saved
14. Heb. 3:14 Hold fast confidence to the end = saved
15. Heb. 5:9 Obey Jesus = saved
16. Heb. 10:39 Believe to the end = saved
17. I Tim. 4:16 Continue in the doctrine = saved
18. I John 1:7 Walk in the light = saved
19. Gal. 6:7-9 Sow to the Spirit & faint not = saved
20. Rev. 2 & 3, 21:7 Overcome = saved
21. Rev. 22:14 Do his commandments = saved

...IF ALL 21 ARE EQUAL TO BEING SAVED, THEN THEY ARE ALL EQUAL TO EACH OTHER!

Either there are two or more ways to Heaven, or each statement is just a **clarification, expansion, and definition** of the other terms.

"Believe on Jesus" can erroneously be made as narrow as to only include a prayer, or intellectual trust; or as broad as to include "obey", "follow", "walk in the light", etc. It is vital to understand that "believing on Jesus" is not just believing in his historical existence, or his historical resurrection; but **BELIEVING HIS TEACHINGS TO THE POINT WE OBEY THEM!** Believing in Him as King, Lord, Shepherd, and Physician to the point we **ACT** upon His leadership, teachings, and guidance.

Listen to God as He tells us about Abraham's faith in **Gen.26:5 "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."** Yes, Abraham's works showed his faith. Without the obedience spoken of here, Abraham would have been unfaithful and unbelieving.

Today, men are trying to disregard the other statements, and reduce "repentance" to their definition of "belief", which is "dead faith". Therefore they must change the meaning of "repent" to a change of mind which doesn't change the actions, or a change from no faith, to a dead faith (James 2). They don't understand the Bible definition of "works", so they do theological gymnastics to avoid man having any part to play for fear that they will be teaching "works". This reveals that they just don't understand what the Bible is saying.

If my son, Micah, and I were on a wilderness trek with an experienced guide; and we were suddenly confronted by a grizzly bear. The guide turns to Micah and says, "Son, you stay calm and do exactly what I tell you." Now, I look at Micah and say, "Son, believe in the guide"; or "Son, trust the guide"; or "Son, follow what he says"; or "Son, hold fast your confidence in the guide to the end"; or "Son, receive this man as your guide" -- **I have said the same thing!** Wouldn't it be foolish for Micah to look at me and say, "Dad, does 'trust the guide' mean I have to obey him?" **OF COURSE TRUSTING AND BELIEVING MEANS OBEYING!!**

If a man came to town claiming to be the Son of God, King of Israel, and Savior of the world; and telling people to turn from sin, and be baptized as one of his disciples -- If I then went and told people to **believe** in this man, they would understand that I meant for them **to do what the man said**, not just pray a prayer and go on their merry way in sin. If I told people to turn from sin, and become one of his disciples; I would be telling them to **believe** in him without ever using the word **BELIEVE**. Is this that difficult?

Faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith. Ignatius 105 AD

Into this joy, many persons desire to enter. They know that "by grace you are saved, not of works," but by the will of God through Jesus Christ....But He who raised Him up from the dead will raise up us also-- if we do His will, and walk in His commandments, and love what He loved, keeping ourselves from all unrighteousness. Polycarp 135 AD

To believe in Him is to do His will. Irenaeus 180 AD

Today Jesus is not presented as demanding repentance and obedience; so faith in him has been reduced to believing, as in Santa Claus -- at least those who believe in Santa try to behave.

If a man turns from sin, is baptized a disciple of Jesus Christ, and follows him in faith to the end of his life, he will be saved -- even if he never "officially" asks Jesus into his heart. I don't find one preacher in the Bible telling people to "ask Jesus into their heart!" What a tragedy that "salvation" seems to be marked down on the clearance rack: and the prophets of yesterday have become salesmen who have mastered their tricks to get men to buy their watered down product. The better deal we can cut the public, the bigger church we can build, and make **true** preachers look like hard nosed cavemen!

The tree is made manifest by its fruit. So those who profess themselves to be Christians will be recognized by their conduct....It is better for a man to be silent and be (a Christian), than to talk and not be one. Ignatius 105 AD

This, then, is our reward if we will confess Him by whom we have been saved. But in what way will we confess Him? We confess Him by doing what He says, not transgressing His commandments, and by honoring Him not only with our lips, but with all our heart and all our mind....Let us, then, not only call Him Lord, Lord, for that will not save us. For He says, "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will be saved, but he that works righteousness." For that reason, brethren, let us confess Him by our works, by loving one another. Second Clement 150 AD

CHAPTER 11

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SALVATION

I recently asked a preacher who was misled on the baptism of the Holy Spirit if he knew the difference between OT and NT salvation. He didn't. I was not surprised, but it just went to show why he was mixed up on the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, people were saved by a **living, obeying faith in God**. When you read Hebrews 11, and James 2, with Acts 26:6,7; & Romans 3,4; you see that those who believed God in following and obeying him were saved. Their faith was counted for righteousness, and their sins were forgiven on credit -- accounting that Jesus would definitely come and pay for them.

According to Acts 10:43, all the prophets preached "repentance and remission of sins in Christ's name" (Luke 24:47). The OT saints who were saved, served and followed Jehovah God in hope of his promised salvation through the coming Messiah. So we can say they were saved by the same faith we are -- except theirs looked forward to Christ by keeping the ceremonial laws and such; whereas our faith looks back to Christ's coming (and forward to his return) by following his teachings and confessing him as our Lord.

SO WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

1. We do not show our faith by keeping the ceremonial laws. Christ is the fulfillment of those rituals; therefore we look to the real thing, not the type. Instead of obeying God in the OT ceremonial laws -- God's old covenant with man; we obey God by following his Son Jesus, and obeying his commands. Jesus came to clarify God's moral law and establish a new covenant where God's moral laws are written in our hearts by the Holy Ghost through the local church ministry. Everyone that has ever been saved was and is still saved by grace through faith. Nobody was saved by the ceremonies of the law. Nobody is saved by dead faith. Their faith lived in serving God through the moral and ceremonial law; our faith lives in following God's Word in obedience to Jesus.

The Jews were to use the law as simply a guide to their faith, not to earn merit for salvation. This is where many stumbled, according to Romans 9:32. The same principle that applied to the OT Jews concerning the law (Duet. 30:11-14); applies to us now concerning Christ (Romans 10:6-10). They were to walk by faith in the light they were given, and so are we.

So... they followed and obeyed in faith, just like we do. Their faith was counted for righteousness, just like ours is. Their sins were covered until Jesus came and made atonement; ours are continually cleansed in the blood as we walk in the light and confess known sins (I John 1:7-9). The first main difference is **how** they were to show their faith (keeping the law Vs. following Jesus).

2. The second, and most important difference is the "Promise of the Father" in our New Covenant or New Testament. Lets look at a couple OT passages about NT salvation:

Jer. 31:31-34, Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel...I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts...

Ez. 36:26-27 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you:...And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Joel 2:28-32 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, ...And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit...And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered...

Now, if you compare these Scriptures with Heb. 8:6-13; 10:15-17; and Acts 2:15-21 & 33-41; you can see clearly that there is another big difference between OT and NT salvation. We have the indwelling Holy Spirit, which gives us a spiritual re-birth, and helps us to endure to the end. The promise of the Father, which Jesus obtained after his ascension, is the baptism of the Holy Spirit -- The indwelling Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-8; 2:33,38,39). Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Spirit was "with" them, but soon would be "in" them.

- **John 14:17** "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

The Old Testament prophets, priests, some kings, and a few others had a special anointing of Holy Spirit power; but it seems the Spirit was still only "with" them, but not "in" them. The common people didn't even have this much as individuals. In Joel God promised to pour out His Spirit on all his children, not just certain leaders. He declared that even the servants, handmaids, sons, and daughters would not be denied this special blessing. All true believers have this blessing. It is how God writes His Laws in our heart and mind.

Thank God! We don't have to look to a human mediator for a relationship with God; we can know him ourselves and cry "Abba Father" as a child. We have been adopted through receiving the Spirit of God's Son to dwell in us. We can approach the Throne of Grace, not stand and wait for a priest in the Temple. We can come continually to our High Priest, Jesus, and receive atonement for our sins (Heb. 7:22-25). We now are the Temple of the Holy Spirit, we don't go to the Temple. The Shechinah Glory dwells within us. The covenant of Grace means I live on a higher holier plane than the ceremonial, carnal worship of the Old Testament. I want to be one of the true worshippers who worship God in Spirit and in truth (John 4:23), not with my hands (Acts 17:24-31) or sacrifices, dances, images, instruments, etc.; but with the fruit of my lips, making melody in my heart, walking in the Spirit with sobriety, humility, and holiness.

Heb 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Hebrews 2:1-4; 10:26-29; 12:18-25; and basically the whole book teaches us that since we have a better covenant, with a better sacrifice, a better priest, a better hope, and better access to God; **we also will have greater condemnation if we neglect it!**

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven: Heb. 12:25

CHAPTER 12

CARNAL CHRISTIANS?

In an effort to cover for the ungodliness in their churches, many preachers who build a crowd by the false repentance and easy believism (that we have been speaking of) like to point out that there are carnal Christians in the New Testament as well. The truth is that every time carnality was addressed we find an apostle warning them of missing out on salvation and warning them of judgment. Carnality was not tolerated and excused, but confronted, rebuked, and the unrepentant were disciplined out of the body. You don't find people in the New Testament tolerated in their rebellion. What you do find is excommunication, rebuke, warning, and even people dropping dead -- remember Ananias and Sapphira? The liberals usually run to I Cor. 3 to support their idea that once saved you don't *have* to obey. They say you will just lose rewards, but still be saved. Let's examine this Scripture.

I Cor. 3 is often misinterpreted as saying people can lay the foundation of salvation, and never do anything else, but still be saved. **THIS IS A LIE AND A WRESTING OF SCRIPTURE!** There are some very important points that these people miss.

1. Paul makes it clear that the **builders** are the **preachers**, and the **people** are the **building**. Observe: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, **ye are God's building.** The people are the structure that the preacher is building on the foundation of the gospel -- the true gospel which demands repentance and a living faith that obeys.

2. The warning is for preachers to beware how they build on the foundation of Christ, and teach the people; because if they don't teach them right, the people will be lost in the trial and not finish their race. The preacher's "work" will not endure judgment, if they are not taught right. The preacher's "work" will be tried. **SO DON'T FOLLOW A LIBERAL**, a compromiser, a softy, or a heretic (heretics are not even building of the true foundation) -- **YOU MAY END UP WOOD, HAY, AND STUBBLE; INSTEAD OF GOLD, SILVER, PRECIOUS STONE.** The same could be said for two generals in the military as to how they train their men -- the battle will show which general produced efficient trained men and which did not. If you read further you will find that the heretic who is not building on the foundation of Jesus Christ, but is actually destroying the foundation and defiling God's temple (the church) is **DESTROYED**.

I Cor. 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

This is similar to what Jesus taught in Matthew 5:19, where He warns that if you discard a command of God by calling it the "least" then God will discard you on the same basis - being the "least".

Matt 5:19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

3. The rebuke of carnality in Corinth was nothing more than immature zeal for one preacher over another - Not rebellion against the church or Christ.

In I Cor 5 & II Cor 2 we learn of a man caught in adultery with his stepmother. There was sharp rebuke, discipline, repentance, and restoration -- where is the justification for all the continued ungodliness in the churches of today?

Paul rebukes some folks in Heb. 5 for becoming dull of hearing. They are threatened with missing out on Heaven; but if you look at the life they did have, you will find they, in their "low time", were higher than most today! They "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods" for Jesus sake. They were "made a gazing stock by reproaches and afflictions" because they stood for the truth! They ministered to the saints. Don't use them to hide your rebellious church members behind!

If you want to learn what happens to backsliders, just read I Cor. 10:1-14! This passage says they all started out with the same salvation; but because they grew lukewarm and cold, they were spewed out - just as Jesus threatens the Laodicians in Rev. 3:15. Saying that all those who fell away never really had it, and wouldn't have been saved had they continued; actually surrenders the case for unconditional security. What guarantees that some future lapse won't show that YOU never had it; and what guarantees that continuing will save you!?

In I John 3:6-9 and 5:18 are some interesting verses that have puzzled many. Once a few things are understood, the puzzling goes away.

1. The word "sin" or "commit sin" speaks of the working of known disobedience, and the practice, embracing, or justifying of known sin; not just one act committed in a moment of weakness. Christians are not sinlessly perfect; but if one is a Christian, he will be living in obedience to Christ. If they hold to known disobedience, we are not to consider them a Christian at all. Compare with what John says in 1:5-2:6.
2. The word "cannot" does not mean "incapable"; but means that it is not consistent. Since I am married, I cannot date other women. Since I am a Christian, I cannot practice sin. It does not mean I am incapable of doing so; but I have renounced sin, and gain victory over it through Christ.

In Matthew 3, John the Baptist is preaching that the people repent of being evil trees and bring forth good fruit, meet for repentance. He said that every tree that didn't bring forth good fruit would be hewn down and cast into

the fire. Jesus continued this thought in exposing false teachers (which is what John is doing in 3:7), and says, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Now, if the "cannot" meant "incapable"; why tell the people to repent and become good trees bringing forth good fruit!? Repentance would be impossible. **JUST AS AN EVIL TREE CAN TURN AND BECOME A GOOD TREE, SO A GOOD TREE CAN TURN AND BECOME AN EVIL TREE AGAIN.** Yes, you can know them by their fruits, because a good tree will not be bringing forth evil fruit -- it is inconsistent. You can tell false teachers by their fruit, but this does not mean they can't repent and become good teachers.

John tells the people to let the doctrine abide or remain in them, so they also can continue in Christ and the Father, and receive the promise of eternal life (I John 2:24,25). John is warning against false Gnostic teachers who taught you could live in sin, and still be saved (2:26). He is simply saying you can know the tree by its fruit! He is not saying that a bad tree cannot become a good tree, or that a good tree cannot become a bad tree.

The conclusion then is that carnality can cost you your soul. The narrow road is only wide enough for those walking in the Spirit, it will not allow for sin, carnality, worldliness, and self-will. If your church is full of this, then it is full of wood, hay, and stubble that will not last. Take heed how you are building -- First, make sure you are even building on Christ; Then make sure you are building according to the blueprint of God's Word. One who is sincerely striving to build on Jesus Christ, but has been taught wrong, or is confused about God's ways, will still be saved due to his sincere living faith in serving Jesus to the best of his understanding; but many of his "converts" will show up as wood, hay, and stubble; and be burned.

John T. Christian quotes Phillip Schaff in his history: **"For the first three centuries the Lord placed Christianity in the most unfavorable circumstances that it might display its moral power, and gain its victory over the world by spiritual weapons alone. Until the reign of Constantine it had not even a legal existence in the Roman empire, but was first ignored as a Jewish sect, then slandered, proscribed, persecuted as a treasonable innovation, and the adoption of it made punishable with confiscation and death. Besides, it offered not the slightest favor, as Mohammedanism afterwards did, to the corrupt inclinations of the heart, but against the current ideas of the Jews and heathens it so presented its inexorable demand of repentance and conversion, renunciation of self and of the world, that more, according to Tertullian, were kept out of the new sect by love of pleasure, than by love of life."**

CHAPTER 13

CHILD EVANGELISM?

Child training? Wonderful!

Child discipline? Tremendous!

Child teaching? Beautiful!

Leading children to "pray a prayer", get baptized, and tell them they can't lose salvation no matter what they do? TERRIBLE!

Most child evangelism starts out good with picking up children who normally could not get to church or learn about Jesus. Then they take them to church and teach them the Bible, which is also good. But then they lead these little children to pray and ask Jesus in their hearts for salvation, baptize them, and tell them they are going to Heaven no matter what -- this is vaccination against true conversion.

This has confused thousands of people as to what conversion is, and when they were truly born again. Usually those who lead little children to "accept Christ" also believe in "easy believism" (they have too), and eternal security. Can they tell a little child to walk the straight and narrow, or be excommunicated? Can they warn a child of being lukewarm? Can a little child deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Jesus? Is a little child ready to be a disciple? We believe they are ready for teaching and training in preparation for future discipleship.

If you say that children are in need of conversion, then you are saying they are Hell-bound sinners. You are saying that God will stand a 9 year old boy before the Great White Throne with his eyes bugged in fear, and sentence him to eternal fire, because he didn't deny himself, take up his cross and follow Jesus! Our own unjust justice system doesn't try children as adults. Children are only told to obey their parents in the Lord; and parents are to spank them with the rod to deliver their soul from Hell -- This is all heart preparation, so when the seed of God's truth is sown, it will find good ground and bring forth fruit.

In Ex. 30:14, we see that only those from twenty years old and above were required to pay the atonement tax. Those under this age were safe. This principle shows up again:

Duet. 1:39, Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

How old were these children who were not accountable for good and evil?

Num. 14:29 Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.

Once again, those under twenty escaped! I'm not saying that it is wrong to lead our children to Christ before twenty, but I am showing that this idea of children being in danger of Hell at 8 or 9 is unbiblical. The main reason those under twenty were not accountable was because they were not old enough to be a part of the decision making process -- they were under their parent's authority. It is confusing and wrong to lead a child to baptism before they are old enough to make that intelligent choice on their own. Children will believe anything, even Santa Claus; but they are acting on Mom and Dad's faith, not their own personal faith. They are not able to be Bible believers -- disciples. Did Jesus baptize any child disciples? **Teach them about Jesus; show them the narrow road they must travel, and get them started, but don't imply salvation comes before the end of the road.**

It is true that Jewish children were circumcised at eight days old, and considered "in the covenant" from infancy. Does baptism take the place of circumcision for New Testament believers? We don't see this clearly taught in the New Testament. Did the apostles baptize every person of every age when they baptized house-holds into the faith? There is no way to prove one way or the other. The Bible does indicate that those baptized were first instructed in the Word of the Lord and believed -- this cannot be spoken of infants. If one says that they were under their parent's authority, were taken into the church when the head of the family believed, and thus raised in the faith; we answer: If we could know it was so, we would follow it; but how is it to be proved?

If baptism was to take the place of circumcision and be used the same way, then why didn't Paul use this great argument when telling Gentiles they didn't have to get circumcised; and why is it that Jewish Christians were practicing baptism AND circumcision? If baptism with water is a parallel of baptism with the Holy Spirit, are we to believe that infants receive this? Do they then take communion? Paul says that if even one parent is a believer, then the children are "holy", otherwise they would be unclean - as the children of unbelievers -- but he doesn't link this with the baptism of the child at all. We believe that our children are safe and considered "holy" because we are believers and raising them in the faith. Faith in Christ is what we want to teach our children, then they will hopefully make their own commitment to discipleship by being baptized. When they come to the age of understanding, then they must profess their own faith in Christ. As to the children of unbelievers, we know God will be merciful and just, and will judge them according to their light, ability, opportunity, and maturity. All children need to be taught about Jesus, but not given a false gospel and false hope. Obviously, parents who don't follow Jesus can't expect that their offspring will be the same in the sight of God as the offspring of God's beloved.

WHAT ABOUT LUKE 18 & MATTHEW 18?

1. These Scriptures are primarily speaking of how adults need to become as humble children to be saved; they are not speaking of children having adult accountability and baptism.
2. The offending of the little ones has two possible applications:
 - I. Offending a believer who has become one of Christ's "little ones" (by humbling himself as a child, and being thus converted).
 - II. Leading a child astray as they are approaching the age of accountability, so that they do not get baptized, but are lost. Many parents are stumbling blocks to their own children, so they grow up wicked, and lose their innocent humility.

If children were Hell-bound sinners in need of evangelism while in childhood, could Jesus have said, **"Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"**? If children are Hell-bound sinners in need of evangelism, then do we have to be converted into Hell-bound sinners to go to heaven!? No, Jesus is focusing on the child-like humility and teachable spirit of children.

Jesus, the Son of God, didn't start to be about his Father's business until he was twelve years old. At this age a Jewish young man began taking part of the feasts and learning the Law. His disciples were all older than middle teens. Physically, God has made boys and girls become men and women during mid teens. We need to consider when God sees them as "accountable".

I believe we should teach, train, spank, correct, and mold children in the way they should go. Teach them that those who follow Jesus will go to Heaven, and those who follow the Devil will go to Hell. Teach them to pray, confess sin, love Jesus, etc. Becoming a disciple seems to be more fitting for those who are at least twelve or older.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Prov. 22:6

Tertullian 145-220AD And so, according to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children. For why is it necessary--if (baptism itself) is not necessary--that the sponsors likewise should be thrust into danger?....The Lord does indeed say, "Forbid them not to come unto me." Let them "come", then, while they are growing up; let them "come" while they are learning, while they are learning whither to come; let them become Christians when they have become able to know Christ. Why does the innocent period of life hasten to the "remission of sins?" More caution will be exercised in worldly matters: so that one who is not trusted with earthly substance is trusted with divine!...If any understand the weighty import of baptism, they will fear its reception more than its delay: sound faith is secure of salvation.

CHAPTER 14

SOWING TARES

This chapter is meant to answer the grave question: Can we discard *some* of the things Jesus and the apostles taught; and only teach people to observe "some things" rather than "all things" -- for the purpose of "winning more people"? And, "Is it acceptable to be a 'Christian' that doesn't 'observe all things' (Matt. 28:19-20), or doesn't keep the traditions of the apostles (2 Thess. 3:6,7)?"

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. Matthew 13:24

When the servants came and told the master that they saw tares in the field, he said unto them,

Let them both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

When Jesus gave the interpretation of this parable, he said,

He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

I would like to make some observations concerning this parable, and then share some convictions I have concerning this situation.

1. The wheat is a result of Christ's pure doctrine, which produces the proper fruit of true believers.
2. The tares are a result of Satan's deceitful counterfeit doctrines which produce a "look alike" which cannot be identified except by the fruit it bears. The parable says when the blade brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

In Jesus' interpretation of the parable, Jesus calls the tares those that live in such a way that is offensive to God, and Jesus also describes them as, "**them which do iniquity (anomia - lawlessness)**". This is what Jesus called those in Matthew 7:21-23, which were also tares.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house on a rock.... And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them

not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:...and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

They professed to be Christians, having done many "wonderful works" in Jesus' name; but Jesus sums them up this way: **They were workers of iniquity, who heard his teachings, and called him "Lord, Lord"; but didn't obey his teachings and do the will of God.**

From these and many other passages we conclude that Satan is at work to produce counterfeit believers, who may not even know they are counterfeits, as we see in Matthew 7:21-27. How is it that they are counterfeits and don't even know it? They are deceived by false doctrine that tells them they can say, "Lord, Lord" to Jesus, but don't have to obey all he taught, and will still be saved! They believe false doctrine that tells them they can profess to be a Christian, but do not have to do the will of the Father -- and yet will be saved. They believe false doctrine that once they ask Jesus into their heart, they can live in disobedience to him (work iniquity), and they are eternally secure!!

They believe they can hear Jesus' sayings, but not do them. Just like the false prophets in 2 Peter 2; the modern day liars are "**speaking great swelling words of vanity**"; and "**alluring through the lusts of the flesh, and much wantonness**"; and "**PROMISING LIBERTY**"!

James makes it clear that, if we are hearers of the Word, but not doers, we deceive ourselves. You see, the **tares** are not harlots and drunkards or atheists--but church goers, and even preachers. A tare looks very similar to wheat, and can only be discerned when it bears fruit -- the **fruit** is the difference. The Bible teaches us how to know the difference!

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. I John 2:3-4

All who preach the unconditional security doctrine, whether from Calvinism or Antinomianism are SOWING TARES. All who claim to preach Arminian doctrine, but live in disobedience to the teachings of Jesus are SOWING TARES by their example. The preacher's life will define his doctrine! If I preach right, but live wrong; then I am teaching you to believe right, but live wrong -- You are becoming a tare! A hearer, but not a doer!!

The Pharisees did this, and Jesus rebukes them for actually "**vaccinating**" people against the truth, by making them "**secure**" in error, thus almost impossible to win to the TRUTH.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Matthew 23:15

Yes, soulwinning is wonderful! Yes, Jesus takes people right where they are; but he doesn't let them stay there. He demands they "**GO AND SIN NO MORE!**" Are you obeying "all things whatsoever Jesus commanded"? Do you pass the I John test? Are you one who "cannot endure sound doctrine"?

NOTE: God is not going to separate the two until the judgment! He is going to let all grow together in the world. He is not in the business of killing false believers now, but letting them go until judgment -- ARE YOU LISTENING! YOU MUST REPENT, AND OBEY ALL JESUS TAUGHT!

CHAPTER 15

THIS IS THE CONDEMNATION

JN. 3:19,20 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Since I have come to the light of what New Testament Apostolic Christianity really is, I have been diligently preaching and writing to share with other Christians the great news and establish a truly Biblical church. Going forth with the assurance that people who claim to love Jesus will be overjoyed to receive the new light of how to be a more pleasing bride for our coming Lord! Have I been disappointed? That is an incredible understatement.

I have learned, to my dismay, that men, indeed, love their darkness -- their comfortable darkened churches, where "**every man can do that which is right in his own eyes**" and not be condemned, rebuked, or even "preached at". They can watch their dirty TV, listen to their worldly music, wear their immodest clothes, ornament their bodies with jewelry and fashionable costly array, read their dirty books, run with their unchristian friends, lay up treasure on earth, etc. etc. -- and never have their toes stepped on or their "eternal security" questioned.

Truly, the above Scripture covers not only the unchurched who won't come to Christ from the bars and night clubs, but even more the modern "Pharisees", who won't come to Gospel truth from their Laodician Sunday Clubs. The condemnation is the same! Nay, it is even much worse!

The person sitting in a church claiming to be a Christian with a Bible in hand is much more accountable than the harlot and publican who are not continually exposed to the Word of God. Yes! It will be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for lazy, unwilling, unfaithful churches who fall from being the bride of Christ to a two-timing harlot who won't repent when the truth is brought to her of her fallen condition!

THIS IS THE CONDEMNATION!! THIS!! That God has sent precious **light** into the world, in the person and teachings of his Son, Jesus Christ: and men snubbed their noses at it, ran from it; and when pressed with it, flew into a rage of hate and crucified it!! This is exactly the attitude of modern day Churchianity when presented with the glorious truths of Scripture that show us where we have slid, and how to get back to New Testament Apostolic Christianity! You can't pick and choose what light you feel comfortable with, and say, "I have received the light". You must receive all the light God gives through his Word. Be partial toward the Light is due to the love of some darkness.

NOTICE: It **doesn't** say, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men had to struggle to live up to it consistently". It doesn't say that!! Because **that** is not the problem! We are not saved or condemned based on our **ability** to perform; but on our **willingness** to strive -- Faith that diligently seeks him, and works by love. You will be condemned for a stubborn unwilling heart that loved darkness more than light!!

You will be condemned if you love your fashionable clothes more than simple modesty; love your jewelry more than obeying the apostles; love supporting a church where you are free to do as you please more than one that teaches the whole counsel of God; if you love watching your TV more than a pure, safe home and testimony for your children; if you love to put up with a preacher who is leaning on the liberal side more than the one who is fighting for the right.

