



THE CHURCH

Pastor William E. Wenstrom Jr.
WENSTROM BIBLE MINISTRIES

Marion, Iowa

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Wenstrom Bible Ministries

Brief Description of the Church

- Wenstrom Bible Ministries is a non-denominational church, which teaches the Word of God verse by verse, paragraph by paragraph, chapter by chapter, book by book. Our purpose is to make the Word of God available to believers and communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to the non-Christian community.
- We believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
- Church Denomination: non-denominational

Church Programs

- Sunday Morning Worship
- Mid-Week Bible Study

Scripture's View

- Inspiration: Verbal Plenary Inspiration – “Every Word Counts”
- Sufficiency of Scripture: God speaks through Scripture alone

Theological View

- Gifts of the Spirit: Sign gifts have ceased
- The Kingdom of God: Is the future millennial Kingdom.
- Israel: The modern nation of Israel is the chosen nation and will be used in fulfillment of prophecy.
- The Rapture: Takes place before the Tribulation
- The Tribulation: The seven-year period of Jacob's Trouble
- Interpretation of