This is the condemnation! They love darkness rather than light because they want to do as they please, and "as they please" is not godly and right! Woe unto the man or woman who would rather have the praise of men, than go with Christ without the camp, bearing his reproach. Woe to the man who forsakes the cross for the crowd, and trades his eternal birthright for a mess of worldly pottage! The day will come when you find no place of repentance, though you seek it carefully with tears!

You say you believe in Jesus, and would never crucify him; but every time you reject the light of Jesus' teachings and stay in the worldly Sunday Club system, rather than "going with him without the camp, bearing his reproach"; you are definitely crucifying him! When you reject one aspect of Jesus' teachings, you have rejected him as Lord of your life! You kiss with the Judas kiss, and betray him when you call yourself his disciple, but follow the ways of his enemies.

If you reserve the right to disobey the Word of God, then you are still lord of your life. If the matter was pressed hard enough, and you were publicly called down like the Pharisees were; you too would become so enraged you would cry, **CRUCIFY HIM! CRUCIFY HIM!** This is exactly what happened almost 2000 years ago. This is why the apostles were also hated -- the disciple is not above his Lord!

Jesus demanded repentance and forsaking darkness for light, and still does. All the Old Testament prophets were slain and hated for this. They were never popular until years after their death. Jesus upbraids the Pharisees for the hypocrisy of building tombs to honor dead prophets, while hating and rejecting the living, preaching ones. This is exactly what is going on today. We honor the dead prophets, but don't obey them. Then we hate and reject the living men of God who are preaching the same message today!

If you end up in Hell, this will be the condemnation: **"You loved darkness rather than light"**.

Preachers are commanded to **"teach them to observe all things whatsoever"** Jesus commanded. When you take Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you enroll in this course -- you need to understand God expects the preacher to teach, and you to learn to observe "all things". In the New Testament church, if you refused to obey the bishop who was teaching you truth from Jesus and his apostles, you would be excommunicated and then lost your hope of Heaven unless you repented! Has this changed? If you are excommunicated from a Biblical church for Biblical reasons, you still lose your hope of Heaven. Even if you run to a liberal pastor who pats you on the back -- God is not mocked, nor will he allow his faithful preachers to be mocked!

The Calvinist would have us believe that faith is a gift that God gives to whoever he has unconditionally elected; but faith is the **response to light** (Romans 10:14-17), and light is given to every man (John 1:9; Titus 2:11-14; Romans 1:18,19). You either gratefully embrace the light, and thus receive more; or selfishly neglect and avoid it,

so you can deceive yourself into thinking you aren't really accountable for it, and thus continue to love your darkness. Which ever you do by your own free choice will determine whether you are condemned or saved!

AND THIS IS THE CONDEMNATION, THAT LIGHT IS COME INTO THE WORLD, AND MEN LOVED DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT...

AND THIS IS THE CONDEMNATION, THAT LIGHT IS COME INTO YOUR LIFE, AND YOU LOVED YOUR DARKNESS, RATHER THAN LIGHT

AND THIS IS YOUR SALVATION, THAT LIGHT IS COME INTO YOUR LIFE, AND YOU LOVED IT, EMBRACED IT, PRAISED GOD FOR IT, AND THREW AWAY YOUR FILTHY DARKNESS TO OBEY THE LIGHT.

Has light come into your life? I have been hitting my head on the ceiling of different church groups since I was converted, and having to find a new group who was more Biblical. I want to learn and grow to the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!" I want to be in that church without spot or wrinkle! That peculiar people zealous of good works! How large would our military be if anyone could leave boot camp, quit, and go home whenever they wanted to? The only one's who would stay in the **crucible** of training, to burn away their dross, would be those who **really wanted to be a good soldier and appreciated the training**. This is how it is with Jesus and His church - you can leave the crucible of testing any time; and, therefore, **ONLY** those who **REALLY** want to be a soldier for Christ will remain and endure to the end.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

CHAPTER 16

THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:" Romans 16:25,26

First, we need to think about what is being said. The reason so many people read their Bible, yet don't obey it; is because they don't think about what is being said. Charles Finney once said, "Though Bible in hand, the average Christian will rise no higher than the Christians around them". This is because we don't meditate in the Word. We must think our theology to its natural conclusion, to see if it is indeed Bible; or if it ends up in a contradiction of God's Word.

Let's look at what is being said in Romans 16:26: ***The preaching of Jesus Christ to Jew and Gentile alike, and the glory of the Spirit New Birth of the New Covenant is now manifest by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to God's commandment; and made known to all nations for the OBEDIENCE OF FAITH.*** Paul says that the reason he is preaching the good news of Jesus to all nations is to produce the obedience of faith. Jesus died and rose again; the Gospel is preached; evangelists are sent out; and preachers preach everywhere all for this thing: THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH.

WHAT IS THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH? The obedience of faith is a certain kind of obedience. This attribute of true faith is very important for 3 reasons:

- 1) It is essential to salvation.
- 2) It is essential to pleasing God.
- 3) It is the main theme and goal of the Gospel message.

WHAT THE "OBEDIENCE OF FAITH" IS NOT

- 1) It is not conforming to rules in order to avoid criticism and maintain social standing.
- 2) It is not going through the motions of a religious order to earn the right to enter Heaven.
- 3) It is not living a certain lifestyle in order to gain merit with God, so he will help you reach your goals in life, and give you success in gaining material possessions or temporal pleasure.
- 4) It is not simply praying a prayer and being baptized, though these are included in it.

WHAT THE "OBEDIENCE OF FAITH" IS:

The obedience of faith is the natural result of putting our full confidence in Jesus Christ as our Lord and King to save us from our rebellion and make us holy. It is the natural result of believing in the God-Man, Jesus, and his teachings; thus following him in obedience and seeking his way over ours.

It is not the obedience of selfish gain!

It is not the obedience of just a fear for my hide.

It is not the obedience of a double motivated person.

It is the obedience of restored faith and trust in the one obeyed. A complete persuasion and assurance that Jesus is right on everything, is faithful, and is my only hope of knowing and doing right. This is the type of faith that one would have in his doctor, which would cause him to do exactly what the doctor said and follow the protocol to the minute detail. Thus, I follow him when I repent of my sinful, selfish way. It is that obedience that comes from total confidence in the one obeyed. The obedience of love, respect, admiration, fear and worship. Fear is indeed a part, because the Father judgeth without respect of persons according to every man's work. Therefore, we must pass the time of our sojourning here in fear (I Peter 1:17).

FAITH WITHOUT OBEDIENCE IS DEAD. It is worthless to God and man. The whole value of faith to God is that it naturally produces loving obedience. If a man has faith in me as a leader and teacher, then I have a certain control over that person. If someone has faith in me, then I can lead them and change them with my teachings; but if they don't have faith in me, then I can't do anything for them. It is the same with God's government. His Kingdom is dependent upon his subjects having faith in him. If there is broken down faith, then there is disobedience. That is how Satan caused Eve to rebel against God -- he slandered God, and broke down her faith in him. That is how Satan still causes men to live in rebellion to God. Man's faith in God must be restored before man will repent and obey God. The whole value of faith to God is that it obeys out of the right motives!

OBEDIENCE - NOT OF FAITH

As we said earlier, there is obedience that is not the obedience of faith. The Pharisees obeyed Moses' Law and certain traditions to be seen of men. Now, that is obedience, but not the obedience of faith. I can obey you, and not love you. I can obey you, and not have any confidence in you. Salvation is promised to men who have obedience from a faith that works by love! Jesus can only help me if I put my faith and trust in him, and do what he says. If I don't put my confidence in him and obey him, then I will continue on in my rebellion to God until I pay for it in Hell's flames.

The keeping power of God is dependent on my faith -- we are kept by the power of God **through faith**. The only way for God to help me, apart from me exercising my free will in obedience to him, by faith in him, is to override my free will -- which he will not do. No one will be allowed into heaven without the obedience of faith -- or God would have to immediately take away their free will and make them a puppet to keep sin out of heaven. There will be no rebels in heaven! Faith that doesn't have the power to produce obedience and righteousness is no faith at all -- It is dead faith and is worthless. It will not save you!

Why did God not say, "Obey Jesus, and thou shalt be saved"; instead of "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"? Because, just as there is faith without obedience (dead profession), there is also obedience without faith. **In many places God does simply say "Obey Jesus"**; but it must be the **obedience of faith** (doing my best because I truly believe His Word and embrace it) or it is just outward conformity or even a false concept of self atonement through religious activity.

1) Faith must have the attribute of obedience or it is not true faith.

2) Obedience to God must stem from faith in him, or it is not acceptable to him.

There is also an obedience of faith with the **wrong object** of our faith. The Jesus of the Bible is to be our **object** of faith: not the Roman Catholic Pope; a certain church; a famous preacher; pastor, etc. There are those who follow the Catholic teachings with the obedience of faith -- their faith has obedience; and their obedience is from faith; but with the **wrong object**.

The Jesus of the Bible has a certain **character, certain morals, certain teachings, a definite will, definite goals**, etc. There are many "Jesus-s" being propagated today (Just as Jesus said there would be); who are **not** the Jesus of the Bible (2 Cor. 11:4). The Jesus of Christian Rock has different teachings than the Jesus of the Bible, therefore, he is a false Jesus. The Jesus of the Catholic Church, and many other churches and cults have different teachings

than the Jesus of the Bible; therefore they are false also. I MUST HAVE THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH IN THE JESUS OF THE BIBLE.

Having faith in Jesus is having faith in His teachings, His ability to save, His character, and His ways. If men make up a new Jesus that is more pleasing to the flesh; having faith in this new version will not save!

It is interesting how Paul sums up his ministry of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles as, "**making them obedient**" (Romans 15:18). It is interesting how Peter speaks of the Gospel message as a "**holy commandment**" and "**the way of righteousness**" (2 Peter 2:21). In 2 Thess. 1:8 we see Jesus coming to take vengeance on those who "**obey not the Gospel**". Hebrews 5:9 tells us that salvation is only for those who "**obey Jesus**".

We could go on and on with verse after verse; but to what avail? Those who have repentant hearts would never think of giving Jesus a disobedient faith -- It is only the unrepentant heretics that we have to preach this to. May God help you to have the OBEDIENCE OF FAITH IN THE JESUS OF THE BIBLE!

CHAPTER 17

THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE

"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence <biaz>, and the violent <biaz> take it by force." Matt. 11:12

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth <biaz> into it." Luke 16:16

Luke's parallel passage says, "**Presseth into it**", which can also be translated, "**Entereth Violently**".

"Every man" refers to the multitudes whom the Scribes and Pharisees considered "cursed" and "unlearned"; but they were the ones obtaining the kingdom - pressing in before the others with a zeal for repentance and reconciliation to God the others thought was beneath them. John's preaching had stirred this zeal in those who knew themselves to be sinners and in need of The Great Physician.

This may be the most important chapter for you to understand, and apply. I would like to share with you the thoughts of some spiritual and learned men, including early church writers, on this subject of "**the violent take it by force**".

The Pulpit Commentary says on Matt. 11:12, "**Suffereth Violence: In Luke it is middle "Every man entereth violently into it;" and though it is certainly passive here, St. Luke's phrase compels us to understand the reason of the violence to be to gain entrance into the kingdom. The kingdom is not ill treated, but it is as it were taken by storm...Our Lord is describing the energy with which some souls are pressing in, and urging the need of such energy if salvation is to be obtained."**

Adam Clarke: "**The tax gatherers and heathens, whom the scribes and Pharisees think have no right to the kingdom of the Messiah, filled with holy zeal and earnestness, seize at the kingdom as by force from those learned doctors who claimed for themselves the chiefest places in the kingdom. Christ himself said, the tax-gatherers and harlots go before you into the kingdom of God. He that will take, get possession of the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, must be in earnest: all hell will oppose him in every step he takes; and if a man be not absolutely determined to give up his sins and evil companions, and have his soul saved at all hazards, and at every expense, he will surely perish everlastingly. This requires a violent earnestness"**

William Burkit: Our Saviour goes on commending John's ministry from the great success of it: it had that powerful influence upon the consciences of men, that no soldiers were ever more violent and eager in the storming and taking a strong hold, than John's hearers were in pursuing the kingdom of heaven. Never any minister (before) discovered the Messiah and his kingdom so clearly as John did; and therefore never was there such zeal to press into the kingdom amongst any as the hearers of John had.

Learn hence, 1. That the clearer knowledge any people have of the worth and excellency of heaven the more will their zeal be inflamed in the pursuit of heaven.

2. That all that do intend and resolve for heaven must offer violence in the taking of it; none but the violent are victorious; they take it by force.

Irenaeus: (180 AD) Bishop of Lyons (France) was originally from Smyrna, where, as a young man, was taught by Polycarp. "**The Lord declared that the kingdom of heaven was the portion of "the violent". He says, "the violent take it by force". By "the violent", he means those who by strength and earnest striving are on the watch to snatch it away on the moment... this able wrestler, therefore, exhorts us to enter the struggle for**

immortality. He does this so that we may be crowned, and so we may deem the crown precious -- for it is that which is acquired by our struggle...since, then, this power has been conferred upon us, the Lord has taught and the apostles have commanded us even more to love God, so that we may reach this for ourselves by striving for it."

John Bunyan, Pilgrim's Progress: "I say also that the Interpreter took him again by the hand, and led him into a pleasant place, where was builded a stately palace, beautiful to behold; at the sight of which Christian was greatly delighted. He saw also upon the top thereof certain persons walking, who were clothed all in gold. Then said Christian, "May we go in thither?" Then the Interpreter took him, and led him up toward the door of the palace; and behold, at the door stood a great company of men, as desirous to go in, but durst not. There also sat a man, at a little distance from the door, at a table-side, with a book, and his inkhorn before him, to take the name of him that should enter therein. He saw also, that in the doorway stood many men in armour to keep it, being resolved to do to the men that will enter what hurt and mischief they could. Now was Christian somewhat in amaze. At last, when every man started back for fear of the armed men, Christian saw a man of a very stout countenance come up to the man that sat there to write, saying, "Set down my name, sir": the which when he had done, he saw the man draw his sword, and put a helmet upon his head, and rush toward the door upon the armed men, who laid upon him with deadly force; but the man, not at all discouraged, fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely. So, after he had received and given many wounds to those that attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all, and pressed forward into the palace; at which there was a pleasant voice heard from those that were within, even of those that walked upon the top of the palace, saying, "COME IN, COME IN; ETERNAL GLORY THOU SHALT WIN." So he went in, and was clothed with such garments as they. Then Christian smiled, and said, "I think verily I know the meaning of this".

I think, verily, that I also know the meaning of this. We could write volumes, and preach many sermons on the names of those men who stood and kept people from entering in: Pride, false security, fear, flesh, busy-ness, sin, relatives, bias, world, crowd, books, TV, bitterness, unforgiveness, unwilling heart, etc. etc. They are still standing at the door to keep you from entering heaven. You must be the **"violent, who take it by force"**, if you will be saved at all.

"Are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive (agonize) to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:23-24

"Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." 2 Tim. 2:3-5

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints:" Ephesians 6:10-18

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (reprobate)" I Cor. 9:26,27

"And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. 12:11

I could go on and on, but I hope you get the point! You must have a **violent desire; a violent faith;** and violent **striving** to get on the narrow road, and **stay** on the narrow road. It takes this to contend for the faith. It takes this to witness! It takes this to raise godly children in a cursed world.

Noah had a violent habit of **"moving with fear"** and **"obeying God"** by faith. That is how he **"found grace in the eyes of the Lord"**, while EVERYBODY else didn't -- just those with Noah! He didn't start this habit of faith when God spoke to him. It was **because** of this habit and practice that He **"found grace"** and God spoke to him. Abraham developed a violent faith that was willing to offer his own son in obedience to God! Moses had a

violent, earnest faith, that chose to suffer with God's people; rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Look at Rahab's violent faith! This is the type of faith that we must have to be saved! This is the type of faith that it takes to keep our love from waxing cold.

I want you to notice this faith was essential for the Old Testament prophets to obey God:

"For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Is. 50:7

"And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee. But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hardhearted. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house." Ez. 3:4-9

Now, I want you to see something that I think is very sacred:

"And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," Luke 9:51

I stand in awe and respect when I think of Jesus setting his face, like a flint, toward Jerusalem -- toward his betrayal; toward Gethsemane; toward the unjust trial; toward the mocking; toward the spitting; toward the buffeting; toward the rejection; toward the scourging; toward the nakedness; toward the shame; toward a crown of thorns; toward the cross....and ultimately toward "the cup" he must drink for all mankind! Jesus had to have violent determination! Violent love! Violent obedience to his Father! He set the example for us to follow. He overcame through "strong crying and tears" (Heb. 5:7); through sweating "great drops of blood"; and "laying down his life"!

Away with Antinomian Hobo Christianity! Away with Calvinistic puppetry! Away with the lies of unconditional security! **"Ye Shall Not Surely Die"** is the lie of the serpent! **THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY HIS FAITH!** Listen to Paul, **"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness!"** Hallelujah! Glory to God! He stated that with a memory creased by stonings, shipwreck, rods, stripes, imprisonments, beatings, long night sermons, warning with tears, a night and a day in the deep, perils of robbers, perils of false brethren, and the care of all the churches!

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." 2 Cor. 5:8,9

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (disobedience: same as I Peter 2:7-- Strong's #543 & 544) Heb. 4:11

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:" Romans 2:7

THE KINGDOM OF JESUS CHRIST IS THE PORTION OF THE VIOLENT. THOSE WHO WILL NOT EXERCISE A VIOLENT FAITH, WILL NOT OBTAIN ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST'S KINGDOM!

Section Six

THE GOSPEL ~ TRUTH VS. ERROR

It is evident we are in the days of great deception, spoken of by the Lord. It grieves my heart to see so much heresy and false philosophy robbing sincere, but uninformed people of the abundant, holy life they could experience within the "whole counsel of God". As a youth, taking Karate, I was taught to use my opponent's own inertia against him, rather than directly opposing his force. My soul agonizes to see how Satan has used this trick on so much of what is called Christianity today. Who would have thought that the zeal to win lost souls would cause men to fall into a false, watered down, Gospel to produce more "numbers". Who would have thought that the desire to avoid the errors of Roman Catholicism in their "adding to scripture" and making salvation come through the church's merit system, would lead so many into the Antinomian heresy of false repentance and false faith, which is afraid of anything that could be called "works" - even obedience to Jesus Christ.

I am continuously amazed to see people defending erroneous doctrine and the sinful, disobedient lives that adhere to it; while at the same time criticizing pure doctrine and the pure, godly lifestyles of those who follow it, as though it is sinful to be godly! Paul said grievous wolves would come in and spread false doctrine after he left. What you preach and practice today is either a product of an apostle or a grievous wolf. As we have said before, the only reason one prefers the grievous wolf doctrine over the pure apostolic is because he loves darkness, and the sin he can justify through it, more than light.

Once a Baptist preacher, who followed the heresy of false repentance spoken of in this book, was taunting one who believed you must live in obedience, and calling it, "sinless perfectionism". After a moment the man said to this Baptist preacher, "Just exactly what sin is it that you want to commit?" Yesterday a Calvinist asked me how it was that I came to my position. I said, "Plain statements of Scripture". We are to only build doctrine on PLAIN STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE, IN CONTEXT, WITH BIBLE DEFINITIONS FOR THE WORDS, AND COMPARED TO ALL THE OTHER STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE ON THE SAME SUBJECT. You can't ignore verses that don't fit in your system of doctrine, or use "your verses" to cancel "their verses". The Bible harmonizes perfectly, so the "my verse can beat up your verse" nonsense is unacceptable. Every verse fits in its perfect place and true doctrine will mesh with every verse.

I've found that many preachers misrepresent the opposing side in order to refute it. They build an absurd straw man, and then tear him up. The uninformed reader thinks they have refuted me; but they have only beat up their straw man. I've tried to get them to sit and discuss the issues, or even debate; but they will not. I believe it is important to confront error, and allow the people to see both sides.

Because I believe that men must repent and turn from their wicked ways before God can forgive them, I'm accused by these preachers of preaching "sinless perfection". Those who believe that Jesus must be received as boss

(LORD) of your life, when you accept him as Savior; are labeled with "Lordship Salvation" -- and said to believe that unless a sinner becomes an instant, perfect, mature Christian at conversion, then he is not saved. This is a lie. This is a straw man and misrepresentation of their beliefs.

The Devil's tools are "false accusation" and "deception"; and it is sad to see these preachers, whom I was raised under, using such methods. As I said, I was raised under such preaching, saw the consequences in the lives of people I love, went to their colleges, and when I stood against such heresy, and tried to persuade my family, friends, and church, of the truth, I lost my church, was called a heretic by relatives and those I thought were friends. Don't think I am splitting hairs, and being extreme -- you haven't seen what I've seen. My confidence in such preachers was broken down because of all the dishonesty that I saw. When I turned to the Word of God, historic apostolic Christianity, and God's Spirit to lead me, I found the truth was much more evident than I expected, and marveled that I had not seen it sooner.

As I said, as soon as my personal bias was discarded, I saw the truth. If you would discard yours, and simply seek "TRUTH" you would see it too. I'm going to set the errors I've heard preached next to the truth of God's Word, and historic apostolic Christianity, and I want you to see for yourself which is consistent with the Word of God, and which is Satan's deceit. You will see the same lie in false doctrine that Satan told Eve in the Garden: If you disobey God, **"YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE"**.

1. REPENTANCE

ERROR: Repentance is a change of mind that doesn't necessarily produce a change of lifestyle from rebellion against God to obedience to him. If God required men to turn from rebellion to obedience in order to be forgiven, then salvation would not be a gift. God is said to "repent", so repentance cannot be "turning from sin". It simply means a change of mind about Jesus. God just wants sinners to admit their sinful condition, and accept Jesus as the payment for their sins. So repentance is simply a turning from the one sin of unbelief. "Unbelief" is the only sin a sinner needs to turn from to be saved.

TRUTH: There are many points here that need to be addressed, so bear with me. **THE BOTTOM LINE OF SALVATION FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION IS FORGIVENESS!** God cannot grant forgiveness justly without two things:

1. Jesus' atonement (payment) for sins through his blood shed on the cross; and

2. Man's confessing and forsaking of his sin, which is called repentance in the Bible.

The men who preach the error are dishonest in that they make a big deal out of God repenting, yet don't tell the people there are different Greek words used by the Holy Spirit to speak of God changing his mind out of mercy, or man changing his mind and heart and life about his rebellion. In either case, God's "repentance" from wrath to mercy still changes his actions. Anyone with sense knows that if I change my mind about my rebellion, I will then strive to obey -- this is elementary.

FORGIVENESS IS A FREE GIFT. ALL GOD'S PROVISION IN SALVATION IS A FREE GIFT. THE ATONEMENT IS A FREE GIFT. IT IS FREE TO EVERY MAN WHO WILL REPENT AND RETURN TO GOD AS THE PRODIGAL DID TO HIS FATHER. Repentance does not pay for forgiveness -- thus causing salvation to **not** be a gift!! However, it is **not** a gift to rebels, or everyone would be saved, and nobody would go to Hell.

END VS. MEANS

Repentance is a change of the ultimate preference of the mind or will of man. It is a change in the "END", and not merely the "MEANS" in the ultimate preference of the will. A selfish person may adopt religion as a **means** of securing social status or pursuing the same "end" as he pursued before conversion -- self security, acceptance, praise of man, etc. Usually it is not hard to see this in a person if you are around them much, or speak with them about the Lord and their sins. There is a definite difference between the person who has surrendered his will to God's, and is seeking God and serving God for God's glory; and those who see God as a rabbit's foot -- a means to secure their own pleasure, prosperity, or security. This is where the Pharisees were, and many "Christians" today are. They have yet to experience true conversion. They are still seeking their **own** pleasure, and haven't forsaken their wicked ways. You can discover this by asking the question: Do they adjust their lifestyle to fulfill God's pleasure and will? Are they denying self and bearing the cross of obedience to Christ? Or, are they doing what they do because it satisfies the flesh? Does a woman dress fashionable, immodest, and worldly for God's pleasure? Does a man smoke, drink, chew, watch TV, look at ungodly books, or listen to worldly music for God's glory? What is the ultimate preference of the will? Yet their churches are full of these people who have been told they are not only saved, but secure for Heaven!

The churches are full of people who do as they please all week laying up treasure on earth or spending it without any regard to God's will, pleasure or Word. Many times they live just good enough to be accepted in their social arena, and receive the praise of men; but it never takes them to the realms outside the gate bearing the reproach of Christ -- doing God's will that brings the scorn of men.

"Beware when all men speak well of you".

These people live in the experience of Romans 7:14-25 or even worse in 6:1 -- "living in sin that Grace might abound;" but have never experienced Romans 8. They are in bondage to the flesh, and fulfill the desires of the flesh, though they are convicted by the law, and claim to be full of desire to do better. You do what you want to do. You may say you desire to do better, but what you do is what your ultimate preference is at the moment. The Gospel promises victory to those who really want it. That is what the new birth is all about. I understand that Christians have struggles; but it is **because they have repented**, not because they know they need to! It is struggling to obey, not struggling to justify their own way! It is struggling upward to victory, not wallowing in the mire!

BUT BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY, DECEIVING YOUR OWN SELVES. JAMES 1:22

This self deceit is where the people in Matthew 7:21-27 come in, as well as Judas, and the disciples in John 6:64-66. This is why when great multitudes were following Jesus, he would turn and say, as in Luke 14:25-35, and to the rich young ruler; that they must die to self before they could become one of his followers. There must be a death to "self fulfillment", before there can be the birth of "Thy will be done" in our lives. The false repentance doctrine is the tail on the "easy believe", dead faith dog.

WE ARE NOT OUR OWN

When accepting Jesus as Savior and Lord, we must understand we become **stewards** of our lives and possessions for God's purposes, not **owners**.

What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. I Cor. 6:19 & 3:16,17

It seems obvious from the context that these Corinthians were young in the faith, but still should have already known this -- They were told this at conversion. Jesus came preaching repentance to a world of men who had taken personal ownership of their lives contrary to God's will, and were living as "gods" for their own glory and pleasure; just as Satan told Eve in the garden.

ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW

This is the very reason the Bible can say, **"If any man be is Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God" (2 Cor. 5:17)**. Right from the start!! We are the ones who yield our members to do right or wrong: and which ever we do, determines our destination.

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Romans 6:16

This was written to believers, as sinners are already dead in sin. Notice how Romans 6:17,18 paint a perfect picture of repentance at conversion.

...ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

What form of doctrine was this? Not "Easy Believism", Antinomianism, Calvinism, or this false repentance heresy!

METANOEO

From Genesis to Revelation, God is calling sinners (people who practice sin) to repentance. Repentance is a complete transformation of the mind and heart. It starts with conviction from God's Word preached by the unction of the Holy Spirit about man's sin, and God's wrath toward it; and ends with a yielding to God, and forsaking of sins. The root of the Greek word METANOEO (repentance when referring to salvation) is META. It is the same root for METAMORPHOSIS and METABOLISM. The root means transformation. If this has really happened to a sinner's mind, then his entire life will change direction. That is why John the Baptist and the apostles demanded fruits or works "meet for repentance". This is why I John 2:4 can boldly say,

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

So... are all new converts supposed to be "liars" for some time before they start obeying; or are they expected to obey from the point of conversion?

WHAT DID THEY DO?

It is clear how the people in the Bible understood repentance: John the Baptist told the people to repent. So, **what did they do?** They came confessing their sins, and asked him what they should do to be righteous and acceptable to God. Jesus said that the people of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah. Well...What did they do? Jonah 3:5-10 says the people "believed" God, and therefore put away their evil ways. God's message is a promise of pardon to those who repent and forsake their wicked ways: so when I "believe" God, the first thing I do is forsake my sins in hopes of pardon.

REPENT OF SINS

To say that repentance is turning from **unbelief**, and not from **sins**, shows that they don't understand God's message that we are to believe. The Gospel is essentially the same all through the Bible: Salvation is by grace through faith -- nobody has ever been saved by keeping the law perfect. The words of the prophets are the foundation for New Testament Gospel preaching. Here is an example of salvation by grace through faith: Isaiah 55:6,7

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

This is exactly the same thing taught through the story of the prodigal son. Jesus is teaching the glory of one sinner repenting, more than 99 just persons (non-sinners) who need no repentance. Read Luke 24:46,

Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Now, if you take this to an English teacher, and have them diagram the sentence, they will tell you that repentance refers to sins. Before there can be remission (forgiveness) of sins, there must be repentance of sins. Those who hear this message and believe it will do what? ...They will repent of their sinful way, and turn to Christ, so they can receive remission.

VICTIM OR VILLAIN

I believe part of the problem is a false philosophy that man is a **victim** and not the **villain** in regards to sin. A victim cannot do anything but trust and allow the Savior to save them. But, the villain must give up his villainous ways before he can be pardoned and forgiven. Man is not condemned because he is a cripple, but because he is a criminal -- not because he is a victim, but because he is a villain! The prodigal son was not a victim, but a rebel; and had to give up his wicked ways to be reconciled to his father. Read Colossians 1:21,

And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

They were alienated by wicked works, which stemmed from a wicked mind; so when they repented and changed their mind, guess what else changed? Their works! So what did they repent of? Their sins!

Hebrews 6:1 makes it clear what believers repented from at conversion: "dead works". Dead works are works that are not of faith in God, just as faith without works is also called dead faith -- they need each other to be alive!

WORKS MEET FOR REPENTANCE

Read what Paul said to the Gentiles, "**Repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.**" Acts 26:20. "Works meet for repentance" is an interesting statement. It is the same thing John the Baptist required of the Jews. It proves that repentance has to do with "works", and a repentant person will have different **works**! The man in the temple cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He was repenting of his **sins**! Jesus told people who said they believed in him, "Go and sin no more". He was telling them to repent of their **sins**.

The bottom line of salvation is forgiveness! The Bible says those who cover their sins shall not prosper, but those who confess and forsake their sins shall have mercy. The man in the temple was confessing and forsaking his sins. The people who came to be baptized of John were confessing and forsaking their sins. The men of Nineveh confessed and forsook their sins, and all this is called repentance. The only people who have the privilege to simply "trust Christ" for forgiveness are those who are already repentant. Those still in disobedience can only

trust presumptuously, and the Lord doesn't hear their request for anything -- **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me."**

If the judge tells a wife beater to repent, what do you think he wants him to repent of? Eating sweets?... or beating his wife? When God calls sinners to repentance, he wants them to repent of being sinners -- and unbelief is only one sin that sinners must repent of, as can be seen from Revelation 21:8. We are to repent of the **works** of unbelief, not just from the unbelief, and keep the dead works.

CHILDREN OF OBEDIENCE

It is all too clear that men turn from disobedience to obedience at the point of conversion. If lost people are labeled the "children of disobedience" in the Bible, then what must Christians be? And when did this begin? Again, If I John tells us, **"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar"**; then when did this change occur? It had to occur at conversion, or there would be a time when all baby Christians were liars! Sad to say, the ones following false doctrine are! -- Thanks to the deceivers who converted them!

Read Ez. 18:30-31; Ez. 3,18,33; Is. 1:16-20. Where do you think the Jews got their understanding of the meaning of repentance? The sin of "unbelief in Christ" can only be committed after Christ has been presented; but repentance is preached in the New Testament before Christ came, and to the Gentiles who didn't even know about Christ coming.

THE TRUE GOSPEL

The Gospel is that we can obtain remission of our sins in Jesus' name if we repent of them. This is the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. When God said in Isaiah 55:7, **"Let the wicked forsake his way"**, what was he saying? If the wicked forsook his way, was he to go some **other man's way**, or start **obeying God**? It is obvious. Well, then God was saying for sinners to come back to obedience in order to receive pardon, right? Right! How long did God want this person to remain obedient? If he turned back to his wicked ways, would God continue his forgiveness? Who is even foolish enough to argue that God would? The truth is plain and consistent with every verse in the Bible: While I remain repentant, I remain in God's forgiveness; but if I turn back to my wicked ways again, I step out of God's forgiveness. This is exactly what is says in Heb. 3:12-14; 10:26; II Tim. 2:12; Romans 6:16; 8:13; 11:22; I Cor. 9:27-10:14; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; Gal. 6:7-9; Eph. 4:30-5:7; Heb. 6; 12:15-25; James 5:19-20; II Peter 2; 3:17; I John 2:24-25; Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 22:7,14 to name a few -- not to mention the Old Testament ones like I Chronicles 28:9 & II Chronicles 15:1,2,

And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

Now, this principle is the same in the New Testament, in fact, we are even under greater danger if we turn back, because: **"To whom much is given, much is required."** (Heb. 2:1-3; 10:26-29; 12:25).

A FREE GIFT?

To say the **conditions** of repentance and living faith make salvation **not** a free gift, or **of** works, only shows they don't understand the Bible at all. Normally, a criminal must pay his due punishment with or without repentance; but, because of God's mercy and the gift of Christ's atonement, God offers a free pardon to those criminals who return with a penitent heart. To say this is salvation by works shows further ignorance. "Salvation by works" says that good works can atone for bad works, so Jesus didn't need to die. Salvation by grace says that Christ made atonement as a free gift; but this free gift is **only** given to those who return to God as the prodigal did to his father: repentant, humble, submissive, and willing to only be a servant.

UNBELIEF OR DISOBEDIENCE

All sin is a form of unbelief. All obedience to the Spirit of the Law, or to Christ is because of faith! The two are inseparable. In fact, the Greek word used for disobedience in 15 places in the New Testament (**Luke 1:17; Acts 26:19; Romans 1:30; 10:21; Eph. 2:2; 5:6; Col. 3:6; II Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:16; 3:3; I Peter 2:7:8; 3:1,20; 4:17**);

...is translated "unbelief" or "believed not" 13 times in the New Testament (**John 3:36; Acts 14:2; 17:5; 19:9; Rom. 11:30,31,32; 15:31; Heb. 3:18; 4:6,11; 11:31**)

FAITH OR FAITHFUL

It is interesting also, that the word translated "faith" is also translated "faithful" in referring to salvation. To say someone is a believer, is to say he is faithful. Just as "infidel" means "unbeliever"; and "fidelity" means "faithful". The two cannot be separated. You can't have a believing rebel, or an obedient unbeliever. God requires the heart; so outward conformity to rules alone is not obedience. This is one reason the basis for salvation is **faith** and not the works of Moses' Law; because God wants the **heart**! He didn't have the Pharisees' hearts; nor does he have the heart of one who professes to believe, but doesn't strive to obey!! It is impossible for belief to be in the heart, without obedience in the life!! IMPOSSIBLE!

If there is disobedience, then there is some unbelief in the heart to the same proportion. That is why Hebrews 3:12 says,

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, IF WE hold the beginning of our confidence (faith) stedfast unto the end;"

The reason they say that God just wants the sinner to turn from his unbelief to their definition of belief -- which is to pray their "sinner's prayer", and say they are depending on Jesus to get them to Heaven; even though they won't obey Christ, get baptized, be faithful to church, etc.; is because of their error on Justification by faith. We will discuss that next.

CONFESSING THE LORD JESUS

God says that baptism is the answer of a clear conscience to God. If the sinner hasn't confessed and forsaken all known sin in his heart, he doesn't have a clear conscience in baptism! The Bible says we are to confess the Lord Jesus unto salvation (Romans 10:9-10). These false prophets are leading people to hypocrisy in telling them to confess Jesus as their Lord, but not live as though he is their Lord; and calling us heretics because we tell them to live what they profess!! Amazing!

2. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

ERROR: One act of faith in "accepting Christ" causes us to be perpetually justified before God -- thus having our past, present, and future sins forgiven and cleansed at the moment one "accepts Christ". Furthermore, the good works of Christ are placed (imputed) on our record, so we are seen as righteous as Jesus, though in reality we live in shameful disobedience to God. Thus, once "saved" we can never be condemned for our sins, no matter how wicked we live. God will only chasten us -- even to death and Heaven. Justification by faith, apart from works, means that whether our faith works, or does nothing, it has no affect on our salvation -- since we are perpetually justified by that one act of faith in receiving Christ. Some use the verse in Romans 4:5 to this end: **"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."** Others will declare that our future sins are not covered at conversion, but that Jesus' advocacy is automatic and unconditional -- not conditioned on our walking in the light or confessing known sin. They even say that present confessing of sins for forgiveness has nothing to do with our salvation.

TRUTH: It is hard to believe that seemingly intelligent people actually believe and preach such damnable lies; but it is true. As I have studied, I have found that in the first century some gnostics actually had a similar idea; but the apostles shot it down. First John was written to combat such error in the first century. One big name, Baptist evangelist, who called me a "male donkey" in front of a church lobby full of people, because he could not answer my questions concerning his heresy; also told a relative of mine, "As long as he is stuck in I John, there is no hope for him". Well, I'm still stuck in I John!

PERPETUAL JUSTIFICATION

It is easy to prove from Scripture that perpetual justification is conditioned on perpetual faith -- and that must be a living, obeying continual faith! I am justified today, not because I prayed a prayer 10 or 20 years ago; but because I am living by obedient faith in Jesus Christ today! Only past sins were cleansed and forgiven at conversion. Present sins that are known are cleansed and forgiven as I confess and forsake them. Present sins that are unknown to me now are the only ones automatically covered; but only while I am walking in all the light I have now!

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

...If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:7,9

It is clear that **"walking in the light"** means doing what I know is right. While I do this I still have ignorant (unknown) sins that must be covered, and are. Then the sins I know about, which will only be moments of weakness, slips, mistakes, etc. during my walk of faith, are to be confessed for cleansing and forgiveness. Nobody will be allowed into Heaven without having their sins cleansed and forgiven. God has given man the responsibility to not only repent and come to Christ in faith, but to continually use the means of grace God has provided to keep themselves in the faith, and under the blood.

OUR HIGH PRIEST

Jesus is our High Priest in the Tabernacle of Heaven, he is there with his once-for-all sacrifice provision to cover his saints and keep them saved; but we must follow God's program! We must:

1. Walk in the light (This is called by many different names: Sow to the Spirit, Abide in Christ, Live by faith, etc.) When we are walking in the light, unknown sins are covered, and we are eligible for number 2.
2. Confess known sins to our High Priest for cleansing.

We keep ourselves saved by these two steps. Step number two is seen in the following verses: Hebrews 7:24-25

But this man [Jesus], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

If we understand "come" is present participle in the Greek, then we can see that Jesus is ever living and available, and thus can save to the end (uttermost) those who "are coming" unto God by him to confess and find grace to help in time of need. See Heb. 4:14-16:

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 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.

This is powerful! Notice the sins that a believer must confess are not rebellion, but "infirmities" of our human nature; and, because Jesus has suffered victoriously, he is the perfect advocate for us.

ADVOCACY OF CHRIST

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: I John 2:1

What John wrote in chapter one was so they would know not to commit sin, but if any person did commit a sin, they were to avail themselves of the provision of grace in Jesus our advocate/high priest/intercessor.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Romans 5:8,9,10

It is vital that you understand this! Reconciled means "getting together" not necessarily "staying together". Reconciled was "by his death" -- being justified by his blood from our past when we repent and are born again. However, our ultimate salvation is not wrought by this alone, but by his **life**! This is speaking of his continued work as our high priest, and our continued coming to him for mercy, confessing our sins. **WE ARE JUSTIFIED PERPETUALLY BY WALKING IN THE LIGHT AND CONFESSING KNOWN SINS PERPETUALLY!!**

So, unlike the Old Testament saints who came to the earthly tabernacle to an earthly priest with an animal sacrifice that could not really take away sins; we come to the Heavenly Tabernacle to Jesus who has offered himself the perfect lamb. We have a much better covenant, built on better promises, with better provision, a better priest, easy access, and, instead of praising God for it and using it, we want **"our sins forgiven past, present, and future"**, so we can live as we please and never have to be bothered with our sins again! If this isn't Roman Catholic selling of indulgences, I don't know what is!!

FOOT WASHING IS A PICTURE OF JESUS' CONTINUAL PRIESTLY WORK

When Jesus washed the disciples feet, he taught them this same principle. First he said that a believer needs not to wash his whole body again (the bath of regeneration that cleanses from past sins, and the power of sins); but just

needs to have his feet continually washed (Jesus' priestly work of keeping us clean while we "walk" in this dirty world). Now, does this affect our salvation? Jesus told Peter, concerning the foot washing, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me". That is pretty clear! Nobody will get into Heaven without a clean record of cleansed and forgiven sins. God has set the condition on that: IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT...; and, IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS...

All the exhortations I listed earlier concerning this show clearly that continued forgiveness is conditioned on continuing in the faith! The parable of Matthew 18:21-35 is clear to the honest soul that not only are we **not** forgiven for future sins, but we **can lose** past forgiveness that we already had! We can have forgiveness revoked, by not forgiving others!! Jesus said so!

JESUS' GOOD DEEDS NOT PUT ON MY RECORD

Nowhere does the Bible teach that Jesus' good deeds are put on my record. The Bible states that our **faith** is counted to us or imputed to us for righteousness -- this is because our faith activates Jesus' blood (Remember I John 1:7), which cleanses our record, which makes us righteous! The Bible says that "Jesus is our righteousness"; but that is the same scenario. If we have a living faith in Christ -- walking in the light, our sins are cleansed and forgiven through Jesus' priestly work applying his blood for me! If a man is saved by the skill of the doctor, it doesn't mean the doctor's skill is imputed to the man. We are saved by Jesus' righteousness only in that He obeyed the Father to the death of the Cross to shed His blood for the atonement of our sins.

Jesus' righteousness had to be put on his record, so he could be the sinless, perfect Lamb to die for me. Once he died for me, and provided his blood to atone for my sins, then there is no more need for his good works to be put on my record! If his blood washes away my sins, then why do I also need his good works -- sinless is sinless! If his good works were put on my record, then he would be in Hell paying for my sins, and I would be going to Heaven by works -- His works. He could not have been resurrected unless he was counted sinless, so if his good works were put on my record, he would not have them on his record, and would not have been resurrected. Jesus' death was vicarious, not his life and works! When people speak of being clothed in the righteousness of Christ, they can only mean Biblically that we are clothed in the cleansing blood of Christ -- the word atonement means "covering". Adam and Eve were clothed due to the shedding of blood, and so are we, if we continue in the light. Paul quotes David to clarify what the "imputation of righteousness" is in Romans 4:6-7:

Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

WHAT ABOUT ROMANS 4:1-24?

Very simple: the works spoken of here are not the works of faith in Christ (which activates the atonement for us, and thus saves us); but the works of Moses' Law in order to atone for our own sins - which is impossible. Notice, the word "debt" in verse 4. Justification by the **works of the law** is keeping the law perfect, as Jesus did, so that the law **itself** justifies me. Thus justification is a "debt" and not a salvation (salvaging). Paul makes it clear that no man is justified by the works of the law; and thus we can't seek justification in this way. We must seek justification by faith in Christ, which says, "I confess my sinfulness, and don't depend upon my righteousness to earn anything; but I repent of my wicked ways, and yield my members to Christ in faith that, as I follow him, he will be my atonement and High Priest to cleanse my sin, so I can be righteous before God, and thus be saved."

ABRAHAM'S FAITH

The Bible says, "Abraham believed God, and **it** (his faith) was counted unto him for righteousness." Simply read Hebrews 11 to see a further view of what this faith was. It was not just one act of faith, as we see the Holy Ghost quotes that phrase, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" regarding more than one act: Romans 3,4 -- promise of his son; James 2:21-24 -- the offering of his son; Heb. 11 -- going whither he knew not in obedience to God. Galatians speaks of Abraham's faith as **faithfulness**, and Romans speaks of the "**steps**" of his faith -- This is not speaking of "one act" salvation.

Romans 4:4, 5 say, "**Now to him that worketh is the reward (justification) not reckoned of grace, but of debt.**" If we could keep the Law perfect, justification would be a debt -- not grace. Verse 5, "**but to him that worketh not**", --This has only one application, and that is in reference to earning justification as a debt God owes: working to earn justification apart from Christ. "**But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness**". Two things are obvious:

1. "Believeth" is the same faith spoken of in the rest of Romans, and the New Testament; and is not dead faith; but living, obeying faith -- compare Romans 2:5-11.

2. God justifieth the **ungodly**; but not as they continue in their ungodly ways, but as they repent. If "believeth" is living faith, then they are no longer "the ungodly" in the sense of rebellion, but just in the sense of human sinfulness, which we cannot eradicate here and now. To interpret this differently is to contradict the rest of the Bible. James makes this very clear, and is in perfect harmony with Romans. The "works" of Romans, which cannot save, are works of law to atone for sin; but the **works** of James, which our faith must have, are not works of the law (did the law tell Abraham to offer his son? or Rahab to hide the spies?); but the **works of faith in obedience to God. Paul speaks of "works of the Law" to earn heaven as a debt; but James speaks of "works of obedience" as the acid test of true faith. Those depending on "works of the Law" to earn heaven apart from Christ's atonement will be disappointed; but those obeying diligently all Christ's commands seeking to find grace in His sight and receive of His atonement, will be saved.**

Verses 6-8 illustrate the meaning of verse 5:

Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Romans 5:6-8

The false prophets say that verse 6, and 8 mean that believers can live in sin, and God won't record it anymore. This is pure heresy, and a lie from Satan. Verse 7 makes it all too clear what verses 6 & 8 mean. That is this: When God forgives a person's sins, those sins are not imputed to them. God can either forgive my sins and cleanse them, or impute them to my record for judgment day. If I am walking in the light, then they are cleansed and forgiven; but if I'm not, they are imputed. The blessing is upon the man who is living by the obedient faith of Abraham. In this state, and this state only will his sins not be imputed, but be forgiven and cleansed. When God forgives and cleanses, He is saying that He now counts me righteous, even though I haven't done the righteous deeds to earn that title. If I had, He would not have had to forgive me. "Imputation of righteousness without works" is simply the forgiveness and cleansing of those walking in the light!! When I'm forgiven and cleansed, my record says I am righteous (I've done my duty); when in fact I didn't do what was righteous. It is easy to see how someone could be led into error if they are trying to get by with sin, and not looking at the whole picture of God's Word -- Taking one passage out of context can start heresy every time!

GALATIANS

In the book of Galatians, Paul is battling a problem of a similar sort. Some Jewish believers were telling Christians they wouldn't be ultimately saved if they didn't adopt the Law of Moses (diet and holy days, etc), and circumcision, to their faith in Christ (Acts 15). Paul battles this in Galatians by saying that, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." They don't need Christ's atonement, if they seek salvation through the deeds of the law. (Gal. 5:4-7)

For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

If the apostles had believed they were justified by one act of faith, they would have used that argument in Acts 15, and Paul would have repeated that here in Galatians. They would have said, "We are already saved, what do you mean, 'We won't be saved, unless we are circumcised and keep the law of Moses'?" They didn't say that! They, instead labored to show the difference between justification through the deeds of the law, and justification through a continued, obedient, faithful belief in Jesus Christ. Which is spelled out in Galatians 6:7-9, and 15,16.

GALATIANS 6:7-9 Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing (sowing to the spirit): for in due season we shall reap (eternal life), IF WE FAINT NOT.

(italics and emphasis are mine)

It is obvious that "corruption" is equal to "Hell". This is very clearly teaching continuous justification by continuous faith. "Walking in the light" (I John 1:7); "sowing to the Spirit" (Gal. 6:8); "abiding in Christ" (John 15); "not living after the flesh" (Romans 6:16, 8:13); "Patient continuance in well doing" (Romans 2:7); "living by faith" (Gal. 3:11); "keeping his sayings" (John 8:51); and even more -- are all synonymous to "believing on Christ" in the Bible definition of the word "believe".

UNCONDITIONAL SECURITY?

Those who say Christ's advocacy is automatic have already been sufficiently refuted, as well as those who say that people who believe will never turn back. All these things are inconsistent with justification by faith. Every warning to continue in the faith says there is no unconditional security, once you understand you are not saved by "one act" of faith. Ezekiel 18 & 33 are very clear on God's program, and harmonize perfectly with Romans 6-8, and the rest of the New Testament. Ez. 33:13 shows the error of unconditional eternal security:

When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness (His status being declared righteous), and commit iniquity (because he thinks he is secure), all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall surely die for it."
(parenthesis mine)

This man was presumptuous because God said he would surely live; and so he slacked off, not realizing the promise was conditional -- this is exactly the dilemma of the false security of today. The effects of the unconditional security doctrine are seen and rebuked in Ez. 13:22.

Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:

The lie of unconditional eternal security is an enabler to the disobedient, causing him, with his "one act" justification, dead faith salvation, false repentance, etc. to be confirmed in his rebellion; and laugh and scoff at those who are working out their own salvation with fear and trembling by striving to walk in the light and confess known sin. They say, "All your works are wrong, because you are not supposed to add any works to grace" -- so they continue in their sin, that grace may abound. God forbid! When we call men to genuine repentance and living faith, they call us heretics - I know, I lost my church and many friends over it!

YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE ...

This is a terrible lie of Satan, "Ye shall not surely die"; but Romans 6:16, 8:13, 11:22, 2:5-11; I Cor. 9:27-10:14; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; Gal. 6:7-9; Eph. 4:30-5:7; Heb. 3:12-14; 6; 10:26-39; 12:15-25; II Tim. 2:12; James 5:19-20; II Peter 2; 3:17; I John 1:7-9; 2:24,25; Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,15-21; 22:7,14; 21:6-8; and many more in the Gospels, parables, related doctrines, etc.-- all say that faith without works is dead, and will not justify; and that those who do not have it, and don't continue in it; but live in sin, **will be damned!** I Cor. 11:32 says they will be condemned with the world, if God's chastening doesn't turn them around. This is implied in Heb. 12. Are you honest, my friend? Don't ignore the facts, because you want Heaven and sin too. You can't have both, as many other Scriptures state - such as: I John 2:3,4; 2:15-17; John 8:51; 14:21-24; 15:1-10; Matt. 7:21-27; etc.

Mark 8:34-38 is a passage I have heard watered down. I heard Bob Grey of Texas say that it doesn't refer to salvation; but, my friend, that could not be farther from the truth! Jesus is speaking of saving or losing your soul!! He and others in the same group of Baptists preach and teach the false doctrines we are refuting in this pamphlet.

3. ETERNAL LIFE

ERROR: Eternal life, once given to me by Christ is mine to the extent that I can leave God's will with it, and live in rebellion with it, and still live forever in Heaven. Once I have it, I will never die spiritually. The very fact that God states I have **eternal** life means I can never lose my inheritance in Heaven or be condemned.

TRUTH: Even when I believed eternal security, as a young man, I knew this was a faulty foundation to build upon. Eternal life is mine in the same way that sap (life) belongs to the branch of a tree. If the branch departs from the tree, and leaves the **source** of sap, then it will wither and dry up. The Bible is clear that Jesus is the source of life, and if I abide in Christ, I will have eternal life abiding in me; but I do not become the source, nor do I have eternal life apart from Christ. John 15 tells me if I stop abiding in Christ, I will be cast forth as a branch, withered, and burned.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

See also I John 2:24,25:

Let that therefore abide [Meno] in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain [Meno] in you, ye also shall continue [Meno] in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.

It is vital to see the conditional aspect here! Notice the Greek word behind “abide”, “remain”, and “continue” is the same. It is also vital to note that ultimate possession of eternal life comes after we have overcome, and endured in the faith. Note the following verses:

Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. I Peter 1:9

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Rom. 6:22

That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:7

It is all too clear from Scripture that, just as a branch into a tree, we are grafted into Jesus at conversion (Romans 11:17), and as long as we abide or remain in him, we have his life in us -- in the person of the Holy Spirit, which is the earnest of our future inheritance, and the seal that God has accepted our repentance. We do not have the ultimate inheritance, but just the earnest or down payment or promise (Eph. 1:13,14). If we abide in Christ, his life or Spirit will abide in us, thus we will remain sealed unto the day of redemption, where we will receive our inheritance and our hope -- Eternal life with Christ!

According to Jesus' definition, eternal life is more than eternal existence. People in hell will have eternal existence as well; but eternal life is something different.

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Jesus declares that eternal life is a quality and “kind” of life, which can only be experienced in close union with God and Christ – which only comes to those who continue in a humble repentant, obedient walk with Christ.

Verily, Verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. John 5:24

This is the only verse in the Bible that at first glance would seem contrary to what we are saying; however, once understood, it actually backs up what we are saying. This verse would appear to teach "one act" that produces everlasting, unconditional results; but this is not so. The conditions are clearly seen in the fact that "**heareth**" and "**believeth**" are BOTH PRESENT PARTICIPLE; so the verse would read: "**He that is hearing my word, and is believing on him that sent me, hath everlasting life (abiding in him), and (in this state) shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**" This is the only verse that even appears to teach what they assert; but instead it clearly teaches consistent that we must have a continued "hearing" and "believing". In fact, the following verses, like vss. 28,29, "**Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.**"; make it clear that Jesus was not preaching Antinomian heresy.

If eternal life was our eternal unchangeable possession at conversion, then many verses in the Bible would mean nothing; like for instance Revelation 22:14 **Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.** “Have right to the tree of life” is declaring that we will receive eternal life AFTER we have passed our test.

Remember Gal. 6:7-9?

....but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Rev. 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

4. SALVATION BY FAITH, WORKS, OR BOTH?

ERROR: Saying one must obey Jesus, or continue in the faith, or exercise faith in Christ by obedience, in order to have **saving** faith, is teaching salvation by works. Salvation is by faith alone. Faith is simply depending on Jesus to take you to Heaven, and not your own good deeds, faithfulness, or obedience.

TRUTH: Salvation is by faith, but not faith that is **alone**. **"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."** So says the Holy Spirit of God!

There are two types of works: works that **provide** salvation, and works to **activate** God's provision in my behalf. God is the only one who can do the provision works; but man is the only one who can do the activation works.

The provision works are: Atonement, Adoption, Justification, Forgiveness, Regeneration, etc. We can do none of this for ourselves. The activation works are: Repentance, Faith, Confessing, Enduring, Following, etc.

God will never do this for us, but has put the responsibility on us. Faith without the activation works is dead, is not even faith, and cannot save -- cannot activate God's provision. It is not faith at all, but mere **presumption**.

Whenever you see the Bible say, "not of works" it is always speaking of the works to **provide** salvation. We can't regenerate ourselves, but we can repent so God will. We cannot forgive ourselves, but we can confess our sins, so God will. If God commands it of us, then it is our responsibility. In Eph. 2:8,9 the "Not of works" is speaking of God's provision in verse 7, "his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" and also in verse 5, "hath quickened us together with Christ". The salvation spoken of in verses 2-7 was not without repentance, faith, obedience, etc. God kept his promise, as they met his conditions -- it is that simple.

In Titus 3:4,5 we see another **"not by works of righteousness which we have done"**. This is speaking again of what **provided** or **caused** the **"kindness and love of God our savior toward man"**. Did God provide salvation because we were so good? Did Jesus die on the cross and make atonement for sin, because we were righteous? God Forbid! If you look back in Titus to 2:11-14, you will see what God's grace says to sinners:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Can you see the difference between God's provision, his conditions, and our response? It is clear from the context that Titus 3:5 is referring to the fact that our good deeds cannot **provide** the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"; and also it is equally clear in 2:11-14 that the grace of God must be activated for each individual's benefit by repentance and faith. Those who don't do what the "grace of God" is telling them to do, will not be part of the redeemed, peculiar people! If our works of faith were not a condition on our receiving God's works of provision; then every man would be saved!

WORKS ONLY AFTER SALVATION?

Someone has said that works only come **after** salvation: "we work away from the cross, but not to the cross"; but this is not Biblical either. We have read in Isaiah 55:6,7 where God tells the wicked to forsake his ways -- that is works. In Acts 17:27, Paul tells sinners this:

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

God comes all the way from Heaven, but expects us to come the last few steps to make the union complete. This is pre-salvation works. What the grace of God tells us to do in Titus 2:12 is works that we are to do at conversion and thereafter. We have read in James that we are justified by faith and works working together. We have read that faith without works cannot save. Jesus told sinners to "come unto me" -- this is pre-salvation works!

Continuing in the grace of God; sowing to the Spirit; holding fast our profession; walking in the light; confessing known sins; and living by faith are all works that have to do with my salvation. Repentance is a work that activates salvation. Confessing Jesus as Lord is a work that activates salvation. Calling upon the name of the Lord is a work to activate salvation. Jesus said that if we don't forgive, he won't forgive us -- this is a work that affects our salvation. Overcoming is a work that has to do with salvation. So you see, God's **provision** is not from any work of ours; but God commands good works of faith before and after salvation that **activate** and **maintain** salvation's benefits to our personal situation. Jesus may have died for everyone; but only those who "obey the Gospel" and activate God's provision for themselves will be saved.

IS BELIEF A WORK?

A passage that makes it clear what the Bible means when it says, "believe", and what will happen when we believe, is II Thess. 2:12,

That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

It is obvious to the honest person that you can't "believe the truth" and "have pleasure in unrighteousness" at the same time -- not in the Bible definition of the word. So, to believe the truth means to forsake the pleasures of unrighteousness! The soul-winners had better make this clear. They can't just expect the people to know it.

II Peter 2:21 calls the Gospel message a "**holy commandment**" and the "**way of righteousness**". The apostles presented the Gospel in such a way that the sinner knew "to believe" was to obey that "holy commandment" and go in the "way of righteousness", forsaking the "pleasures of sin".

5. THE SALVATION STATE ON EARTH

ERROR: I am completely and eternally saved at the moment I accept Christ, and there is nothing more about my salvation that has to happen on earth, it is all settled.

TRUTH: The Bible has many passages that show we are looking forward to our ultimate salvation, and it is conditioned upon our continuous faith. II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is one of many passages that have been listed earlier. I will just quote 6:17-7:1:

Wherefore, come out from among them; and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Here we have believers who are under the **continued** responsibility to meet the **same** conditions whereby they were forgiven and received in the first place. It is obvious the conditions must be maintained if the sonship was to continue. God's promise was a covenant with man. We have our part, and God has his. Here we see God's definition of repentance, and our ever present responsibility.

ESPOUSED -- NOT YET MARRIED

To understand this better, one must realize that we are in a betrothal period with Jesus. The marriage of the Lamb with his bride (the church) is the big future event, where our salvation will be complete. Just as Joseph was going to put away Mary when he thought she had broken the betrothal covenant, so Christ, being also a "just man", will have to put us away if we do the same. Look at II Cor. 11:2-4,

For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity (purity) that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

Some say, "All you have to do is commit your soul to Christ, and trust him." However, I Peter 1:19 says we are to commit the keeping of our souls to God in **well doing**. Jesus expects us to be faithful to him, just as a betrothed bride should be. Conversion is the act of accepting Christ's proposal, and forsaking all others for Christ only -- otherwise, if we still love the world or sin, we are a two-timing harlot, and will be put away! Jesus doesn't have to marry an unfaithful bride, and he won't!

Read again Mark 8:34-38! Also Paul says, If any love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema -- accursed! Compare that to John 14:15, 21-24; I John 2:15-17; 4:20; and Romans 12:9. It is pretty clear that there is no room for half-hearted brides! When you accept the betrothal covenant with Christ, you forsake all others, love him, obey him, adore him. Can a baby Christian do this? Well... would you expect your newly espoused bride to feel this way toward you? She better! or refuse the proposal! Many of the false converts that many churches have would refuse the proposal if they heard it correctly. It is unnecessary to drag you through every reference and parable; if you are honest, you already see the truth. If there is anything you don't understand, you can always contact us and ask.

Here are some more references where salvation is at the **end** of our life of faith: Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Luke 13:23; Acts 2:21; Romans 5:9,10; 8:24; 13:11; I Cor. 3:15; 5:5; 15:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; I Thess. 5:8,9; II Thess. 2:13; Heb. 1:14; 9:28; 10:39; I Peter 1:5,9; 4:18; and there are others. We are brought into the salvation state at

conversion; but ultimately saved when we die in faith, and go to be with the Lord forever. Just as Paul said he had fought a good fight, and kept the faith, so must we.

6. CHURCH HISTORY

ERROR: What the Baptist's teach concerning their unconditional eternal security, false repentance, "one act" justification, etc. is what the early first century Christians and the Ana-baptist believers preached.

TRUTH: Anyone who knows anything about the first two centuries of Christianity, the Waldenses, Albigenses, and other Ana-baptist groups down through history up to 1700 AD have to let out a hearty laugh at the above erroneous statement -- it could not be farther from the truth. The Baptist denominations in America have completely forsaken their Ana-baptist roots and become so protestant, that most of the faithful descendants of the Ana-baptist's today don't even realize the Baptist's are from the Ana-baptists.

I am telling the truth, but won't waste the time to document it all for you in this short pamphlet. On my shelf beside me are Baptist histories by Orchard, and Christian; Waldensian and Albigencian histories by Faber and Allix; Ana-baptist histories by Van Braght; the writing's of Menno Simons; The "Ante Nicene Fathers"; Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History; etc, and my Kings James Bible -- They all agree and testify that "unconditional eternal security", "one act justification", and all the errors we are combating are NOT from historic apostolic Christianity; but from grievous wolves crept in unawares, not sparing the flock!! The Baptists before and during the reformation, didn't believe unconditional eternal security. Some were later influenced by reformation doctrine, and caused a split back in England between the Particular Baptists, and the General Baptists. The General Baptists and their offspring still believe as I do (but have become worldly, thus condemning themselves); but the Particular Baptists and their offspring make up those who teach this damnable protestant heresy!

VOICES OF THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES

Barnabas (A work written around 70-100 AD, and widely accepted and circulated through the churches. Many believed it to be written by Barnabas, the companion of Paul.) "We ought therefore, brethren, carefully to inquire concerning our salvation. Otherwise, the wicked one, having made his entrance by deceit, may hurl us forth from our life." And again, "The whole past time of your faith will profit you nothing, unless now in this wicked time we also withstand coming sources of danger....Take heed, lest resting at our ease, as those who are the called, we fall asleep in our sins. For then, the wicked prince, acquiring power over us, will thrust us away from the kingdom of the Lord....And you should pay attention to this all the more, my brothers, when you reflect on and see that even after such great signs and wonders had been performed in Israel, they were still abandoned. Let us beware lest we be found to be, as it is written, the "many who are called," but not the "few who are chosen."

Clement of Rome (companion of Peter and Paul) writes around 96 AD: "Let us therefore earnestly strive to be found in the number of those that wait for Him, in order that we may share in his promised gifts. But how, beloved, will this be done? It will be done only by the following things: If our understanding is fixed by faith towards God. If we earnestly seek the things that are pleasing and acceptable to Him. If we do the things that are in harmony with his blameless will. And if we follow the way of truth, casting away from us all unrighteousness and iniquity."

Ignatius (Bishop of Antioch, and personal disciple of one or more of the apostles) 35-107 AD writes: "Faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith." And again, "The tree is made manifest by its fruit. So those who profess themselves to be Christians will be recognized by their conduct....It is better for a man to be silent and be (a Christian), than to talk and not be one."

Justin Martyr 100-165 AD Writes: "Let those who are not found living as He taught, be understood not to be Christians, even though they profess with the lips the teachings of Christ. For it is not those who make profession, but those who do the works, who will be saved."

Irenaeus 130-200 AD (Bishop of Lyons - heard Polycarp preach in Smyrna when a youth). "To believe in Him is to do His will." Again, "With respect to obedience and doctrine, we are not all the sons of God. Rather, it is only those who truly believe in Him and do His will. Now, those who do not believe, and do not obey His will, are sons and angels of the devil....Those who do not obey Him, being disinherited by Him, have ceased to be His sons." And again, "We should not, therefore, as that presbyter remarks, be puffed up, nor be severe upon those of olden times. Rather, we should fear ourselves, lest perchance, after (we have come to) the knowledge of Christ, if we do things displeasing to God, we obtain no further forgiveness of sins, but are shut out from His kingdom. And for that reason, Paul said, "For if (God) spared not the natural branches, (take heed) lest He also not spare thee."

Clement of Alexandria 150-215 AD writes: "It is neither the faith, nor the love, nor the hope, nor the endurance of one day; rather, "he that endures to the end will be saved."

Tertullian 160-230 AD writes, "We ought indeed to walk so holily, and with so entire substantiality of faith, as to be confident and secure in regard of our own conscience, desiring that it may abide in us to the end. Yet, we should not presume (that it will). For he who presumes, feels less apprehension. He who feels less apprehension, takes less precaution. He who takes less precaution, runs more risk. Fear is the foundation of salvation; presumption is an impediment to fear. More useful, then, it is to apprehend that we may possibly fail, than to presume that we cannot. For apprehending will lead us to fear, fear to caution, and caution to salvation. On the other hand, if we presume, there will be neither fear nor caution to save us." And also, "Some think that God is under a necessity of bestowing even on the unworthy what He has promised (to give). So they turn His liberality into His slavery....For do not many afterwards fall out of (grace)? Is not this gift taken away from many? These, no doubt, are they who,after approaching to the faith of repentance, build on the sands a house doomed to ruin."

7. SECURITY AND ASSURANCE

ERROR: Once I accept Jesus into my heart by praying the sinner's prayer, I am as good as in Heaven in that I cannot be lost or die spiritually ever again, no matter how I live or what I do.

TRUTH: The careful reader will realize we have already destroyed this heresy from its roots in the previous studies. Some will ignorantly say they agree with me on Repentance; but not on Security. This is absurd. Jack Hyles, a well known Baptist pastor who teaches the errors we are discussing, said in a sermon, in my hearing, that, "If you believe a person must turn from sin to be saved, then you have to also believe if he goes back to sin he will cease to be saved". He went the other way with it, to say you don't have to turn from sin -- he teaches the false repentance. However, he still knows how repentance and eternal security rise and fall together. It is absurd to say, **"You have to take off your muddy boots before you come in the house, but after you are inside, you can put them back on"** -- this is what you say when you claim to believe right on repentance, but hold to unconditional security.

I would rather know when I am secure, and when I am not, than to believe this lie of unconditional security -- because they are not as secure as I am! Let me illustrate:

If you ask them about a person whom everyone thought was born-again, but went off into sin, and flunked the I John 2:3-5 test; they will say, "Well, I guess he never really had it". -- But you would have told that person when he was a good Baptist that he was secure and couldn't lose it! So how secure are you, if a year from now, due to trials which cause you to become bitter, etc. you find out **YOU NEVER HAD IT TO BEGIN WITH!!!**

Baptists will lead a new convert to pray the "sinner's prayer", tell them they can't lose it; but, later, when the person doesn't obey Christ and come to church, they conclude he never had it! **BUT THEY TOLD HIM HE HAD IT AND COULDN'T LOSE IT BECAUSE HE PRAYED AND RECEIVED THE GIFT -- WHICH HE DID!!** They didn't tell him he had to obey; but when he didn't, they decided he didn't have it!! Deliver us, Lord Jesus, from such foolishness!

Brother, I know from God's Word when I am in Christ and secure; and when I would be out of Christ, and cast forth as a branch! I John 2:3-5 is clear who is in, and who is out!! John 15 paints the picture clear! Let's examine Romans 11:22:

GRAFTED OR CUT OFF?

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Some try to skirt around this verse by saying it doesn't refer to **individuals**; but **national** Israel, and **national** Gentiles -- **FOOLISHNESS!** When did **all** Jews get cut off, and when did **all** Gentiles get grafted in? **NEVER!** The unbelieving Jews (branches -- plural) were broken off, and **only** the believing Gentiles were grafted in. When did all the Gentiles "continue in his goodness"? **NEVER!** Individual Gentile converts were grafted in and stood by faith (vs. 20). This verse cannot be "explained away" by Unconditional Security Baptists -- they cannot get around it! It is as plain as the nose on your face, and if it were the **only** verse in the Bible that taught you could lose salvation, it is clear enough to stand the test!!

The Jews that rejected Jesus were cut off from the vine (salvation in Christ). The Gentiles who believed were grafted into Christ. If these Gentiles continue in the grace of God by obedient faith, they will be saved; but if they rebel, get lukewarm, etc. they will be cut off.

HE WAS SANCTIFIED BY THE BLOOD

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? Hebrews 10:26-29

Antinomians cannot comprehend the power and beauty of this passage, because they have faulty concepts of "sin". They don't teach the difference between ignorant sin, single acts of weakness - sin, and presumptuous or willful sinning. This is vital to understand I John 3:1-10 & 5:18-21, and this passage in Hebrews -- not to mention the whole Bible. The Baptists don't understand how that due to **presumptuous** sin, a man didn't have opportunity to offer a sin-offering and be forgiven in the Old Testament, but was stoned, "without mercy" under two or three witnesses. Those who sinned ignorantly were able to offer a sacrifice and be forgiven. Read Numbers 15:27-41! Then listen closely to Hebrews 10!

1. It was written to believers -- it makes no difference whether they were Hebrews Christians or Gentiles Christians -- salvation is the same for both. They were both in the same church! There was no church that didn't have both in it! The letter was read to the whole church for everyone to hear -- however, it dealt with specific questions that converts from Judaism would naturally have, so it was addressed to them and their particular needs. The principles apply to all!!
2. They were not "baby" Christians (5:12, 6:10, 10:32-36).
3. They were warned many times to "hold fast what they had" not "make sure they had it".
4. The passage in chapter 10 is without doubt written to believers.
5. The scenario is about what would happen if a man who **"had been sanctified"** by the blood of Jesus Christ, according to the New Covenant; took up willfully disobeying Christ, thus trampling him under foot, and doing despite to the Holy Spirit -- his earnest and seal. The result would be worse than a man doing the same thing to Moses in the Old Testament -- this is exactly what Hebrews 2 says, and 12:25. It is very clear to the open mind!

This warning is seen again in II Peter 2:20-22,

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

This is the same warning written to both Jewish and Gentile believers. How could the latter end be worse than the beginning if this person didn't lose his salvation? If you say he never really had it, then you are ignoring the obvious thrust of the passage that the person was "entangled again and overcome". It is clear that if he had not been "entangled again and overcome", he would have been just fine! You liberals need to look at the apostle's view of salvation:

1. "escaping the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ";
2. "the way of righteousness"; and,
3. a "holy commandment delivered unto them" -- that they were to obey!

The passage says this person was "washed", and that can only mean one thing!! Those who squawk about Peter calling this person who fell away a dog and a sow, miss the fact that Peter spoke of lost people as "sheep going astray" too; and he did say the sow was "washed" -- this is piddly nonsense to bicker over, when the whole passage is as plain as day.

Hebrews 6 is also a very clear and sober passage to warn believers who had become dull of hearing, and slow to grow. The Baptist's have such foolish and illogical excuses to try and get around these passages -- I was taught their excuses growing up, learned them again in college, I have their books now, and am ashamed to say I preached it myself for a few years. The scenario in Hebrews 6 is definitely speaking of a born-again person -- that is who Paul is warning! It can't get much clearer! If one were to turn away from Christ after having all God has to offer as means of grace, then they will not be permitted to go on to perfection, because they have crossed the line and crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh; and, therefore, will not be brought again to repentance; but are nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned. Read the whole chapter - The parable of rain on the earth

represents two types of people (earth), which both receive God's grace (rain); but one brings forth fruits meet for repentance, and the other brings forth fruits of rebellion. The point Paul is making is clearly seen in 6:11-15: **"And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."**

Every passage we have listed through this entire pamphlet teaches that we are only secure, as we remain repentant and obedient! Assurance of present acceptance with God comes also from living by faith and obedience -- Do you pass the I John test? Read it! If you do, then Praise God; but if not, take care of it! -- you will not be allowed to prove John wrong by your personal situation becoming the "exception".

CALLING UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Rom. 10:13

How many of you have heard this passage used to support the "pray a prayer" soulwinning plans. I was taught that this meant: "All you have to do is call upon the Lord and ask for his free gift to be saved". This term, "Calling upon the name of the Lord", means so much more than that!! It is the continual expression of "the just shall live by faith" principle. You don't see anyone in the Scriptures told to pray "the sinner's prayer" for salvation.

Peter quoted Joel in Acts 2:21, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"; but when the people asked what to do to be saved in Vs. 37, he didn't tell them to call on the Lord, but to repent and be baptized. In the New Testament, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 2:21; 9:14,21; 22:16; Rom. 10:13; I Cor. 1:2, etc.) is the same language ascribed to those who worshipped the true God in the Old Testament (Gen. 4:26, 12:8; 2 Kings 5:11). Stephen died "calling upon the name of the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit" Acts 7:59.

Listen how Paul refers to true believers in the New Testament:

"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord both theirs and ours:" I Cor. 1:2.

"Calling upon the name of the Lord" is not a one time "sinner's prayer", but a life long relationship! Peter and Paul are saying, when they quoted Joel, that "All who become true followers of Jesus Christ with a living relationship of "calling upon the name of the Lord" -- shall be saved ultimately at judgment day!"

It is an expression that also means to be surnamed or called by a person's name; hence it is used of being dedicated to a person, as to the Lord -- Acts 15:17 (from Amos 9:12); and James 2:7. Calling upon the Lord, and being called by his name characterizes the Christian life!

In Romans 10:9-13 Paul is not soul-winning, but discussing doctrine, and he is saying that the message requires our **life** (believe in the heart) and our **lip** (confession with the mouth) to match up! We must believe and confess Jesus as our Lord to be ultimately saved at judgment day! Belief in the heart leads to a righteous life, and confession leads to ultimate salvation. This life is classified by Paul as "calling upon the name of the Lord". Believing on the Lord (present participle), and calling upon the Lord (present participle) are all continuous, not a one time act. When the Bible says, "we believe unto righteousness", it reveals a continuing belief with a definite result. When it says, "confession is made unto salvation", it reveals a continual confession which leads to ultimate salvation at the end of one's life. We are born again, when we repent and start "calling upon the name of the Lord"; but we are not yet saved in the sense that saved is used in this passage.

WHAT DID GOD PREDESTINATE?

If a person will study closely this matter of predestination, they will find that God's predestination is not SPECIFIC but GENERAL. God didn't predestine Joe to go to Heaven and Henry to go to Hell. God predestined all who would believe on Jesus Christ with a pure obedient faith to be saved, and that all who rejected the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to be damned. This is not hard to prove, when we see in Romans 9-11 that the Jews "to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants.....(9:3-5)", were once the "elect", but were cut off. Additionally, the believing Gentiles, who were not the "elect" were grafted in and became the "elect". We also find in 11:17-24 that if these Jews who rejected their Messiah, and therefore ceased to be the elect, would repent and believe on Christ, they could be grafted in again, and once again become part of the elect!! God predestined Jesus to come and give himself a ransom; that the Gentiles would be accepted into the church; and the basic plan of events; but not who would be saved, and who would be lost.

When I was lost, I was not part of the elect, but when I repented and submitted to Christ, I joined and became part of the elect (chosen) of God. If I don't continue in the grace of God, I can be cut off, and cease to be part of the elect (II Peter 1:10). "Unconditional election" as Calvinists teach cannot be reconciled with Romans 11:17-24. Nor does it make any sense for Paul to continue to try and reach those who were cut off (11:11,14), if election is determined by specific unchangeable predestination. This error of specific predestination has caused untold confusion about evangelism, church discipline, child rearing, prayer, Bible interpretation, and has done nothing but slander the pure love of God who wants ALL MEN to be saved. Jesus died for ALL MEN and WHOSOEVER WILL may come!! PRAISE THE LORD!

--The Bible seems to teach that God predestined and foreordained a format or program, but not man's thoughts and choices within these predestined perimeters. Therefore this would be a general predestination, but not a specific predestination. How much God foreknows in detail we cannot now know. Note the following passage where Paul sums up this thought quite clearly:

Acts 17:22-31 " 22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

VITAL POINTS TO NOTICE FROM THIS PASSAGE:

--In the context we are speaking of "all men", not just the "elect".

--What is predestined is the boundaries of their activity - the "times" or different ages and events in the general program of the earth's life span.

--The predestined purpose was for "all" men to seek the Lord, if "haply" or "perhaps" they might feel after Him and find Him. This reveals that God placed men with freedom to choose, seek, and find God within these preset boundaries, and watched to see what they would do, hoping they would seek him. EVERY TIME the Bible says that God was "displeased", "angry", "disappointed" etc. at man's behavior reveals that He did not predestine this behavior, and makes us question in what way He foresaw it, if He did.

--Vss. 30 and 31 reveal that God has overlooked some ignorance in some men concerning false concepts of God, but now, since Jesus has come and made a clear revelation, God commands "all men everywhere" to repent. This further supports the fact that God did not predestine man's thoughts and actions or choices -- otherwise He would not be "winking" at their ignorance, because it would have been His own doing as much as their knowledge was. Also these verses reveal God commanding men to repent and follow His way, which would be mockery if they could not, or if God had to do it for them. Next, we see God is going to judge all men according to their response to His commands, which proves man's ability and freedom to choose. This passage alone disproves Calvinistic unconditional predestination and election; total depravity and inability; irresistible grace; and unconditional security.

There are hundreds of verses in the Bible that indicate clearly that what we do makes a difference in how things, at least in our life, will turn out. Every verse about prayer; every command to obey; every warning of disobedience; the parables of Jesus and teachings about the broad road, and the narrow road; the principles of "sowing and reaping" etc. etc.

There are many verses that indicate that somehow God didn't foresee exactly what would happen in every situation. In fact, every passage that speaks of God being displeased, disappointed, changing His mind or being angry seems to indicate this. Every passage that speaks of God being patient, longsuffering, gracious, or even compassionate seems to indicate this. I didn't write these verses, God did; so evidently He expected us to infer the obvious from them:

-- Ge 2:19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam **to see what he would call them:** and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

--Gen. 6: 3 ¶ And the LORD said, **My spirit shall not always strive with man**, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 ¶ There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 ¶ And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 ¶ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 ¶ The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13 ¶ And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

-- 2Ch 32:31 Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

Are we to believe God's own testimony?

--Jer. 17:10 **I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.**

Why would God have to search and try, if He predestined it all.

--Isa. 1: 2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

--Isa. 5:1- Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: **and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.**

Did God predestine what these people are doing here? It seems He had different plans, and is upset over their use of free-will. This scenario is repeated hundreds of times in Scripture.

--Isa. 1:16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Does God's actions depend on what man does? Does man's actions determine what God does?

--Ez. 18:20- 21 ¶ But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

25 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

29 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

30 ¶ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

This clearly reveals God's anger and, shall we say, frustration with man's rebellion and wrong use of free-will? Could this be true if all were predestined?

--Luke 19:41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

--Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

Would Jesus' speech be honest and acceptable if He predestined all of it? This clearly displays that Christ had a desire that would have been fulfilled in their behalf, but they ruined it. This clearly reveals Christ's disappointment due to man's obstinate free will.

--Jonah 3:10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

--Joel 2:13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

--Luke 12:47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

Is it possible to go contrary to the will of God?

--I Cor. 10:1-5 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the **same** spiritual meat; And did all drink the **same** spiritual drink: for **they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them:** and that **Rock was Christ.** But with many of them **God was not well pleased:** for they were **overthrown in the wilderness.**

For God to be displeased, it would seem He desired something different.

-- Jer 19:5 They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, **neither came it into my mind:**

-- Jer 32:35 And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, **neither came it into my mind,** that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

How could God predestine the actions of these people, and then tell them that this abomination had not "come into His mind" - i.e. It didn't originate with HIM?

--Read the parables - The Great Supper, The Sower (Luke 8); and all the New Testament commands and promises. Need I continue? There is more evidence than I can give here.

"It is clear that there must be difficulties for us in a revelation such as the Bible. If someone were to hand me a book that was as simple to me as the multiplication table, and say, 'This is the Word of God. In it He has revealed His whole will and wisdom,' I would shake my head and say, 'I cannot believe it; that is too easy to be a perfect revelation of infinite wisdom.' There must be, in any complete revelation of God's mind and will and character and being, things hard for the beginner to understand; and the wisest and best of us are but beginners." --R.A. Torrey

Section Seven

TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE

"The battle for Apostolic Christianity"

INTRODUCTION

It is important to remember, when reading this short appeal, that we are not attempting to exhaust every subject or answer every argument. Please realize that, when Jesus said, "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you", He had not yet "commanded them all things" that they were to eventually teach. In fact, Jesus did not change anything from Moses' Law; but just clarified and taught it in its fullness and proper spiritual meaning. It wasn't until 12 years after Pentecost that God changed how Gentiles came to Christ.

John 16:12-14 "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Now, considering this, we see that "all things" Jesus wanted taught to the nations would be progressively taught to the apostles after the Spirit came; and during the apostles' lives. The apostles were the ones God used to establish the format of the local churches and plant them in many lands.

Don't forget that salvation was "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile". The apostles started only preaching to the Jews. Jesus was made under the Law, to deliver those under the Law. Thus, the preaching was very Jewish to start out. The apostles kept the Sabbath, dietary laws, circumcision, etc. for their whole life, this being only modified by the superior obligations of Christ's teachings – like being able to fellowship with Gentiles after Cornelius. In Acts 21, which was 29 years after Pentecost, Paul is still obeying Moses' Law with James and thousands of other Jewish Christians - and Paul is **not** teaching Jews to forsake Moses or the circumcision of their children. The Jews were never required to stop observing Moses' Law (Acts 21). Twelve years after Pentecost God opened the doors of the New Testament Church to uncircumcised Gentiles who were not required to keep the

ceremonial aspects of Moses' Law, except for a few "necessary things" as entrance requirements (Acts 15, Matt 28:20; Rom. 8:3,4, 13:14). After Jerusalem and the temple was destroyed in AD 70, life for Jewish Christians no longer included temple sacrifice, or any of the ceremonial aspects of the Law that required the temple and priesthood. The Jew's obligations to the Ceremonial Law ended when God made it impossible to obey.

Although many things may not have been part of the original practice; they became the practice of the churches as God revealed truth to the apostles. We are to receive (and teach others to observe) God's "completed" revelation -- the way the apostles left it; not so much how it started out.

The apostles received "all truth", as Jesus promised, from the Holy Spirit. This finished product of faith and practice is "the faith" we are to contend for; and can be seen in the faith and practice of the churches established by the apostles in the first century. The believers were first called "Christians" in Antioch, not Jerusalem (where they were just a "Jewish sect"). God destroyed Jerusalem, and put an end to Judaism. The middle wall of partition was removed (Col. 2:14-16); the Old Covenant finally vanished away (Heb. 8:13); and the glorious New Testament Church was the "one new body" created for Jew and Gentile "believers only". We now live under the "Law of Christ", keeping the commandments of God as clarified and taught through Christ; which is called the "faith of Christ" or "doctrine of Christ". The New Testament references to the "commandments" (I John 2:3-5; Rev. 22:14; etc.) are not speaking only of the "Ten Commandments"; but of all God's Moral law and of "all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20); the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27); and the Law of Christ (I Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; II Thess. 2:15) based on the moral aspects of God's Law in the Old Testament. The basis of the New Covenant is God writing His Law in our hearts, so we have the mind of Christ -- the one who inspired the Law.

Rarely do people hold to a doctrine as a result of unbiased study and love of truth; but from emotional attachment, "partisan spirit", bias, convenience, and habit. Your life must adjust to fit your beliefs; or your beliefs must adjust to accommodate your lifestyle, or you will go insane. Which is more precious to you - your lifestyle or truth? This is usually the reason you believe what you do. If you are loyal to truth above your love of lifestyle, then you can find truth; otherwise you won't. This is called "willful" ignorance in Scripture, and is seen as rebellion. Don't close your eyes, and say, "I just can't see it". To practice Truth, you may have to leave your Tribe.

The "traditions of the apostles" were more precious than gold to the churches of the first two centuries. When Paul went to the churches delivering "the decrees for to keep", there were no recorded arguments (Acts 16:4,5) - they just obeyed. All who make Bible story books draw the characters with head veils; yet people in this apostate age fight against this apostolic endorsed tradition. The real argument, then, is whether or not we have liberty to throw away what the faithful churches, from the first century till now, have lived and died for. On which side will you stand?

CAMP MEETING

It was a warm summer night, sitting in the old wooden pew at the camp meeting. The preacher preached hard and eloquent on the parable of the sower. He warned of being **stony ground**; not having **root** in ourselves; and said we must get the **stony places** out of our life. Yet, one thing was missing. The people were full of stony places. The teens showed worldliness from head to foot. Yet, they all left feeling good -- why? The Preacher never told them what "**stony**" was. He told them to make "**right choices**", but never told them what they were, and which choices were bad. This is the plague on modern preaching. So afraid to offend, modern preachers speak in general, vague terms and leave the audience to decide for themselves. It has been an obvious failure. Look at the churches. Look at the teenagers. O yes, they are full, which spells **success** to most; but these churches are also **full** of sin, fornication, immodesty, worldliness, etc. - which spells **failure** to Christ. I heard years later that this preacher was expelled for sin.

The chapters in book #5 "Sowing Tares"; and "This Is The Condemnation"; should probably be read before this book. We are not justifying extremists or abusers of the valid Bible principles of which we speak; but "overdoing" discipleship training is hardly the disease of our day. Knowing the **TERROR** of the Lord, we persuade men. If the righteous scarcely be saved....think about it.

William Cowper wrote a poem that explains why it is good to "spell out" right and wrong in clear terms, so the people know just exactly what you mean. It seems Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, told his followers that only part of the swine could not be eaten; but never told them what part, thus the poem:

"THE LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED, OR HYPOCRISY DETECTED"

Thus says the prophet of the Turk,	Thus, conscience freed from ev'ry clog,
------------------------------------	---

<p>Good mussulman, abstain from pork;</p> <p>There is a part in ev'ry swine No friend or follower of mine</p> <p>May taste, whate'er his inclination, On pain of excommunication.</p> <p>Such Mahomet's mysterious charge, And thus he left the point at large.</p> <p>Had he the sinful part express'd, They might with safety eat the rest;</p> <p>But for one piece they thought it hard From the whole hog to be debarr'd;</p> <p>And set their wit at work to find What joint the prophet had in mind.</p> <p>Much controversy straight arose, These choose the back, the belly those;</p> <p>By some 'tis confidently said He meant not to forbid the head'</p> <p>While others at that doctrine rail, And piously prefer the tail.</p>	<p>Mahometans eat up the hog.</p> <p>"You laugh-'tis well-The tale applied May make you laugh on t' other side.</p> <p>Renounce the world- the preacher cries. We do- a multitude replies.</p> <p>While one as innocent regards A snug and friendly game at cards;</p> <p>And one, whatever you may say, Can see no evil in a play;</p> <p>Some love a concert, or a race; And others shooting, and the chase.</p> <p>Revil'd and lov'd, renounc'd and follow'd Thus bit by bit, the world is swallow'd;</p> <p>Each thinks his neighbor makes too free, Yet likes a slice as well as he:</p> <p>With sophistry their sauce they sweeten, Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten."</p> <p>-William Cowper</p>
---	---

CHAPTER 1

"TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE" - THE BIBLE PRINCIPLE

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Amen. Matthew 28:18-20

This is a very important study that has been greatly misunderstood in our modern American churchianity; so please listen close to every point. If I seem to be "shouting", it's because this is a major battle today -- Paul warned night and day with tears that the whole counsel of God, which he had taught, would not be changed or perverted. If your care for the whole counsel of God, and the faith once delivered to the saints is any where near Paul's, then I'm sure you'll be shouting "Amen", and not grumbling about what I am going to say.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James 1:22

It is true that your misinformation on some of these issues may not have condemned you to hell, if you were sincerely walking in all the light you have had. However, your ignorance of these issues opens the door for Satan to rob you of God's blessings; and the absence of knowing and doing **all** the counsel of God leads to deception and the destruction of later generations -- your children and grandchildren. Truth is truth, and once you know it, you are accountable to be a doer of the Word.

Let us examine Matt. 28:18-20:

I. THE COMMAND: Jesus did not say, "Tell them what I commanded". Jesus said, "Teach them to observe what I commanded". Do you see the difference?

Jesus commanded MODESTY; but the Apostles job was not to tell converts to just "be modest". This would develop "every man doing that which is right in his own eyes"; which has never been God's program. If I just tell converts "be modest"; then every convert is left to define modest according to their limited and warped understanding, which has been built by the social norms of their surroundings. Thus, natives in Indonesia may just be concerned about wearing their loin cloth, gourd, or less. Jesus said **"teach them to observe"** : This involves **defining** the terms for them, **explaining** the principles for them, **walking** them through it, and **being** an example for them.

Consider what Timothy had to do to please the apostle Paul who was instructing him:

ITim 2: 9 ¶ In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; 10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

Timothy was to see that this was accomplished in the practice of the churches he presided over. He had to draw lines, define terms, and enforce his decisions. He had to define "modest apparel", "costly array", "shamefacedness", etc. He had to say, "This dress is OK; but that pattern is not". He had to establish standards and rules of conduct and dress; and the people had to follow for it all to work.

Modesty is only one of many "commands" of the Lord, and makes a good illustration; but there are many commands the converts must be "taught to observe" according to the definitions and contexts in which Jesus taught the apostles -- not modern day definitions and contexts. If the churches down through the centuries were faithful in doing what I am saying, then we would still be "observing" Jesus' commands according to the same definition of terms as the first century church. We would define "modest" in their terms, not London's, or Paris', or Hollywood's'. We would define "love" in Jesus' terms and ideas. We would define: separation, non-conformity, non-resistance, church discipline, evangelism, hospitality, marriage, manhood, fatherhood, motherhood, submission, church authority, worship, holiness, sobriety, watchfulness, faith, repentance, and many more commands of our Lord according to HIS TERMS.

Situational Ethics, "easy believism", individuality, humanism, and the breakdown in church discipline have produced a religious system where "every man does that which is right in his own eyes", based on his finite mind, limited perspective, carnal appetites, and insubordinate heart - and the preacher better not say anything about it, or I'll trot down the road, and pay my tithes there. This is apostate churchianity, not Bible Christianity.

II. THE EXPECTED RESULT: The apostles did teach the first century church to observe Jesus' commands, Jesus' way. It is vital that we understand Jesus set up the format for what kind of "bride" he wanted, AND EXPECTED TO FIND THAT SAME PATTERN WHEN HE RETURNED - "Even unto the end of the world".

We are not supposed to be "observing his commands" our way; but **His** way. That is why we are told to "contend for the faith that was **once** delivered unto the saints". What saith the Scripture?

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.....And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. Now we command you, brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us:" II Thess. 2:15; 3:5-7

"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." II Thess. 3:14

In the early 1500's there is an account recorded in Van Braght's "Martyrs Mirror" that tells of some men traveling from the churches of Thessalonica, because they heard there were similar churches to theirs in Moravia, called Anabaptists. They found each other, and rejoiced that they were in agreement. The men from Thessalonica claimed to still be "holding fast the traditions" they received of the apostles. Isn't this amazing. After 1500 years. Maybe it is because they caught this principle clearer than the rest -- Paul spoke it in clearer terms in their epistle.

As long as the church is converting, baptizing, and "teaching them to observe" **all** things; the church is safe. Why the strong rebukes to the churches in Revelation 2 & 3? They were not observing all things in the apostolic way.

Consider Acts 20:26-31,

"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

(WHY PAUL?)

For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God,

which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Lend me your ear. What the churches today are preaching and practicing is either "the same" as the churches of the first century, who were taught to "observe Jesus' commands" by the apostles; or they are preaching and practicing something from a grievous wolf, crept in unawares.. **PERVERSE THINGS:** that means they are "altering the original" -- that is why we call new "Bible versions", perversions. Now you may think it is a little thing that you don't observe apostolic church order, baptism, communion, evangelism, women's head covering, holy kiss, modest apparel, and many other "traditions of the apostles"; **BUT PAUL WARNED EVERY ONE NIGHT AND DAY WITH TEARS NOT TO TAKE THE COURSE YOU HAVE TAKEN..**

Paul told the Corinthians, **"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ"**. We already saw what he said to the Thessalonians (3:6). Now, what if these and all the other churches would have obeyed continually up to this day? Would they be wearing head coverings, greeting with a holy kiss, disciplining disobedient members, abstaining from jewelry, costly array, etc., breaking bread weekly on Sunday, obeying their bishops; only having preachers who met Bible qualifications; and much more? Would they? **OF COURSE THEY WOULD.** They would be practicing the faith, just like the first century churches did.

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Tim. 2:2

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." Phil. 4:9

"For although the languages of the world are different, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same. For the churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul." Irenaeus 180 AD

So, who dropped the ball? Who suggested to drop the "holy kiss"? Who suggested to drop the "head covering"? Who brought in "unconditional security"? Who? A subtle, yet **GRIEVOUS WOLF**. Now, just because someone dropped the ball 200+ years ago, does not excuse me leaving it on the ground. I am using some of the smallest items (holy kiss, etc.), because these are the first to go, and the last to come back.

Paul was pure from the blood of all men, because he preached the "whole counsel of God". If we don't, we have bloody hands.

III. THE APPLICATION TO US: If the preachers are commanded to teach converts to observe all things, then converts are **hereby also commanded** to follow and learn from the preacher to observe all things the apostolic way. God always comes to the preachers or bishops when the church is out of line. See Rev. 2 & 3 - the angels of the churches, were the bishops. "Angel" simply means "messenger". Read what Paul says to Titus and Timothy. Paul, in Acts 20, is giving a charge to the bishops. They, in turn, are to "oversee" the "flock"; who, in turn, are expected to obey the bishop.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for YOU." Hebrews 13:7,17

You may not understand, at first, all the "rules" of the church, but if they are part of teaching you to observe the commands of the Lord, then you must obey. If they are heretical and anti-bible (like Diotrephes' situation in III John); then you have a responsibility to get into a Biblical church. **BUT TO RUN TO A CHURCH WITHOUT "RULES", JUST SO YOU CAN DO AS YOU PLEASE, WILL COST YOU YOUR SOUL.** (And your children's). Salvation is only through repentance and submission to Jesus Christ as Lord -- this includes following the program as he set it up, not doing as you please. Jesus chose to have human bishops with authority to apply Bible principles for their present situations. Jesus **will** back them up when they do this faithfully.

Hebrews 5 tells us that those who are mature in the Lord, and are teachers, have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. You, a young believer, without your senses exercised, need to "follow the faith" of your bishop whose understanding runs a little deeper than yours may. God gives sincere leaders more insight for the sheep's sake. The same Bible that tells children to obey their parents, wives to submit to their husbands, citizens to obey their governments; **also** tells Christians to be in a local body and obey their bishops.

The church is to be the **"bride of Christ"**, **"the pillar and ground of the truth"**, and **"the light of the world"**; but this depends on the **collective testimony** of the membership. Therefore, all the members should submit to the standards of the faith and traditions of the apostles, **not** do as they please until someday "they are convicted about it". The church would not have a clear testimony if everyone did their own things. If your elders tell you it is wrong, or right, based on "teaching you to observe what Jesus commanded", and they show you the principle in the Bible; **then you are convicted about it.** God's Spirit works through the men He has gifted to perfect the saints and edify the church (Eph. 4).

God directs his church through Spirit anointed elders, bishops, deacons, etc. --- MEN. These men have not the liberty to change the gospel; but if they make a rule (like abstaining from TV programs) in order to lead the church to obey Christ's commands, and be holy; then you are bound to obey. The very reason Jesus chose ministers was for the "perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:11-14). **JESUS IS GOING TO STAND ON THE SIDE OF HIS AUTHORITY STRUCTURE, IF THEY ARE STANDING ON THE WORD OF GOD.**

If you disobey, this is unprofitable for you. You had better have a good case if you are going to reject the church's authority. You people in "Americanized Churchianity" may not comprehend this principle; but if you could understand the glory of a Biblical church, you would either hate it or love it -- revealing whether you are a sheep or goat. Goats don't last long in a Biblical church setting.

Critics have said, "Well, I think we should just focus more on 'getting the Word out' to sinners, rather than making an issue of this". Pray tell me, what Word are you wanting to get out? A watered down Bible full of eraser marks? The Word we are supposed to get out commands us to "teach sinners to observe all things". Not doing it would be "Sowing Tares", remember? (book #5) All the apostles taught is part of being a believer - there is no gospel salvation without the commandments of Christ and teaching of the apostles. Love demands we give people what God said to give. Look at what John the Baptist handed out? What did Jesus preach? What did Paul preach?

Another has said, "God accepts people just like they are -- just like he did the woman taken in adultery" Jesus accepts REPENTANT SINNERS where they are; but commands them to GO AND SIN NO MORE. He accepts us where we repented, but won't let us stay there.

"Let it be understood that those who are not found living as He taught are not Christians -- even though they profess with their lips the teachings of Christ." Justin Martyr 160 AD

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." I Jn. 2:3-5

Most people only want **security**, and so they only go far enough in religion to feel **secure**. This is not true faith in Jesus Christ. You cannot follow and love Jesus Christ without also desiring to observe all things he commanded, and be a doer of the Word. The two must go together, or you have been deceived. Your "love of life style" must surrender to the "love of truth", or Jesus is not your Lord, you are. If you are not willing and anxious to take the full prescription the Great Physician has given, then you don't have faith in Him. It is that simple.

Dear readers, I know this may be new territory for some of you, and you may wonder why I am so emphatic. Don't forget what happened in Matt. 7:21-27. Please reconsider Paul's tearful warnings. Consider that when Paul said in **Gal. 1:8,9, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed..."**; he was not speaking about those who denied Jesus' resurrection, virgin birth, deity, etc.; but to men who were altering Paul's instructions concerning "practice". Men were saying that Jewish circumcision, diet, holy days, etc. were essential to Gentiles being Christians. If adding to Paul's message deserves damnation, what about the subtracting that is going on? Can you afford to keep your eyes closed?

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:18-19

Are you going to rely on some false security like the Jews who came to see John the Baptist?

"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Luke 3:8-9

I am only trying to rescue you from apostate Americanized churchianity, and help you to find First Century Apostolic Christianity. Without this principle, you will never find it.

THE GOSPEL BALANCE

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I Cor. 9:19-22

Fearing that our studies will serve to justify those who abuse truth to the detriment of the church, I have felt it necessary to clarify myself better. There is a vital and important balance between being a faithful disciple, and being a faithful evangelist; between **separation from the world**, and **reaching out to the world**; between reaching our lawless society, and yet being under the law to Christ; and, between having standards that "perfect the saints", and not having standards that needlessly stumble the seeker.

I do not mean to oversimplify such a complex balance, yet I believe with all my heart it does not have to be that difficult--if there is sincere desire to find the balance, rather than justify our position. With the example of the apostolic churches, the clear Word of God, and common sense, I believe we can effectively contend for the faith, and still reach out and love sinners.

Paul was very clear where he drew the line: **"...but under the law to Christ"**. He did not throw out one jot or tittle of God's Moral Law or the teachings of Jesus. To those without head coverings, he did not throw away that principle, but still taught it -- it is part of being under the law to Christ. We want to get to the minimum requirements for sinners, and yet not water down **"teaching them to observe all things"**-- just like the apostles did in Acts 15. If we really believe in hell, and really love sinners, we will lay aside every obstacle that we lawfully and righteously can to reach them.

Churches who add rules, like holding to the German language while living in an English speaking land; requiring "broad fall" pants; forbidding beards or mustaches; insisting on hair parted in the middle; and such like, are only declaring how little they care about the lost man going to hell. These rules they admit are not part of the "Law of Christ", and are not matters of morality, godliness, or modesty (because they fellowship, accept, and even use preachers from other churches who do not do these things); yet tell the sinners in their community they must do them in order to be a part of their church--this is the same thing Jesus reproved the Pharisees for doing.

Rules that keep **"leaven"; carnality; worldliness; and immorality** out of the body are one thing; but rules that have no moral bearing are actually wrong and harmful. There is no need to be in the ditch of "No Rules", or in the ditch of "Unnecessary Rules". The fences the church establishes for the sheep are to keep the sheep from going into temptation and destruction, not to uphold non-biblical tradition. These **fences** should never be used to keep people from growing in holiness, or being **more** Biblical. Where there is not moral danger to the body of Christ, there should be liberty. I have no problem with rules for maintaining a godly testimony for the church, when they are balanced with holy zeal to reach lost souls, and do not just uphold some dogma. Unless you hunger to win souls **AND** hunger to obey Jesus, you'll be out of balance.

Some people criticize churches whose rules tend to produce "clones". However, there is absolutely nothing wrong with striving to be **"all of one mind"** and **"of the same judgment"**, just as the apostles tell us to be over and over in Scripture. The problem is when this "oneness" is abused and taken past the spiritual, doctrinal and moral issues of the church. I doubt the apostles wanted us to all part our hair the same, any more than they meant for us to use the same brand of dish soap -- this is not the idea. To agree on a biblical head-covering is perfectly right as we don't want **fashion** to bear rule in the design. If we consider the new converts, we will try to agree on a practical, simple, and easy to make head-covering.

For the men of the church to agree on a style or several styles of dress that are acceptable and modest for the ladies is perfectly right. The convert has to get modest clothes anyway, and needs to be taught what "modest" is. If we really care for reaching the lost, we will make this transition as practical and easy as possible without losing our modesty.

Men can get modest, plain clothes at Goodwill or Thrift stores, and thus save money. So to require clothes for men that must be homemade is not very practical. Women can rarely get modest, plain clothes from the world, because the world's fashions are bent on exposing women. It is actually more cost effective and much more modest to just have a simple dress pattern the ladies can make -- this is good for our daughters to learn anyway.

I recently saw a missionary who was wearing a very flowered shirt -- I assume to "relate" to the people in Africa. The irony is that the convert he was baptizing had a plain white shirt on. So, did the missionary really have to throw away plain dress to relate? No. We are to teach the Africans to dress modest and plain too. Obviously, it is not so easy for some Africans to change their wardrobe, just as it is not easy for naked heathen to make clothes; but all this can be done with time -- however, the missionary definitely can wear clothes of the right example. In China, if it is best to dress as the Chinese; then dress as a plain Chinese, not an immodest, extravagant one -- this isn't too hard, is it? The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the same over the whole world.

The principles of modest apparel transcend over geographical boundaries, just as any other moral issue does. We wouldn't expect Arabs to dress as Westerners, but still to dress modest, plain, simple, etc. The principles cannot be laid aside, but can be applied by church leaders in practical, godly ways for their country-- this will follow the type of dress for that country usually, but modify it to fit Bible principles.

In every case, loving the lost, loving our children, loving our members, and loving our Savior will balance our position. We want a chaste, holy bride (church) to present to Christ, but not the Pharisee definition of one. We want a safe environment in which to raise up godly children for many generations; but converting sinners God's way is safer for our children than just "holding the fort" our way. Converting lost sinners keeps the church hot, it is the "pew packing" without true conversion that is dangerous to the church. Making Jesus fans will ruin the church, but making disciples keeps the church alive and in focus.

There is, no doubt, areas where a leader lives his personal convictions on **details**, and allows others to live and learn by watching and growing. This area of tolerance cannot allow **worldliness** and **leaven** to infect the body. People are different, have different ways of keeping house, different ways to garden, different priorities, etc.; and should be allowed to be different, as long as their difference is not "walking in the flesh".

As long as someone has a willing heart, and is growing, we wait patiently for them to take the next step; but if they settle down and refuse to grow, we must prod and encourage continued growth. I would never excommunicate a willing, seeking, humble heart; but would lovingly help them grow. An obstinate, stubborn, rebellious heart must be dealt with, so others are not deceived. **THE KEY IS A WILLING HEART --TRUE FAITH IN CHRIST.**

CHAPTER 2

Teaching Them To Observe.... MODESTY

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel (Gr. Katastole), with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array: but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." I Tim. 2:9,10

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation (conduct) coupled with fear. Whose adorning (beautifying) let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel (Gr. Himation);" I Peter 3:1-3

Of all the important doctrinal issues that Paul could have corresponded with Timothy about, he didn't fail to speak of women's modesty. In fact, Paul and Peter both, when speaking about women, made sure they dealt with modesty. Of all the important things in the Christian life that pertain to women, the apostles made sure they spoke of dress, jewelry, hair, head veil, and chastity. Yes, it is a big deal what you observe in these matters. Satan knows all too well that you can be doctrinally sound in every other area and still lose your soul and those of your young people by means of immodesty.

When Paul wrote to young pastor Timothy to make sure the women adorned themselves in modest apparel; it was then pastor Timothy's responsibility to make judgments concerning what **is** modest and what is **not** modest. He had to "teach them to observe" modesty. The important point is that Paul expected Timothy to make judgments and be sure the people were dressing modest.

The apostles, in these passages, are "teaching them to observe" Jesus' commands to some extent; but leave some room for the bishops to finish the work. It would be wonderful if pastors today at least taught their people the specific things the apostles **did** mention (no jewelry, no fancy or costly clothes, no hair-do, but a head covering, etc.) Godly church leaders today must search the Scripture to find God's idea of modest. What did the apostles teach the people concerning this subject? It is the glory of kings to search out a matter...

BASIC OBSERVATIONS

Simple grammar tells us that we should not wear: gold, pearls, costly array, broided hair, immodest apparel, fancy clothes. So, since we can't wear gold, "I'll wear silver". Is that the idea? No. It is obvious to the seeking soul that the apostles are telling us not to "ornament" our bodies for self glory and not to follow the fashion of the world. We are NOT to work at beautifying our outsides, but this work should be only on our insides.

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (conduct)." I Pet. 1:14,15

We are not to dress to look rich, or attract the carnal praises of carnal and wicked men. We are not to justify the world's seeking of self-glory, by partaking in it ourselves.

Paul says to Timothy to instruct the people (teach them to observe) to adorn themselves in modest apparel**NOT WITH** broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array -- of any kind. Now, if you wear costly array of any kind, you are **WITH** these items; when you should be **NOT WITH** these items.

Peter tells the wives to win their unbelieving and worldly husbands by... "dressing to kill"? Did Peter tell them to dress however the husband wanted them to? No, they were accountable to dress and live godly even with an ungodly and unbelieving husband. He said, concerning their adorning: LET IT NOT BE the outward dressing up, fixing hair, putting on jewelry, and fancy clothes (Himation). Now, if you wear a gold ring, you are LETTING IT BE; when you are commanded to LET IT NOT BE.

Yes, I know the Baptists and others like to follow the NKJV perversion and say LET IT NOT MERELY BE; but "merely" is not in the Greek text. It is perversion, and if you "live" it, don't criticize those who tamper with the Word of God, because you are one of them. Peter wouldn't tell them not to **merely** have outward adorning, while Paul is saying to dress modest, **not with** gold, pearls, and costly array. You notice they can't fit their **merely** in Paul's statement. They try to say that "it" in I Peter 3:3 simply refers to their **emphasis**; but this is ignoring rules of proper grammar. "IT" in I Peter 3:3 does not refer to "emphasis", but to "adorning". The word "emphasis" does not appear in the passage. If you diagram the sentence, you will see "IT" refers to ADORNING. Let your **adorning NOT BE** the **outward adorning** of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel (himation - fancy clothes). Let your adorning (beautifying - ornamentation) be the inner spiritual beauty of holiness and godliness in a meek and quiet spirit. You can't serve God and mammon, nor can you have your adorning on the inside while at the same time you are competing on the outside with the world's fashions - they are opposing forces.

MODEST

The word "modest" must be defined for our generation in terms that fit God's program and not our glory. We have already learned that "dressing up" to please carnal man is wrong. We have learned that wearing jewelry, fancy clothes, worldly hair fashions, costly clothes, etc. are all DISOBEDIENCE.

We are told to wear "modest apparel" -- what is that? First, I want you to notice that the word "modest" doesn't **just** mean "covered up". Modest is an attitude that shows in your dress as well as every other part of your life. Paul uses the synonyms, "shamefacedness", "sobriety", "chaste", "meek", "quiet", and "fear"; but not, "showy", "proud", "sensual", and "attractive".

If I say, "He has a **modest** house"; what am I saying? If I say, "He makes a **modest** wage"; what am I saying? Modest also means, "simple", "plain", and is the opposite of extravagant. Yes, modesty should be seen, not only in our clothes, but in our homes, cars, and every area of our life. We are to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

1. We should not appear rich, or desirous of being rich.

1Ti 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

2. We should not appear sensual or sexually attractive.

I Thess. 4:4,5 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

3. We should not appear to support fads, fashion groups, special interest groups, etc.

1Pe 1:14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

4. We should not allow the praise of men to dictate our dress.

1Co 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

5. We should appear as humble, content, spiritual, hard working, modest, chaste, followers of Jesus Christ. That which is highly esteemed among men is still an abomination in the sight of God. The early Christians became a "gazing stock", and so will you when you follow Jesus and protest the world's parade.

Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

KATASTOLE

If one, out of desire to live by Bible principles and to be a faithful leader, digs a little deeper; they will realize that we are not to use "our point of reference" to determine what is modest. They will then ask the question: "What was considered modest apparel in the first century? What principles can we find to apply to our century? Would we be considered modest if we were suddenly placed in the Antioch church in 50 AD? They will then find that the term used by Paul in I Timothy, seems to have a "historical setting" in a "style" of dress according to Adam Clarke. Paul said to dress in modest apparel -- KOSMIOS KATASTOLE. The word **Katastole** evidently refers to parts of the Roman and Grecian dress. If this be Paul's meaning or not, we still can learn through this a style of dress worn in those days and considered modest. What can we learn from it?

The Katastole seems to have been a "vest" type cover over the Stola or dress. The sincere, God fearing people of the day knew what was considered modest. Here is the testimony of Adam Clarke, in his commentary:

"The apostle seems to refer here to different parts of the Grecian and Roman dress. The stola seems to have been originally very simple. It was a long piece of cloth, doubled in the middle, and sewed up on both sides, leaving room only for the arms; at the top, a piece was cut out, or a slit was made, through which the head passed. It hung down to the feet, both before and behind, and was girded with the zona round the body, just under the breasts. It was sometimes made with, sometimes without, sleeves; and, that it might sit the better, it was gathered on each shoulder with a band or buckle.

The katastole seems to have been the same as the pallium or mantle, which, being made nearly in the form of the stola, hung down to the waist, both in back and front, was gathered on the shoulder with a band or buckle, had a hole or slit at top for the head to pass through, and hung loosely over the stola, without being confined by the zona or girdle. Representations of these dresses may be seen in Len's Costume des Peuples de l'Antiquité, fig. 11,12,13, and 16. A more modest and becoming dress than the Grecian was never invented; it was, in a great measure, revived in England about the year 1805, and in it, simplicity, decency, and elegance were united; but it soon gave place to another mode, in which frippery and nonsense once more prevailed. It was too rational to last long; and too much like religious simplicity to be suffered in a land of shadows, and a world of painted outsides."

So, if we really want to understand what the apostles had in mind and what they probably considered modest, we can look at the "historical setting" of this command; or, if we don't, we can also follow the "frrippery and nonsense" of our age like most.

The Anabaptist peoples, and many other godly groups have followed the "Katastole principle" in their dress for the ladies by using a "cape-dress", "dress and vest", or some other way of producing the simple, modest, "double covering" of the Katastole. The advantages of this dress are obvious: A loose, long, full dress, with a second cover to the waist that wasn't drawn in at the waist. This avoids the "drawn in waist" that immodestly accentuates other parts of the body. Such practicality and modesty, why wouldn't every Christian woman want to follow this godly example? Why?

So, is it right for a bishop, in "teaching them to observe", to lead his church to dress in a modest, Katastole-type dress without jewelry, lace, bright colors, fancy prints, and such? Of course it is. Where is the backing for NOT leading your church to do so? Are you teaching your people to "observe all things"? Are you striving for excellence or convenience? It is also right for the bishop to counsel in "home decor", types of vehicles, etc. to "teach people to observe" modesty and simplicity for the testimony of the church and to avoid the snare of the Devil.

I Cor. 6:19,20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

2 Cor. 6:16-7:1 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

TESTIMONY OF GODLY MEN

Charles Finney, One of America's greatest evangelists (1792-1875).

The question now regards fashion, in dress, equipage, and so on. And here I will confess that I was formerly myself in error. I believed, and taught, that the best way for Christians to pursue, was to dress so as not to be noticed, to follow the fashions and changes so as not to appear singular, and that nobody would be led to think of their being different from others in these particulars. But I have seen my error, and now wonder greatly at my former blindness. It is your duty to dress so plain as to show to the world, that you place no sort of reliance in the things of fashion, and set no value at all on them, but despise and neglect them altogether. But unless you are singular, unless you separate yourselves from the fashions of the world, you show that you do value them. There is no way in which you can bear proper testimony by your lives against the fashions of the world, but by dressing plain. "Lectures to Professing Christians," Pg. 146

John Wesley, Founder of the Methodist Church (1703-1791)

I am distressed. I know not what to do. I see what I might have done once. I might have said peremptorily and expressly, "Here I am; I and my Bible. I will not, I dare not vary from this Book either in great things or small. I have no power to dispense with one jot or tittle of what is contained therein. I am determined to be a Bible Christian, not almost, but altogether. Who will meet me on this ground? Join me on this, or not at all." With regard to dress in particular, I might have been as firm (and I now see it would have been better), as either the people called Quakers, or the Moravian brethren. I might have said, "This is our manner of dress which we know is both Scriptural and rational. If you join with us, you are to dress as we do; but you need not join us unless you please." But, alas. The time is now past; and what I can do now, I cannot tell. Wesley's Sermons Vol. II, Pg. 439. Dublin, July 2, 1789.

"Shall I be more particular still? Then, I 'exhort all those who desire me to watch over their souls,' Wear no gold....no pearls, or precious stones; use no curling of the hair, or costly apparel, how grave soever... Buy no velvets, no silks, no fine linen, no superfluities, no mere ornaments, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing, though you have it already,...which is in any kind gay, glittering, or showy; nothing made in the very height of the fashion, nothing apt to attract the eyes of the by-standers. I do not advise women to wear rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace (of whatever kind or colour), or ruffles.... It is true, these are little, very little things, which are not worth defending; therefore, give them up, let them drop, throw them away without another word; else, a little needle may cause much pain in your flesh, a little self-indulgence much hurt to your soul."

The Words of John Wesley, Vol. XI London: Wesleyan-Methodist Book-room.

Adoniram Judson (1788-1850) America's first foreign missionary: to Burma:

In a letter to the Christian women of America, he illustrates how he dealt with a new convert from among the heathen:

After the usual examination, I inquired whether she would give up her ornaments for Christ. It was an unexpected blow. I explained the spirit of the Gospel. I appealed to her consciousness of vanity. I read to her the apostle's prohibition. She looked again and again at her handsome necklace -- she wore but one -- and then with an air of modest decision... she quietly took it off, saying, 'I love my Christ more than this'. The news began to spread. The Christian women made but little hesitation.

Judson now makes an appeal to American women:

Let me appeal to your conscience, and inquire, What is the real motive for wearing ornamental and costly apparel? Is it not the desire of setting off one's person to the best advantage, and of exciting the admiration of others? Is not such dress calculated to gratify self-love, and cherished sentiments of vanity and pride?...Do such motives and sentiments compare with the meek, humble, and self-denying religion of Jesus Christ? I would...suggest, that these questions will not be answered so faithfully, in the midst of company, as when quite alone, kneeling before God. Surely you can hold out no longer. You cannot rise from your knees in your present attire. Thanks be to God, I see you taking off your necklaces and ear-rings, tearing away your ribbons, and ruffles, and superfluities of headdress..."

Herald of Truth, Elkhart, In, V. 10 (October, 1868), 146-148, quoted in J.C. Wenger, op. cit., pp. 145-151.

Menno Simons, Anabaptist leader (1496-1561): (writing about the state church)

Dear reader, take notice that all the proud, haughty, avaricious, carnal, and adulterous persons who call themselves Christians, but are not such (for they testify by their disposition, heart, mind, and life that they

hate Christ),....They say that they believe, and yet, alas, there are no limits nor bounds to their accursed haughtiness, foolish pride and pomp; they parade in silks, velvets, costly clothes, gold rings, chains, silver belts, pins, and buttons, curiously adorned shirts, shawls, collars, veils, aprons, velvet shoes, slippers, and such like foolish finery. They never regard that the exalted apostles Peter and Paul have in plain and express words forbidden this all to Christian women. And if forbidden to women, how much more to men who are the leaders and heads of their wives. Notwithstanding all this they still want to be called the Christian Church. **The Complete Writings of Menno Simons, pg. 377**

Well, I think we know the difference between the slick tongued preachers of today, and the God fearing men of yesterday.. Believe me I could add many quotes from church writings of the first 3 centuries.

Today, if you try to build a church that observes "all things whatsoever" Jesus commanded, you are a freak and a cultist. The problem is ignorant and rebellious people who run from the light, because they love their darkness. Compare the lives of these men I have quoted with the life of your smooth talking, compromising preacher.

DEFRAUDING -- FORNICATION

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." I Thess. 4:3-7

Notice how the apostle equates "going beyond" the bounds of modesty and "defrauding" his brother (or sister); with "fornication". If you dress for sex appeal, or ignorantly dress in a way that tempts others to think unlawful thoughts, then you are guilty of **defrauding**. The form-fitting dress; the materials that lay against the form; shear materials; gaping between buttons; low necklines; slit skirts; short skirts; sleeveless; patterns that accentuate body shape; tight fitting clothes; and any other slick trick of Satan to draw people into sin. This goes for men also. Tight form fitting jeans, unbuttoned shirts, tank tops, shorts, T-shirts, thin or shear shirts, etc. are defrauding to the sisters.

You can defraud brothers and sisters by looks, winks, flirting, flattery, lack of sobriety, and not conducting yourself with holiness.

"Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity." I Tim. 5:1

Living in holiness with God's people is a challenge for all of us; but the problem is not the difficulty of the way; it is those who would rather come to church to be worshipped than to worship. The problem is secret desires that stem from our wicked fleshly nature. We should strive to build up the church, not tear it down by seeking self-glory and carnal preferences. There must be modesty in the home, work, and church -- everywhere we are and go, we should properly represent Christ. Immodesty in the home among family members is still ungodly and dangerous. Having immodest pictures, magazines, art, photos, or such like in our home is defrauding to those who find it or see it. God has called us to holiness, and holiness is modest. **IT IS RIGHT FOR CHURCH LEADERS TO SET GODLY STANDARDS OF MODESTY FOR THEIR PEOPLE IN ORDER TO "TEACH THEM TO OBSERVE" MODESTY.**

I have made this section a major portion of this tract - why? Why, when so many others make this of very little value, and allow people to dress as they please? I grew up in a church where people dressed as they pleased, and have witnessed the fruits of such ways. I have compared what I saw with what the Bible says. I have seen how mankind's major judgments stemmed from apostasy due to immodesty and sensuality. Look at the flood of Noah: What caused it? Look at Sodom and Gomorrah: What caused it? Why did 23,000 people die in Israel (I Cor. 10:8)? What caused David **to fall? Samson?** What was one of the main things David warned Solomon of as we see in Proverbs? What made Solomon fall? Must I go on? You can have right doctrine, good form, nice buildings, and a great heritage, but immodesty in dress and life can still draw your people into Hell right under your nose.

Many times it is wiser to set some simple standards, rather than put the pastor in a bad position of having to police the dress. Printed materials are hard to regulate, and it is unwise for a pastor to have to approach a lady or her husband to let them know their print is too wild after the woman has already made the dress. So, to set a standard which allows only plain solids or just certain types of prints is wise. Give your leaders some slack, and don't buck **and rear over the standards set.** If you want to do as you please, there are many apostate churches who will let you. If you want to do as you please, just don't complain when everyone else does too.

CHAPTER 3

Teaching Them To Observe... HEAD COVERING

If you are just turning to this chapter, without reading all the teaching in the doctrinal series, to try and criticize and justify your disobedience to Scripture; "Do you really want truth?" Our Web-page "The truth about the head covering" goes into more depth than this article does.

You need to understand that we are to be practicing the same faith as the first century apostolic churches had. This is vital. All the commentaries that I have read, which deal with the historical setting of I Corinthians 11, all admit that the practice of the first century churches was that of the women wearing a head veil. So, before we begin to discuss the subject, let me ask you: Do you believe that we are to contend for the "faith once delivered to the saints"? Do you believe that what "all the churches of God" did in the first century, we are to be doing in the 20th century and the 21st?

There are many good books and studies on this subject, and my purpose is not to exhaust the resources, as there are many. "Let Her Be Veiled" (Tom Shank); "Demons In The Church" (Skolfield); Symbols of Divine Order in the Church (Shelter & Shank); The Head Covering (Timothy Nelson); "The Veiling Of The Virgins" (Tertullian); and many others are available if you want to study the subject further.

I've never met a humble seeker of truth who tried to refute or avoid this issue.

HISTORICAL SETTING

In the first century, for women to be seen in public without a head veil was considered immodest. A Jewish man was allowed to divorce a woman who went abroad without a veil. The veil was not just a "prayer veil" or "symbol of authority", etc.; but it was proper feminine modest apparel. The apostle Paul sets forth, not just the cultural practice, but also the Christian practice in I Cor. 11:1-16. Each church Paul established in the Roman empire had its core members as Jewish converts from the local synagogue or Jewish community. We know what the Jews believed about head covering, and it seems Paul's inspired writing is in agreement.

The Pulpit Commentary says for a woman to be in a public assembly with her head unveiled was **"against the national custom of all ancient communities, and might lead to the gravest misconceptions. As a rule modest women covered their heads with the peplum or with a veil when they worshipped or were in public."**

Historians all agree with the following quote from Adam Clarke, **"It was a custom, both among Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews an express law, that no woman should be seen abroad without a veil. This was, and is, a common custom through all the east, and none but public prostitutes go without veils."**

Verse by Verse Through 1Cor. 11

VS. 1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

- Does this apply to us? It sure does. Are you willing to follow a Holy Spirit inspired apostle?

VS. 2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

- Are you remembering Paul in all things? The context is speaking of church ordinances. What is an ordinance? What is a city ordinance? It is law. This is part of the Law of Christ. It is part of the traditions spoken of in II Thess. 2:15 and 3:6 -- The Greek word translated **ordinance** in I Cor. 11:2 is the same Greek word translated **traditions** in II Thess. 2:15 & 3:6. You don't have liberty to disobey God's Word. Christian liberty is not liberty to disobey the Word of God.
- John said that the world could not contain all the books that could be written about what Jesus said and did - now, since God hand picked what we have in our small New Testament; you can be sure it is all important. Every tradition of the apostles that God wanted us to know about is in the Word. If God saw fit to put it in the New Testament, then it is important enough for us to obey. In the first century, you ladies would be wearing head veils in submission to the teachings of the apostles, or you would be excommunicated -- and lose your hope of Heaven.

VSS. 3,4 But I would have you to know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

- Preachers who disregard the head veil ordinance for the women in their church always take their hat off to pray, and would never wear one in the pulpit -- but never ask themselves why.

VS. 5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head:

- EVERY WOMAN is what it says. That is pretty clear to understand, if you want to obey Jesus.
- Prayeth or prophesieth is a simple summation of "spiritual business". We are either talking to God, or talking to men for God. This in no way implies women leading in the church. Do we accuse Paul of senility? Or worse yet, the Holy Spirit?
- "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." I Cor. 14:34,35 -- see context in vss. 26-33.
- "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp the authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." I Tim. 2:11-14
- The prohibition is not against women singing, with the men, songs chosen for the church by the men; but against "leading" in prayer, teaching, singing in front of the church -- which is ministering in song (she doesn't qualify for a minister); or even asking questions in the assembly, because that can be used to argue, or lead the discussion. God said it, and you ladies will be best off to follow. Is your pastor "teaching you to observe this"?

VS. 5b ..for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

- Do men take off their hair when they pray? No. Is short, or cut hair "even all one **as if** she were shaven?" No. Paul says for a woman to pray with an "uncovered" head is **even all one as if** she were shaven. This cannot be said if the "uncovered head" was just the absence of "long hair"; because short or cut hair is not "even all one as if she were shaven" It simply is not so.
- This cannot be said if the "uncovered head" was an actual shaven head, because it would also not be "even all one **as if**" she were shaven--she **would** be shaven. This cannot be said of just having long hair up in a "bun" and then letting it down -- that is definitely not "**even all one as if she were shaven**". This can **only** be said if she took off her veil; and the shame of taking off her material veil (all at once) was equal to the shame of losing her natural veil (long hair) all at once. In this situation only can it be rightly said, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for THAT is even all one AS IF she were shaven".
- Men took off their hat or turban, etc. and women were not to remove their veil. Paul is making a parallel between the natural covering (hair) and the material covering (veil). To remove the material covering (all at once); is compared to removing the natural covering all at once -- shaven. He is about to show that the common knowledge of shame associated with the shaven woman, is to be also for the uncovered woman as well. **It is the same shame.**

VS. 6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

- "For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn:" Now, pay attention: If the covering is nothing but long hair, then Paul would not say, "**let her also be shorn**" -- for she would **already** be shorn. What he is saying is this: "If the woman is going to be unveiled, let her also be shorn" -- there, that makes sense, doesn't it? Paul says that if you are going to be so immodest and bold as to take off the material veil, then you might as well cut off your hair also, like one of the pagan temple prostitutes at Corinth. Both, the cutting of the hair short, and the removing of the veil is usurping the man's position - feminists have now done both!
- This speaks of wearing the head covering all the time, not just in church. The women of the east who are not even Christians still wear the veil in public, if they are decent women. It is a shame to shear off your hair, and you should feel the same way about being without your material head covering. This is a covering with spiritual significance, that covers the hair (the woman's glory) for modesty, and humility, in the presence of God, the angels, and man. See. Is. 47:1-3 to understand the Old Testament shame of uncovering the locks of the head. The long hair was to be covered.

VS. 7-12 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

- Where is the argument for following local custom? It is not here. Paul's reasons for this CHURCH ORDINANCE are all SPIRITUAL. 1. Man's relation to woman. 2. Order of creation. 3. Man and woman's relation to God. 4. Women's relation to the angels.
- Jewish tradition has it that Angels are present at worship services and will flee from an unveiled woman, because she is promoting rebellion. A woman ought to be covered whenever she is in public, especially when being a light to the world, teaching her children, praying with the neighbor, witnessing at the market, etc. It is rebellious to do spiritual business when you are rejecting God's spiritual order and design. Does this attract evil angels to you, and drive good ones away? It may. Paul seems to agree with the Jewish tradition.
- The idea here is that, as man is the glory and image of God, created for God's pleasure; so woman is the glory of man, created for man -- for this cause the woman should have a symbol of authority (submission to this order) on her head, because not to do so reveals rebellion to God's order. This spiritual **neon sign** tells the spirit world (angels) whose side you are on. When you are under your canopy of authority, you are protected in ways you may never know. There is no hint of Paul just telling them to follow local custom.

VS. 13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

- Remember Paul is asking people who lived in the east about 2000 years ago, not an American. In that day and age the obvious answer of anyone, other than some grievous wolf, was NO. It wasn't even comely to be seen in public with your head bare showing off your locks of hair to men other than your husband. When a woman "lets her hair down" (letting it be seen down and flowing), she is understood to be laying aside her modest discretion.
- Adam Clarke says this: **"...it was a custom, both among the Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews an express law, that no woman should be seen abroad without a veil. This was, and is, a common custom through all the east, and none but public prostitutes go without veils."**
- If it was so uncomely to be seen in public without a veil; was it comely to be in public praying, prophesying, and thus representing Christ without a veil? If you can't think your theology back to the first century, then you will never find truth.

VSS. 14-15 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

- What is the lesson of nature? Does it back up Paul's teaching about the veil? Since he used it as a parallel for his argument in verses 5 & 6, let's look at it. Yes, men cut off their natural veil, and don't wear a material veil. Yes, women wear the natural veil, and also should wear the material veil -- Doth not even nature teach you?
- I find it shamefully humorous that so many argue that the hair is the covering, and then go around with bobbed, chopped, and permed hair. They are just rebelling.
- The Greek word for the spiritual veil is **katakalupto**: kata -- down, kalupto -- hide or cover. Something hanging down the head, which hides and covers the head.
- The Greek word for the hair being a covering in vs. 15 is **peribolaion**: peri -- around, ballo -- cast, throw, thrust. The hair was usually worn "around" the head -- thrust around; and is compared to putting a coat on the body. The hair was a coat for the head -- usually wrapped up around the head. This is the Greek word used in Heb. 1:12 for "vesture". So, even though some translations give "covering" for both words, yet even the Greek testifies that the veil and the hair are two different coverings: One which hangs down, and one which is wrapped around.

VS. 16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

- "In spite of all I've taken my time to explain, if someone wants to argue about it, then forget all I've said under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, forget the angels, nature, order of creation, pleasing God, and the authority of the church, and just forget it" -- IS THIS WHAT PAUL IS SAYING? NO. GOD FORBID. Yet, some false prophets actually teach this.

- Here is what Paul is saying: **If someone wants to argue, and say women don't have to cover their heads as I have just explained, then he must stand alone; because we apostles and all the churches of God have no such custom of women going without their heads veiled.**

Notice that Paul says all the churches of God had the same practice -- how foolish it is, in light of this, to say, "it was just a local custom", or "it was just long hair". We know what the churches practiced in the first century, and these churches were scattered over the Roman Empire. You could find what any one of them practiced, and thereby know what they all practiced. Are you one that "seems to be contentious"? There were some in Corinth, and let me share what else Paul said about them:

- I Cor. 14:37,38, **"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."**

Is this how you want the Holy Spirit to think of you, because you are over impressed with your argumentative opinion? YOU CAN'T ARGUE WITH HISTORY. Paul said that all the churches had the same custom about women wearing head coverings --SO WHAT DID ALL THE CHURCHES OF GOD DO IN THE FIRST CENTURIES OF CHRISTIANITY? NAY, WHAT HAVE THEY DONE FOR THE LAST 2000 YEARS, EXCEPT THE APOSTATE DENOMINATIONS. The burden of proof rests on the contentious person to prove that "all the churches of God" did **not** have their women wear veils -- I wouldn't want that job. History is unanimously in agreement with this pamphlet.

Tertullian (c.160-230) "So, too, did the Corinthians themselves understand him. In fact, at this day, the Corinthians do veil their virgins. What the apostles taught, their disciples approve."

Tertullian was not in a controversy concerning whether or not women should veil, but how young. Some were not veiling their young unmarried daughters in some local, and Tertullian is pointing them to Corinth as the example of what Paul intended

Did all the churches of God just wear the veil in church? No. Some will argue that since men can wear hats in public, women can also take off their veil. The spiritual significance has to do with women while praying, prophesying, etc.; but it must be also remembered that it isn't immodest for a man to wear a hat in public -- it is immodest for a woman to be uncovered. It doesn't affect the "angels" for a man to wear a hat in the cold, etc.; but it does for the woman to be uncovered. Don't argue that, "men can't ever wear hats, if women should not be out without their covering". You are ignoring the historical usage and practice of those who knew exactly what the apostle meant.

Is this for us today? If you want to be the bride of Jesus, "teaching them to observe all things", and following Jesus through Paul with "all the churches of God" -- it is.

"The region of the veil is co-extensive with the space covered by the hair when unbound.... Arabia's pagan females will be your judges. For they cover not only the head, but the face also." Tertullian (Written about 207 A.D.)

Tertullian complains in his day that some of the veils were getting smaller. There was also a question as to how young a girl should be veiled. He would have choked on some of this modern twisting of Scripture to allow women to be unveiled altogether. Go ask Tertullian if Paul was just speaking about the hair. He lived 100 years removed from the first century, and lived in the same part of the world, around the Mediterranean.

The early churches understood the value of the "traditions or ordinances" of the apostles. All who make Bible story books draw the women with head veils. The real argument is whether or not we have the liberty to discard what the faithful churches from the first century until now have died for. On which side will you stand? Is Jesus worth it to you?

CHAPTER 4

Teaching Them To Observe....LOVE

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" Matt. 5:44

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me:" John 8:42

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him...If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that

loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." John 14:21,23,24

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." Romans 12:9

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." I Cor. 13:4-7

"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema-Maranatha" (accursed - our Lord cometh). I Cor. 16:22

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." I John 2:5

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I John 2:15

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." I John 4:7-11

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." I John 4:20,21

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." I John 5:2-3

If we wish to be Biblical, we must strive to practice a love that encompasses **every** aspect of love mentioned above. Love cannot be pure and Christ-like toward our fellow man until we "love God and keep his commandments". It is impossible to bypass the precept and have proper brotherly love. If our love doesn't reprove the Pharisees; demand repentance; hate evil; forgive the adulteress; pray for those nailing us to the cross; and all that comes in between, then we are in need of growth. Love that doesn't preach hard and rebuke those who need it, is not true love. Love that doesn't hate error and fight against it, is not true love.

God is LOVE. God's Law is the appropriate expression of love for general and also specific situations. If you want to learn to love then obey God's Law! Jesus summed up God's commandments by the two greatest commands – to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbor as ourselves; and then He said, "on these two commandments hang ALL the Law and the prophets". This means that all God's Word is trying to teach us godly appropriate principles of loving God and our neighbor. Love fulfills the law, because the law is teaching love. If we think OUR concept of love REPLACES the law, then we've been listening to a deceiver. That is not what the Bible says. Love only fulfills the Law of God when it actually lives up to the righteousness of the Law – Romans 8:4.

If we love God, we live in such a way that pleases God. Godliness has to do with not offending God, and living according to his mind, heart, will, and opinion. Because we love God, we honor the "Lord's Day"; meditate in his Word; support his church, contend for the Faith; warn sinners; live holy; obey all things he taught through his Son, Jesus, and the apostles; and worship him with all our heart, soul, and mind.

If we love God, we don't lay up treasure on earth, but seek his kingdom and righteousness. Our homes, cars, and belongings are TOOLS to build his kingdom, not TOYS to satisfy our lusts and pride. They are purchased for this purpose. Our home decor is simple and godly, with walls holding Bible verses, not "Home Interiors" vanities. Our furnishings are kept simple and frugal, so we have more resources for the work of God. We truly try to set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth.

If we love our brother/sister, we live to provoke him/her to reach their potential for Christ. We live to help them to know God better, and reach heaven safer. Our example is the greatest influence on our brethren. Our walk first, then our talk. Because we love our brethren, we call not our possessions our own, but share as wise stewards of God's blessings. We dress as to never defraud. We strive to set the perfect example. We do our part in the church. We carry our burden and try to help others. We strive to preserve the faith for the next generation. We are slow to criticize and quick to believe the best. We pray for each other. We greet one another with the kiss of

charity, and in very practical ways, we lay down our lives (opinions, ambitions, pride, possessions, etc.) for the brethren.

If we love our neighbors and enemies, we try to reach them with the truth, and save their souls from Hell. We preach repentance to them. We strive to be a perfect example, so as not to cause them to stumble away from God. We seek opportunity to help, and thus influence them. We don't sue at the law, or seek vengeance; but try to bless those who curse us, and pray for those who persecute us. Rather than being overcome with evil, we try to overcome evil with good. We don't buy or go out to eat on Sunday, and cause the ungodly to lose their opportunity to attend church services to feed us. Etc.

"Even among those who are not of his religion, the Christian is noted for his fidelity." Tertullian 197 AD

That is, sadly, not the case today many times.

If you love worldliness, or the values of the world, you don't love God. It is vital that we examine what we are pursuing in life. What we love is revealed by what we allow to eat up our time, money, affections, and desires. How many "things" could you do without in order to have more time and money to serve God? Which takes more of your time, your TV, outings with the guys, shopping with the gals, or your Bible, family, soul winning, study, etc.?

True godliness with contentment will shine from a life that "loves" with Bible love. You cannot love riches and worldly pleasures, and **also** love God. When your affections are set on things above, you will not be pursuing riches and honor here below.

To teach people to observe this, we must first be willing to live it. Then we must be willing to speak out against extravagant homes, cars, toys, clothes, vacations, amusements, etc. We need to teach people to live simple, content, sacrificial, and serving lives for Jesus Christ. This is true discipleship.

CHAPTER 5

Teaching Them To Observe....**HOLY COMMUNION**

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." I Cor. 11:23-32

People who don't understand church discipline, also don't understand the Lord's Supper (Communion). The "judge not" crowd, and the "mind your own business" crowd, don't like the truth about church authority or Holy Communion. The word "communion", means "common union". It comes from the word "Koinonia", which is translated "fellowship", and "communion". The root "Koinos" is translated "common", when referring to the people "having all things common". It speaks of a very close knit family group the shares all their belongings, and operates as a body. The church is the body of Christ, and is supposed to be pure and clean. Thus, we are told if we, individually and collectively, are not pure and clean in our walk, then we will be judged for not "discerning the Lord's body"--for representing His body as having sin in it.

Those who say "self examination" is all that is required, miss the point that Paul is not leaving these people to examine themselves, but is examining the people himself in order to warn them of improper self examination. He is telling the elders of the church to put away those who are not walking uprightly - whether that person **thinks** he is OK or not. Church discipline is built around the "common union" of the brethren, and keeping the communion holy.

I CORINTHIANS 5

"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have

not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from yourselves that wicked person."

Let me make some basic observations from this incident:

1. The Elders and Bishops were responsible for keeping communion clean -- unleavened.
2. You can't **just** depend on people to judge themselves. What about "teaching them to observe"?
3. The Principle is that Jesus was unleavened -- sinless -- "For even so Christ our passover is sacrificed for us". Therefore the church should stay unleavened; and this is done by keeping the communion unleavened. What is "leaven"? It is a type of sin. Our communion is representative of the sinless body and blood of Christ -- This is the purpose for unleavened bread, and unfermented wine. We are to take communion with the "unleavened bread" of sincerity and truth.
4. We can't keep the world clean; but we must keep the communion of believers (the church) clean.
5. The bishop must judge them that are "within" the body of Christ, or he is disobeying.

Just as Israel all suffered for Achan's sin, so if we knowingly tolerate "sin in the camp"; we will be partakers of other men's sins. We are told to not even "bid them (heretics) Godspeed" lest we be partakers of their sin.

People who, for the desire to gain acceptance, allow sin in the camp, pretend that the list in verse 11 is exhaustive; thus not excommunicating for anything not on that list. In doing so, they miss the whole point. The point that all sin and worldliness is leaven, and must be kept out of the body.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." I Cor. 10:16-17

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;.....And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." II Thess. 3:6,7,14,15

Are we to "withdraw" from; "have no company with"; "shame"; and "admonish"; but still take communion with those who throw away the apostolic traditions and teachings? These people are disobeying Christ, and his apostles; but they are not wicked enough to be put out of your communion? How much leaven does it take to make bread leavened? It is clear from all the Scriptures that if someone is not in obedience to Christ, the apostles, and the leadership of the church, then they are not eligible for communion. Our first concern is that our church is attractive to Jesus, not to people.

WHEN OPEN?

Communion is to be open between churches of like faith and practice; but not open to the lost, heretics, disobedient, rebels, or those who are new enough, we don't know what they are. Is this hard to understand? The apostles didn't hold communion with Gnostics and heathen. Why was there open communion between the Christian churches? Because they were all of like faith and practice.

"Although dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, the church has received this faith from the apostles and their disciples....The church received this preaching and this faith.

Although she is scattered throughout the whole world, yet, she carefully preserves it, as if she occupied only one house. She also believes these points just as if she had only one soul, and one and the same heart. She proclaims these things, teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony--as if she possessed only one mouth. For although the languages of the world are different, yet the significance of the traditions is one and the same. For the churches which have planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different. Neither do those in Spain, Gaul, the East, Egypt, Libya, or in the central regions of the world." Irenaeus 180 AD

"The pre-eminence of the church is its one-ness. It is the basis of union. In this, it surpasses all other things and has nothing like or equal to itself." Clement of Alexandria 195 AD

"Wherever it will be manifest that the true Christian rule and faith are, there likewise will be the true Scriptures and the correct expositions thereof -- and all the Christian traditions." Tertullian 197 AD

"We hold communion with the apostolic churches because our doctrine is in no respect different than theirs. This is our witness of truth." Tertullian 197 AD

Some will foolishly say that since Jesus had communion with Judas, they will have communion with whoever claims to be a Christian. Did Jesus take communion with Judas **after** he became traitor, or before? Before. Does Jesus accept your repentance, when he knows you are going to fall down again? Yes. God's foreknowledge doesn't cause him to judge or chasten or become angry with us BEFORE we have sinned, JUST BECAUSE HE KNEW ABOUT IT. The teaching of the Word of God is clear to those who CARE ABOUT TRUTH.

EXCOMMUNICATION

If a church is based on the TRUTH, which involves the traditions and teachings of the apostles; then converts will rise to that standard when converted and baptized. They will be converted to TRUTH, not error. Then if they begin to reject TRUTH; they are to be disciplined for the purpose of bringing repentance and restoration. If they don't repent, they are put out of the body, considered apostate, and lose their hope of heaven. If they repent, they are restored to communion.

The "shunning" is done by "not eating" with them or withholding communion. It is also done by "withdrawing" and "admonishing". In the O.T. shunning an apostate was done by reporting them to the authorities, and having them stoned; but in the New Testament, we reprove and rebuke to try and restore them to fellowship. While they are being shunned, we cannot treat them as our "buddy" as if nothing happened, but must limit our fellowship with them to discussing the problem and seeking to bring them to repentance. It doesn't matter if the whole church goes into error, and only the pastor is left with the truth -- they still will be judged by God. **THOUGH HAND JOIN IN HAND, THEY SHALL NOT BE UNPUNISHED.** God's church is not a democracy -- you cannot vote truth out.

Churches should take communion with other churches who are teaching their people "to observe all things" that we have received from Jesus through the apostles; even if they observe them slightly different. If the head veil is a little different; as long as it isn't worldly; it is not "leaven", and therefore communion should be open between them.

THE PURPOSE FOR CLOSING COMMUNION WITH ANOTHER CHURCH OR INDIVIDUAL IS BECAUSE THEY WILL INTRODUCE "LEAVEN" INTO THE BODY BY THE LIFESTYLE AND DOCTRINE THEY HOLD TO. We should search our hearts, and be sure it is "leaven", and not an acceptable variation of understanding, before we close the communion. This takes humility, study, discussion, prayer, and LOVE for Jesus and the brethren.

A church without discipline, is not a scriptural church. Communion that is open to "whomever" claims to **believe** is foolish and wrong.

"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Gal. 1:10

In order to avoid separation and excommunication, we must strive for loving **communication**. Leaders and followers alike must prize the testimony of the church, the purity of the faith, and the will of Jesus Christ above our own opinions and "lifestyle preferences".

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:1-3 (See also Phil. 1:27; 2:1-8; 3:14-16)

CHAPTER 6

Teaching Them To Observe...THE LORD'S DAY

There has been much confusion caused by grievous wolves on this subject of the Lord's Day. The testimony of the Word of God is clear to those who don't have an ax to grind -- or a date at their favorite Restaurant.

WHAT IT IS NOT

1. It is not the Jewish Sabbath. Contrary to Seventh Day Adventist literature; Gentile Christians are not required to keep the Jewish Sabbath, which was Saturday. It was a part of the old covenant between God and Israel "throughout their generations" (Ex. 31:12-18). It was no more "perpetual" than other ceremonial laws (Ex. 29:9, Lev. 24:9). It was not given before Moses (Ex. 16:23-30; Deut. 5:2,3,15; Neh. 9:13,14; Ez. 20:10,12; Justin Martyr Dialog with Trypho). It was not require of Gentile Christians, being part of the old covenant ceremonial laws (Acts. 15, 21:25; Rom. 14:5; 2 Cor. 3:6-16; Gal. 4:10,21-31; Eph. 2:14,15; Col. 2:13-17; Heb. 4; 7:12; 8:6-13; 10:9,10 12:18-20); and Jesus, through his apostles, established a new memorial day, commemorating Jesus' redemptive work, which was much more glorious than deliverance from Egypt or creation. This was all foreshadowed in the Old Testament and is an exciting study.

WHAT IT IS:

The testimony of the New Testament is this:

Jesus Chose Sunday for His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

Jesus Chose to rise from the dead on the first day of the week (Mt 28:1, Mr 16:2, Mr 16:9, Lu 24:1, John 20:1, John 20:19)

He appeared to his disciples on the first day of the week (The resurrection day and the next Sunday- John 20:19,26);

Pentecost was on the first day of the week (Lev. 23:15,16).

The disciples came together for communion on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

Paul admonishes them to take up their collection when they meet on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1-2).

John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10).

All the early church writings verify it was on the first day of the week, Sunday.

"Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead" Barnabas AD 100 (chapter 15)

"But every Lord's Day, gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, so that your sacrifice may be pure." Didache 80-140 AD

"No longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day." Ignatius 35-107 AD

"And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read....But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which Godmade the world. And Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead on that same day." Justin Martyr 140 AD

John died about 96 AD, so all the previous quotes are within 44 years of John's death. Ignatius was the second bishop of Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, and knew the apostles.

"In fulfillment of the commandment according to the Gospel, a person keeps the Lord's Day...." Clement of Alexandria 195 AD

HOW TO OBSERVE?

Paul commands the believers not to forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb. 10:26). If we are to assemble together on Sunday, break bread (communion) together on Sunday, take the collection on Sunday, and "teach all nations" to do the same; then how can we justify supporting businesses on Sunday who violate what we teach, and keep others from it? Other than works of "emergency" (hospitals, etc.), and "necessity" (police, etc.); we should avoid any association with those who mock at the Lord's Day. To go out to eat on Sunday is a mockery of the Lord's Day. To take a job position, knowing you will have to work on Sunday, reveals possible wrong priorities. Can God help us to get enough food and raiment to live in six days, so we can give him one day a week? We may have to lower our standard of living, but that won't send us to Hell.

I once heard the story of a man who had hay in the field, and rain was coming, and it was Sunday morning. His neighbor came by and urged him to get the hay out of his field. But the man said, "No, it is Sunday, and we are going to worship the Lord." After church, and a heavy rain, the man was again confronted by his neighbor, "I told you we should have gotten that hay. Now you've lost it." "But I didn't lose my family.", was the reply of the man who lost his hay while worshipping Jesus.

"If anyone alleges the pretense of his own work (as his excuse for neglecting worship), he is a despiser, offering pretense for his sins." Let such a person know that the trades of the faithful are our secondary employment. The worship of God is our primary vocation. Therefore, follow your trades as you are able, in order to maintain your livelihood. However, make the worship of God your main business. As our Lord said, "Do not labor for the meat that perishes, but for that which endures unto everlasting life." Apostolic Constitutions (compiled 390 AD)

How important is Jesus to you? What if the Devil offered you \$100 to stay home and not worship the Lord and encourage the saints; would you take it? Or should I say, "Do you take it?". "Are you now taking it?" Satan said to Jesus, "All these things will I give you", if you forsake the worship of God -- isn't that what he said?-- "Worship me" is the same thing.

I have purposed that Sunday is to be the Lord's Day all day. I do the Lord's Work; and not my own work. I only buy or work, if it is part of doing the Lord's work. I do my best not to hinder someone else from worshipping the Lord by my support of the business that makes them work on Sunday.

Jesus changed the day of worship by stopping the Jewish covenant, which included the Sabbath, and starting the Lord's Day -- He is Lord of the Sabbath. All the lies about the Pope changing it, or the Roman Catholics changing it, or Jeroboam changing it are easy to shoot down; and are simply slick lies that play on people's ignorance of the facts. Don't be deceived by Sabbath Keepers.

Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch who knew the apostles (AD 35-107), says:

"It is absurd to speak of Jesus Christ with the tongue, and to cherish in the mind a Judaism which has come to an end. For where there is Christianity there cannot be Judaism."

CHAPTER 7

Teaching Them To Observe...CHURCH ORDER

This has been covered quite a bit already, but let me briefly say that our Americanized Churchianity is "Out of Order".

HOLY LEADERS

The Bible gives definite qualifications for ministers (I Tim 3; Titus 1; The whole N.T.). These qualifications, if taken seriously by church members, would eliminate a great majority of the "ministers" in the pulpits. This is sad and scary. Jesus said, "Ye shall know them by their fruit"; not "by their sermon"; not, "by their personality"; not, "by their political skills"; not, "by their education"; not, "by their looks"; not, "by the size of their church"; but **"BY THEIR FRUITS"**. The context of this is where Jesus says if they don't "do the will of the Father", and "do his sayings", they will go to Hell. Look at I John 2:3-5. There is disobedience in the pulpit, because there is rebellion in the pew. People heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and want fables more than truth. God will hold the preacher and the people accountable for the state of the church.

Pastors will "produce after their own kind". What do their children seek after? How do they obey God? This will be the standard of the church -- as goes the home, so goes the church. What do they allow at home? This will be allowed at church. What they preach is of little value, if they don't teach it to their children by the way they live. This is why the Bible makes the "home order" an indicator of Bishop qualification. Is the wife in line? Now, don't pass judgment until you have, like a Christian, approached your pastor about the problem to see if he knows about it, and is willing to act upon it.

HOLY MEN

If the men in the church were holy, a compromising preacher could not get in. Spiritual men do not want a compromiser leading their family to Hell. Spiritual men are jealous for Jesus and his church. Notice that Titus 2 is speaking of the aged men, and young men, not just preachers. Holy men will be "in church", "involved", leading their homes, standing by the authority (when it is Biblical), backing up the church discipline, supporting evangelism through the church, helping support the preacher -- without his asking (I Cor. 9). Holy men will help and encourage the bishop to raise the church to its potential, not tear it down.

They don't make their wives feel they are compared to other women. They want their wives to be plain and modest, not hunting for other's adoration. Their wives don't have to worry about being plain, and losing their husband to some painted harlot. They train and teach their family in the Lord, and set the example of "Jesus First".

HOLY WOMEN

Holy women will want to be silent (when appropriate), covered, modest, grave, temperate, obedient, and teach the younger to do the same (Titus 2). A holy woman will raise up holy children, and help her husband reach his potential for Christ. She will not compare him to other men foolishly, like the women who caused Saul to hate David -- They should have been quiet. She won't criticize her husband publicly or to the children; but build him up. In I Peter 3, Peter reminds the women of Sarah, who called Abraham "lord". She won't embarrass her husband by being foolish or flirting or talking too much. She will be reserved, wise, humble, holy, honorable, a keeper AT home, and hospitable. She will make the home a ministry station to reach lost souls and encourage the saints. I Tim. 5:10

THE HOLY KISS

The holy kiss is a command of the apostles. It is part of "teaching them to observe all things", or it would not have been commanded 5 times by two apostles. Who dropped it? Was that right? Who decided to forget it? A GRIEVOUS WOLF. Who are you following? Are you a doer of the Word? Men greet men, and women greet women -- this is a sign of Christian love, and is very pure, when practiced in a pure church. God has a purpose for this. I can see how it can keep proud, selfish, carnal men out of the church.

I didn't like the idea when I first heard it; but I had a choice: Was I going to Mark-ize my Bible? Or, Bible-ize Mark? Who was going to give in to who? Was I going to lay down "my way"? Or, "interpret" the Bible to fit me? It is part of "following Paul" (I Cor. 11:1); "holding the traditions" (2 Thess 2:15); and "observing all things" (Matt. 28:20).

"Having ended prayers, we salute one another with a kiss." Justin Martyr 160 AD

"Then let the men give the men, and the women give the women, the Lord's kiss, But let no one do it with deceit, as Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss." Apostolic Constitutions (compiled 390 AD).

HOLY CHILDREN

I once heard a friend say, "The colder the church gets, the more ice cream you have to feed them". I've seen this over and over. It all starts in the "children's church". That's right. We start making church a **circus** for the children, and then, in order to keep them when they are older, we have to "update" the circus. These tactics for evangelism are devastating. Children need to learn the TRUTH, **not** be entertained. Do you wonder why churches almost always lose the second & third generation?

We are commanded by the Scriptures to teach the youth to be soberminded, grave, discreet, chaste, and showing themselves a pattern of good works. Why then are the "youth groups" bent on frivolity, vanity, fun, mirth, sports, self-glory, and much of the pursuits of the ungodly youth? If you want to know where a church is spiritually, look at the teenage boys and girls who are accepted members. I don't care how good a man sounds in a book, or on the radio, etc. -- **go see how his teens dress and live.** Is he teaching them to observe? The teens are the primary indicators of the homes of the church. They are the product.

HOLY CHURCH

Pastors and elders setting standards of dress, worship, and conduct in many other areas, is lawful and right when it is done to teach people to observe Bible commands and principles. Some liberal preachers cry legalism when I make a rule of dress; but if they were honest, they would admit **all** churches have rules. Will you allow people to worship in underwear? Will you allow homosexuals to be members? Well, then I can also cry "legalist". The only difference is that you base your standards on "social norms" and the "opinion of the tithers", and I base mine on the example of the New Testament church, the teachings of the apostles, and Bible principles. The early churches were humble enough to seek advice and counsel from those churches who had closer contact with the apostles -- We should be humble enough to do the same.

"The apostles, then, in like manner founded churches in every city, from which all the other churches-one after another-borrowed the tradition of faith and the seeds of doctrine. And they are every day borrowing them, that they may become churches. Indeed, it is only on this account that they will be able to deem themselves apostolic--as being the offspring of apostolic churches. Every sort of thing must revert to its original mold for its classification." Tertullian 197 AD

The apostles set up churches, and ordained bishops/elders/presbyters/pastors (synonymous) to be leaders. Deacons were ordained as associate ministers to help the bishop. In the Bible we find a head bishop with a body of elders leading the church and perfecting the saints –Acts 21. The leaders were then responsible for ordaining other leaders.

CHAPTER 8

Teaching Them To Observe...PURITY OF LIFE

We could go on and on with all the particulars of "Teaching them to observe"; but we don't have time or space -- I will spend the rest of my ministry learning myself, and teaching others, but let me touch a few topics.

WWJD?

What Would Jesus Do? -- Is a good question to ask yourself; but Jesus or the apostles wouldn't have worn a WWJD bracelet or ring. You need to stop feeding on the vermin of Americanized Heresy. You need to read your Bible, study God's church order therein, and find a church that measures up. (Or, at least is trying to) .

I GAVE UP TV AT 16

I was converted at 15. I have a book that I wrote at 19 sharing the story of our High School Bible Study we started in our public high school. I am not saying this to boast, but to make a point. The point is this: I was not raised in a godly Biblical church. I was not taught to "observe all things". I was not taught what I am teaching you. I was taught to pray a prayer at 5 and believe I was unconditionally secure for heaven. I wasn't taught "hands off courtship". I was encouraged to "date". My home was not even as godly as the church. BUT, by reading my Bible and praying, I realized and grew to understand what pleased God, and what didn't. I gave up TV at 16, even though it made my parents upset at first. Everyone at my church watched TV. Nobody told me it was bad. The rest of the family still watched it, and still does. I couldn't listen to people cuss; see the immodesty; receive the world's attitudes and standards from the TV; and then go to my room and fellowship with Jehovah God, the Holy Spirit, and my Lord Jesus Christ. I couldn't do it. I felt dirty and like a Judas. I needed to smite my breast and cry "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner."; **not** "fellowship". How about you?

At conversion, I threw away all my tapes and records, and found some that I thought pleased God -- later I threw those away, and found some I learned pleased God. I have struggled in the Fundamental Baptist Churches and kept "bumping my head on the ceiling" as I would grow. Finally, I realized I had to get out. But what I am saying is this: "It is not that difficult to learn holy living, if you are listening and seeking". When I heard a preacher say something was wrong, I prayed and thought on it, and usually found he was right -- and adjusted - even if no one else around me did. **You can too!** I heard a visiting preacher say you shouldn't kiss before marriage, and I read 1Cor. 7:1 -- So I determined to obey. The first time I kissed my wife was when the preacher said, "you may kiss the bride". I walked in the light I had, and that is what God expects you to do. The Bible has much to say about following our Holy Spirit illuminated conscience.

"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." Acts 24:16

NATURAL SEPARATION

If you start living for Jesus with all your heart, mind, soul, and **mouth**. You don't have to worry about separation from evil influences. You will get separated from ungodly friends, whether you wanted to or not -- they will not put up with your continual concern for their soul. In this world of evil influences, we must be on the offense, not just on the defense -- Let the ungodly be the ones having to separate from us, because of our fearless faith and witness.

COMMON SENSE

YOU CANNOT DO "IN THE SPIRIT" WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD DOESN'T WANT TO DO. Does the Holy Spirit enjoy TV, radio, contemporary music, amusement parks, public beaches, public pools, malls, partying, dancing, theaters, and sports? The one that lives in my body doesn't. He didn't in the first century, second century.....What makes you think he does now? He should be an honored guest whom you would rather die than offend. You should ask him if he wants to do this or that, and if it would not please him, IT SHOULD NOT PLEASE YOU.

Don't ask, "What is wrong with it?"; but ask, "Is it of the Father?" (I John 2:15) Is it spiritually edifying? Does it glorify Jesus? Can you do it in faith that it pleases him (James 4:17, Romans 14:23)? Can I do it in Jesus' name (Col. 3:17)? Is it perfecting holiness in the fear of God (II Cor. 7:1)? Is it holy (I Peter 1:13-17)? Get the idea?

The only Christian Liberty you have is in the realm of the Holy Spirit of God, and what He approves of.

2Co 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, **there** is liberty.

TEACH THEM "WHY" THEY OBSERVE

Critics will eventually admit, when criticizing Anabaptist type churches that the "rules" (Those based on Bible principle) are not wrong; but the problem is when they forget "why" they observe the rule; and thus become dead machinery. This danger of "just going through the motions" without true heart love and desire I have seen much more in the liberal churches I was raised in. The main difference is that the conservative Anabaptists who have members that "just go through the motions" are at least being taught godly motions for the most part. Maybe some are not being modest "from the heart"; but I can usually attend their services without being offended or defrauded like other churches of our day. Other liberal church's whole hearted "immodesty" doesn't impress me. Other church's whole hearted disobedience doesn't impress God either.

It really bothers me when I see some churches, who have had godly teaching, but want to throw off the traditions; changing for the worse. They think they are becoming "more spiritual" and "less traditional"; but, what is more spiritual about smaller head coverings, shorter dresses, fancier shoes, more lace, sportier cars, lighter hose, higher heels, and more vanity and frivolity? I think someone is confused. Godly traditions established by spiritual leaders applying the Scriptures for our protection should not be too easily set aside unless they have lost their relevance due to changing circumstances which demand a different and more appropriate application of Scripture. Don't just throw out godly rules and standards; but rather learn "why" they were established; and get your heart hot for God and holiness again. Obedience must love; and love must obey.

SCARS

I praise God for leading me out of error; but, because I didn't have a Biblical church that would "teach me to observe all things", I have many scars in my heart and mind. I have led others wrong, thinking I was telling them right -- that grieves me and makes me hate false doctrine even more. I made mistakes that grieve me, and hurt people; which makes me want to learn God's wisdom even more. I saw and heard things that are hard to clean from my mind; which makes me appreciate godly standards even more. I could have slipped into Hell! Jesus didn't plan for converts to have to climb through the church's slime and muck to find truth. He expected the churches to lead sinners to victory. The apostate denominational churches have much blood on their hands for stumbling seeking souls with their false gospel and laxity.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" II Cor. 10:4,5

EARLY CHRISTIANITY (Aristides 125 AD)

"The Christians, O King, went about and searched, and they have found the truth. As I have learned from their writings, they have come nearer to truth and genuine knowledge than the rest of the nations. For they know and trust in God, the Creator of heaven and of earth, in whom and from whom are all things....Therefore, they do not commit adultery or fornication. They do not bear false witness. They do not embezzle what is held in pledge, nor do they covet that which is not theirs. They honor father and mother and show kindness to those who are near to them. Whenever they are judges, they judge uprightly. They do not worship idols made in the likeness of man. Whatever they would not wish others to do to them, they do not do to others. They do not eat food that is consecrated to idols, for they are pure. They comfort their oppressors and make them their friends. They do good to their enemies.

Their women, O King, are pure as virgins, and their daughters are modest. Their men keep themselves from every unlawful union and from all uncleanness--in the hope of a reward in the world to come. Furthermore, if any of them have male or female slaves, or children, out of love towards them, they persuade them to become Christians. When they have done so, they call them brothers, without any distinction. They do not worship strange gods, and they go their way in all modesty and cheerfulness. Falsehood is not found among them. And they love one another. They do not turn away their care from widows, and they deliver the orphan from anyone who treats him harshly. He who has, gives to him who has not. And this is done without boasting.

When they see a stranger, they take him into their homes, and they rejoice over him as a very brother. For they do not call themselves brothers after the flesh, but brothers after the spirit and in God. Whenever one of the poor among them passes from this world, each one of them gives heed to him, according to his ability, and carefully sees to his burial. And if they hear that one of their number is imprisoned or afflicted because of the name of their Christ, all of them carefully attend to his needs. If it is possible to redeem him, they set him free. If there are any poor and needy among them, but if they have no spare food to give, they fast two or three days in order to supply the necessary food to the needy.

They follow the commandments of their Christ with much care, living justly and seriously, just as the Lord their God commanded them. Every morning and every hour they give thanks and praise to God for his loving-kindnesses to them. They give thanksgiving to him for their food and drink. If any righteous man among them passes from this world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God. They escort his body as if he were setting out from one place to go to another nearby. And when a child has been born to any of them, they give thanks to God."

Letter to Diognetus 125-200 AD "They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time, they surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men, and are persecuted by all."

Tatian 160 AD "With us there is no desire of vainglory, nor do we indulge in a variety of opinions. For having renounced the popular and earthly, obeying the commands of God, and following the law of the Father of immortality, we reject everything which rests upon human opinion."

THE BOTTOM LINE

Those who don't seek to obey, seek to rebel, there is no neutral ground:
And those who in this manner live, in Heaven will not be found.

If we don't live to love his Word, then we hate it sure enough:
Though we may talk a goodly talk God sees right through our bluff.

Either we seek his will or seek our own "thine all" or "mine" it is.
We can't serve God and mammon: we love our own way or His.

We worship the lamb by our life and lip, or worship our own image.
All we obey or disobey reveals to whom we pay homage.

Don't be deceived and go your way in all your selfish ambition:
Best to repent while there's still time, not justify your position.

Jesus is author of eternal salvation to all that obey only him.
To think you're safe to disobey, is a gross and foolish whim.

You must love him only with all your heart, your body, your soul, and your mind.
No second place lovers can be allowed or a two-timin' harlot we find.

Love not the world or the things therein, is a clear commandment of God.
Set your affections on things above, and on in that narrow way trod.

Section Eight

FOR THE PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS

A Scriptural view of church standards

INTRODUCTION

Repetition is the key to learning; so here you will see a little of that. There are some important issues in the first seven books that will not be covered again in book 8, but are still our position and standard. All of our books and sermons compose our standard -- we are simply teaching the New Testament and applying it to our lives. This is

not so much a law as it is a vision. This is not meant to overwhelm the convert, but to give him a target to shoot for. We will not wait until you have mastered this to consider you a member, but until you have embraced it. We just want you to know up front how we see God's will, how we understand God's Word; and be sure you want the same thing we do.

Let it be known that we are not adding to Scripture, but rightly dividing it with intent to obey, which requires application to our lives. If we believed there was a better way to serve the Lord, and apply Scripture, we would not have written this, but something else. If we see more light, then we will adjust. Only the principles are eternal, not our applications. We humbly ask you to enlighten us if you know a better way to pursue, and can convince us from the Scriptures in their historic use and context.

CHAPTER 1

PLEASED, BUT NEVER SATISFIED

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48

A great danger in setting down standards and rules of conduct for a church group is that usually these standards simply regulate the outside of a person, but never touch the heart. Because of this, people who are not spiritually minded rest within the walls of the church standard with all their "exteriors" in place, but without a living, Christ seeking faith. This produces a false security and sense of "arrival", which then produces spiritual passivity, lethargy, pride, and a dull conscience. The answer is not to throw away standards, but to watch for spiritually dull members and warn them of being such. If you are doing something just because the preacher says so, and not because you have it as your own conviction; the cure is not to **stop** what you are doing, but find out if it is Biblical and make it your own conviction.

People who fall in this trap seem to think that as long as "it" is absent from the church standard's list of do's and don'ts, "it" is acceptable to Christ also. This leads to the idea that **"It** is wrong for me, because my church says, 'No'; but **it** is right for him, because his church says, 'Yes'." Then if I go to his church, **it** will then please Jesus for me to do **it** also, even though I have been taught better.

Now, this scenario can be right at times, and on issues that are really not moral issues, but "preferences" decided on by the church leaders. The principle then that makes "it" displease Christ in one situation, but please him in another is not the **"it"**; but **whether or not you are submitting to God ordained authority**. Hebrews 13:7 & 17 are commands of God also; and we need to give church leaders freedom to apply principles and define terms for the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body of Christ.

Living after the flesh is wrong for you no matter what the church says is permitted. Disobeying Scripture is also wrong for your friend or family; even though the practice is not condemned by their church. If they have received greater light and better teaching, but are hiding behind the standards of a liberal church, they are still rebelling against Christ, and should be warned and rebuked. Hiding behind the accepted standards of a group, while your heart is cold and hypocritical is the sin of the Pharisees. Jesus said,

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:20

Carnal satisfaction with outward uniformity and order, while unconcerned about spiritual temperature or doctrinal accuracy is the sin of the Judaizers (and many "ism" supporters today) whom Paul warned about in Galatians 6:12-14:

"As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The standards Jesus set were basically "Spiritual Goals" that would take a lifetime of striving to master, if even then. They were basically "unreachable", but their practical applications were "practicable". You cannot attain to humility, but you can practice acts of humility in the effort of attaining to humility. You will never arrive at "loving your enemies", but you can practice turning the other cheek, and doing acts of kindness to your enemies. Jesus definitely expected us to obey the practical applications, but always attached them to a "spiritual goal" which we can never fully claim to have conquered.

This mixture of practical application attached to unreachable spiritual goals and ideals succeeds in not only regulating the outside, but in regulating also the heart! "Thou shalt not" leaves too much space; but "Be thou perfect" leaves nothing out. There is obviously no need to fast and pray to fulfill most "church standards"; but if we are to be true followers of Christ, we will have to cry out to God for the power of the Holy Spirit, and cling to the cross to succeed.

Many who obey church standards, but don't know the principle behind the standard, also do not apply it in any other area of life that the standard forgot to mention. This is because it was not attached to a spiritual principle, goal, or ideal that they are accountable for. The standard shouldn't be an "end", but only a "means" to help us attain to the "end" of spiritual maturity.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Heb. 13:7

Why can't we just say to people, "Be thou perfect"? Because some have not the maturity to make proper application to everyday life. Most people's point of reference in determining "biblical" or "godly" is 21st century American churchianity, not 1st century apostolic Christianity. Leaders are to be those whose senses are exercised to discern both good and evil, and thus teach us to observe and apply spiritual principles. Churches who just say, "Be thou perfect", and then let come what may, have shown themselves a shameful testimony for Christ. Having everyone in the church on their own timetable of when they obey specific standards of the church deletes the principle of ministers "teaching them to observe" and followers "obeying them that have the rule over you". Insisting on waiting until "I am convicted about it" is simple rebellion to the Scriptural principle of the younger submitting unto the elder -- you need to get convicted about that.

Actually, every sermon the pastor preaches comprises the church's standard, because it brings more truth and light that we are accountable for. Preaching that is vague and only touches on theory, but lacks practical application, is not Bible preaching. The apostles, who were sent to "teach them to observe all things" made many practical applications, which were attached to spiritual goals -- read the New Testament.

"...that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." Acts 26:20

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety: not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." I Tim. 2:9,10

When Paul told men to repent and turn to God, he then had to make practical application in "works meet for repentance". When Paul told women to be modest, sober, shamefaced, and godly; he had to make sure they understood that meant they were to be modest, without hairdos, without jewelry, and without costly or fancy clothes. Timothy, the local pastor, then had to teach them what was and wasn't fancy clothes, acceptable modesty, etc. People who are spiritually immature couldn't make the proper applications then, and can't now. John the Baptist said, "prepare the way of the LORD, make his paths straight"; but read in Luke all the practical applications he added to this spiritual goal. You can make this a Bible study of your own, to see all the spiritual goals attached to practical applications within the command of "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God...And love thy neighbor as thyself".

We will never master "Loving the Lord with all our heart, and loving our neighbor as our self"; but if we obey God's Word diligently in all the practical applications, we will learn and grow in meeting those all encompassing spiritual goals. If we aren't doers of all the Word of God from our hearts, we will deceive ourselves into thinking we are loving the Lord, and loving our neighbor, when we are actually working for the devil. Notice the degeneration in the 3 passages:

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." I John 5:2,3

- **PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF TERMS**

"But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James 1:22

- **THE LOSS OF PROPER UNDERSTANDING**

"Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." John 16:2

- **THE FRUIT OF IMPROPER UNDERSTANDING**

Saving faith requires us to walk in all the light we have, not settle for the church standard or spiritual level of the church. Your accountability before God grows every time you receive more light; thus you can never rest on a list

of standards. That is what the Jews mistakenly did with the Law of Moses. The Law was only meant to be a guide while they sought the Lord with all their hearts, and thus showed their faith. The Old Testament saints were to show their faith by diligently striving to obey the Law for God's glory; and we are to diligently obey the New Testament to show our faith in Christ. They couldn't atone for their sins by keeping the Law, and we can't by obeying the New Testament; but Jesus won't apply his atoning blood to our record if we are not found diligently obeying and following (I John 1:7-2:5). Being carnal while resting just within the letter of the Law does not show faith, and will not find grace in the eyes of the Lord. The OT Jews were expected to live in the Spirit of the Law by faith in God; and we today are to walk in the Spirit of Christ's teachings by faith. Nobody can be saved by resting in the letter alone of God's Word, but must live in the spirit of God's Word.

RECEIVE AS CHRIST RECEIVES

"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" Rom. 15:7

How sad and unbiblical it is for a church to reject someone from communion because they don't fit some tradition that is not even based on the Word of God; and then at the same time admit that the person they won't receive is a good Christian--maybe more accurate in doctrine or practice than the church.

When dealing with receiving or not receiving people into communion, we must follow the Word of God to know whether Christ will or will not receive certain people. We must not receive a person into membership unless Christ receives them, and we must receive those whom Christ receives. Some would try to jump on this to excuse their loose and unbiblical standards, saying, "Christ receives sinners right where they are". Yes. but Christ **ONLY** receives repentant sinners, who are willing to be discipled and taught to observe all things he commanded by his chosen leaders. The great commission included "teaching them to observe", remember. On the day of Pentecost, Peter told them to repent and be baptized, but he didn't stop there. The Bible tells us: "with many other words" he told them to "save themselves from this untoward generation"; that those who "**gladly** received his word" were baptized; and those baptized, "**continued** in the apostle's doctrine". Later, when they sent out the "decrees for the keep" (Acts 16), church leaders added these decrees to their standards. New members now had to obey these new standards also. Even though some were accepted members days before without these new standards, now they weren't, if they didn't submit. Jesus doesn't receive those who won't submit to godly leadership and be taught. Jesus only receives those who are walking in the light they have, and willing to receive more.

Those whom Jesus receives, we receive to the glory of God. Those whom Jesus would not receive, we will not receive. Some hard cases take time to discern for sure, but we have to take people at their word to some degree. Philip took Simon at face value; and Simon later proved insincere, but that is bound to happen. It is better to bring in one who appears sincere; than keep them out and treat them as liars until they convince us for six months or a year that they want to follow Jesus too. The church cannot become man's club, but must remain Christ's church. Jesus sets the entrance requirements. Many Churches today have become nothing but social clubs for the elite with worldly wise men setting the entrance requirements. We have no right to alter the apostolic design. Through weekly communion, and the dynamics of such, we allow Christ to judge and purge His church His way.

CHAPTER 2

FOR THE PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:" Eph. 4:11-15

This is the goal and aim! This focuses on what Jesus desired to accomplish in the church. Is this **your** desire? Do **you** want the ministers in the church to **perfect you**? Do you want to grow in the unity of the faith? Do you want to become a perfect man according to the measure of the stature of Christ? If not, then you are not ready to be a Christian, a member of a Biblical church, or a follower of Jesus. Are you teachable? Are you willing to be **perfected** by those who are more mature than you? This takes great humility and true living faith in Christ -- the Christ who set up the program, and gave the spiritual gifts to the respective ministers.

This passage of Scripture sums up my desire as a minister of Jesus Christ -- to be faithful to fulfill my job description. This church standard is based on this motive alone. A true minister of Christ who can be shown

Scripturally that they are wrong on a subject, will gladly change -- this is my heart also. I don't claim to have arrived, and I need the brethren in the church to perfect me also. NOTICE JESUS DID NOT SAY WE COULD PERFECT OURSELVES WITHOUT THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH SCRIPTURAL MINISTERS WORKING IN A SCRIPTURAL CHURCH -- It is all too easy to think you are perfect when by yourself without the scrutiny of godly brethren, and the need for submission, forbearance, etc.

I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Phil. 3:14-17

It is very important that you grasp a few simple concepts from this passage. Paul wanted all those who were mature believers (perfect) to be "thus minded", i.e. "striving for greater perfection", and not feeling they had arrived. Nevertheless, Paul says, "whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule,". What does this mean? This means we ought to be striving to grow to new heights of understanding and maturity; but at the same time, we ought not to be divided on the fundamentals of holiness and sound doctrine that have already been established. The decision of the apostles at the council in Jerusalem didn't need to be reconsidered. The instruction the apostles had already given and the standards already set forth should stay intact while they were going higher in Christian character. In other words: STANDARDS ARE MEANT TO BE A FLOOR, BUT NOT A CEILING. They keep us from going backwards, but not forwards. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. If it was right for the women to wear a veil in the first century, then it is right today! If it was wrong for a man to have long hair in Paul's teaching, then it is wrong today. If we reconsider these standards and teachings, we are not going forward, but backwards. Growing in grace NEVER destroys Bible principles of holiness and godliness (the floor); but only builds higher disciplines of mind and body in the individual. Modern day church leaders are not apostles, and improvements can be made in some of their applications. This should only be done by spiritual leaders for the purpose of being more apostolic and pleasing to Christ. Being more spiritual never takes us closer to the world's ways and values; but lifts us higher into Christ's ways and values.

Everything the apostles wrote to the churches were to be obeyed -- they were a standard: either something they should not do, or something they must strive for. The only requirement to reach scriptural standards is a **willing heart** -- God's commandments are not grievous to spiritual people.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." 2 Cor. 8:12

CHAPTER 3

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." II Tim. 2:2

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3

Faithful men are those who will receive truth, keep it unchanged, and pass it on in its purity. We are to contend only for The Faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Thus we trace our spiritual heritage through those men who were faithful to pass on The Faith, which was once delivered unto the saints. Since Paul told us to follow him, and use him as a ruler to measure other teachers, (basically using the apostles and the apostolic churches as a ruler to measure truth and error), this we do throughout church history.

We can historically follow faithful groups of believers up to our day who suffered greatly for the true faith, and never associated with the apostate Romanists. These people were called by many different names usually based on where they lived, or who their pastor was at the time. The name "Anabaptist" was fairly common to all those who didn't accept the marriage of church and state and the accompanying infant baptism. We consider their progress in the faith, and many standards they set as worthy of our respect and attention; lest we think we are more spiritually mature than those who suffered the loss of all things for Jesus Christ.

We hold to the complete Word of God, Old and New Testaments, as the inspired Word and will of our Lord Jesus Christ who came to establish the New Covenant by writing God's Laws in our hearts. What the apostles taught the churches to believe and practice, is the faith we must be practicing today. I would recommend Adam Clarke's Commentary as a powerful tool in Bible Study.

Since the early Christians were not so concerned about theological theories, but in "how you lived"; we also are more concerned about following Jesus than in theorizing about him. Our major concern will focus on being "doers of the Word".

The primary message of our standard is that we should strive for holiness as defined and agreed upon by the consensus of the brethren under the leadership of the bishop and elders (Acts 15). Here is where practical unity and submission to the body really comes into play. The Bible pattern is that believers are accountable to the standards (traditions) given by godly church leaders in "teaching them to observe" the Scriptures. In Heaven there will be no individualism, but we will all ebb and flow with the will of God. If you can't lose your self-will here, you may not make it there.

We believe and practice a Biblical church government, with a bishop and deacons (both called elders/leaders) as administrators (Acts 21:18) who meet Bible qualifications (I Tim. 3 & Titus 1,2). We believe these men should be honored and obeyed as they uphold God's Word (Heb. 13:7,17; I Thess. 5:12,13; I Tim. 5:17). We believe they that preach the gospel have right to live of the gospel; but they may choose to support themselves. All authority is subject to the Scriptures and God's authority.

CHRISTIAN HOME

The Christian home should be modest, simple, godly, and a ministry station. Jesus must be Lord in every aspect. The ungodly influences of TV, radio, internet, magazines, worldly books and cassettes, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and unbiblical religious material (and if there be any other thing contrary to sound doctrine and holiness) should be kept out of the home, and away from the children's reach. Internet usage is cautiously allowed as long as no harmful affects to the church body are detected from it. Parents should act as a filter to keep Satan's influences away from themselves, and the children. Children should not be taken to homes, stores, etc. where they will have their minds corrupted, and parents should avoid the same corrupting influences as much as possible.

Modesty should be practiced within the home as well as without. Children should be taught godly obedience with the Scriptural use of the rod of correction. Children should not be taught materialism by having excessive toys or worldly toys. Christians should separate from the world's fairs, amusement parks, rodeos, sports, games, etc. where humanism, ungodly music, nakedness, materialism, vain competition, alcoholic drink, etc. are propagated.

The Christian home will not seek after the pleasures and vanities of worldly holidays, even if they take on a religious tone, such as Christmas, Easter, etc. Worldly music should be avoided.

We believe it is wrong for children to attend public schools and liberal church schools. Home schooling is a great blessing, and trades can be learned from the home or Christian brethren in most cases. **Parents must give their children adequate education to effectively educate the next generation so God's people won't eventually become ignorant and uneducated due to a gradual decline in each generation.**

We believe in godly, hands-off courtship. The place for courtship is in family activities, where parents can learn to know the parties, and give council. One should not enter into courtship until old enough to marry. Courtship with the unsaved is unscriptural. Weddings and funerals should be kept simple and spiritual, without costly array and vain display.

Christians must always go directly to the brother/sister they have a problem with in a spirit of love and reconciliation, not criticize to others and sow discord -- this is something the Lord hates (Prov. 6:14,19). When brethren and sisters share what they know about other brothers or sisters in the church with new converts, visitors, or one another, they sow discord and hurt what good influence the slandered brother may have had on the person they gossiped to. This is the work of Satan.

BROTHERS

Men are to strive to be spiritually minded; seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; not effeminate; men of prayer; faithful contenders for the faith; loving their wives; bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; displaying the fruit of the Spirit; not speaking evil of others; submitting to government; paying taxes and tithes; honestly providing for their own household; submitting to godly church leadership and brethren; supporting the church; helping the poor; etc. Is there any end? No, it is a lifetime of studying and applying Scripture.

Men are to dress in simple, plain clothes that fit loosely, and cover the body. Short sleeves, where the sleeve comes nearly to the elbow is acceptable for work, but long sleeves are preferred for church meetings. Form fitting jeans, shorts, sweats, un-tucked shirts, t-shirts, and knit shirts are not modest. Men should avoid bright showy colors, fancy sunglasses, unbuttoned shirts (more than one button), and a "macho" image. Men should be careful not to defraud others by their dress or behavior. Hair should not be styled in a worldly manner. Clothes that associate with worldly trends, sports, fashions, etc. should be avoided. Men should seek to control their tongues, emotions, and attitudes by bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ. They should avoid excessive "teasing" and joking among brothers, and should avoid it altogether with the sisters. No jewelry or costly array of any kind is to be worn (including costly, showy watches). Beards are seen as God's will for manly sex distinction.

We are to lay up treasure in Heaven, and not on earth. Our possessions (house, car, tools, etc) should be purchased with godly stewardship and are to be tools to build God's Kingdom, not toys to fulfill the lust of the flesh. Houses and cars should be kept simple, without vain decor, and the show of pride or vanity. We are to strive to display humility, showing that we are pilgrims seeking for a better country. We suggest the homes to have Scripture verses displayed on the walls in various ways, rather than vain and costly decor. We should avoid the show of pride in displaying self-glorifying photos of ourselves on our walls, buying costly furnishings, extravagant architecture and landscape, etc.

Fathers should lead their homes spiritually with Bible devotions and prayer. Men should strive to set the example of loving enemies, turning the other cheek, going the second mile, and doing unto others what we would have done to us. We believe God calls men and gifts men to build the church according to their spiritual gifts. We encourage the brothers to aspire to spiritual maturity and to fulfill their callings under the counsel of the brotherhood and ordination of the elders. We believe it is Scriptural for all God called and qualified men, who have first been proved, to be ordained to preach in evangelistic efforts, Bible studies, and in the local assembly according to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

SISTERS

Wives are to be holy women, submissive to their own husbands; willing to serve their families in love; standing with the husband in child discipline; not speaking evil of their husband or others; happy to be keepers at home; good stewards of time and money; showing forth the fruit of the Spirit; seeking to help the poor, widows, and other sisters; faithful to witness for Christ; hospitable; chaste; soberminded; and loving the Lord Jesus with all their heart.

Our goal is to be "at least" as modest as what Paul expected in his day. Paul considered a woman modest, who wore a plain dress (like the stola of the day without ornaments), with a katastole (like a vest), with a humble-shy spirit (shamefaced), without sensual appeal (chaste), with a veil (modesty), and a serious walk with God (sobriety).

We are striving to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works and perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Life in a true church is not understood by the carnal. Ladies in our society have much to change to get in line with apostolic Christianity, and may be tempted to stop short of victory by comparing themselves with modern standards, or following their feelings. Ladies, please beware having a grumbling, murmuring spirit if your husband leads your family this way - this is very grievous to God's Spirit (I Cor. 10:10). Diligently resist this "missing the leeks and garlies of Egypt" attitude - it is poison to the youth especially. Discontent wives are poison to their husband's spiritual fervor. People who come out of our affluent society to a plain, humble walk of life, are not having to be as radical as the Jews who became Christians, Romans who became Christians, Catholics who became non-conformists, Communists or Islamics turned Christians in the past or today. God forbid that we should murmur about our lesser crucifixion of the earthly affections and lusts. We are teaching nothing new - such standards are common throughout the history of God's people.

Primarily we ask the fathers and husbands to police the particulars of dress in their home, and determine what is most practical and useful within the bounds of what the elders deem modest and godly. We ministers will approach the fathers and husbands if we see a problem. We hope that you will determine in your heart to be humble and cooperative should this arise - Ultimately God will hold the bishops responsible for the church and expects them to keep it in order. This is God's way, not man's. We would only be concerned if we saw something we considered "leaven" and dangerous to the whole body if continued. PLEASE COMMUNICATE IF THERE IS A PROBLEM - DON'T ASSUME WE WILL BE UNCOOPERATIVE.

The following is what the bishop believes to be a safe and wise course, and what he teaches his family. In a close working fellowship, extra carefulness is in order, especially to protect the purity of our youth. We encourage our fathers to seek God for the leadership of their own homes in cooperation and support of the church leadership.

We desire the sister's dress to follow the pattern of the "modest Katastole" (book 7), with a long (within a couple inches of the ankle), full (loose), plain dress (or skirt/blouse) and a loose vest, topper, or smock, which provides the "double covering" over the bodice and avoids the "drawn in" waistline. This keeps the clothes from being tight on the parts of the body which need to be concealed, not accentuated. This type of dress is described in "Teaching Them to Observe" - book 7. Modest "jumpers" are good for little girls, but usually are not modest enough on mature ladies.

We desire that the sleeves should be at least to the elbow and loose fitting; but drawn in at the cuff to avoid immodesty. No lace, ruffles, ribbons, or fancy collars. Dresses must avoid too large neck openings; but must be closed enough to cover the collar bone and shoulder muscles completely. As already stated in book #7, we encourage our ladies to make their clothes when possible, rather than buy them. It will be rare that clothes purchased will be a safe pattern or meet the criteria herein. **Snug clothes are not modest.**

No jewelry or costly array of any type is to be worn. Plain, solid, opaque fabric is a safe choice for the dresses. Prints should be used with great caution. **Simple, subdued, humble, modest, and not too "busy"** printed fabric can be practical to hide stains; but others can become a form of ornamentation - it should be chosen with mortified earthly affections. The mother who desires to "dress up" herself or vainly dresses up her little girl for show is not following Jesus with a single motive and pure heart.

Fabric should not cling to the form, but have some "stiffness" or "body" of its own. Slips should be worn under dresses to protect when standing by a glass door or with light behind you. Bright and contrasting colors are not modest (humble and shamefaced), nor are rich colors of royalty, such as purple or red. We encourage simple colors that won't stand out in a crowd. Shoes should be simple and plain; and should always be worn to church services and activities. No make-up or strong perfumes should be used, nor any other device for drawing attention to one's self. God's idea of beauty requires sobriety, humility, shamefacedness, a meek and quiet spirit, and chastity. This spirit of modesty should prevail throughout the mature sister's activities, thus prohibiting their participation in sports, entertainment, jesting, flirting, etc. Modesty primarily comes from within, and though dressed modest, you must also be careful in how you sit, stand, walk, speak, and conduct yourself in public to be truly modest in spirit and attire.

The head should be veiled with a hanging veil of plain solid material (no prints); that covers the hair (even if you choose to wear your hair down) and the back of the neck (if you wear it up in a "bun"), according to the practice of the early church and the Greek word for covering, Katakalypto. Typically we ask that the ladies veils hang down to their shoulders and come forward so that no more than 3 inches of hair be showing in the front.

YOUTH

The youth should be striving to attain to adulthood and flee youthful lusts which war against their soul. They are to obey and honor their parents and church leaders for the Lord's glory and testimony. The Bible says the youth are to be sober, grave, temperate, and an example of the believer in word, conduct, charity, spirit, faith, and purity. They should not be led to pursue vanities like the world does, such as: sporty cars, fancy crafts, performing with musical instruments, hunting trophies, sports, etc. (Parents should set the example). Youth should seek to learn trades and skills to produce successful homes, godly churches, and build the kingdom of God by winning the lost. Youth should not have activities without adult supervision.

Young ladies should learn chastity, sobriety, and shamefacedness from the elder sisters. This means they won't be playing sports with the men, etc. Children should reflect the modest standards and life of their parents. Young girls should wear pantaloons or bloomers under their dresses for modesty while playing.

CONCLUSION

This standard is simply a summary of Bible standards with applications. It is not exhaustive, nor does it take the place of Scripture, thus not relieving anyone from principles of the Word of God not mentioned here or in the previous books. These practical applications and spiritual goals are set before us to be helps in honoring God with our lives and church body. This is not a merit system to earn heaven, but all should be found striving to glorify Christ by obeying and fulfilling these New Testament goals which show our faith and submission. We invite new members to strive together with us in the narrow way. Nobody can perfectly fulfill this standard in the "spiritual goals"; but all should be humbly striving -- that is the key. If someone has a better idea or improvement for the standard, please feel free to present it to the pastor and brethren at men's prayer meeting. PLEASE ASK QUESTIONS - YOU MAY HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD US. As the verse says below, you only need to be willing - that is what God asks. You can do this. You have the ability to be willing to learn and grow.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." 2 Cor. 8:12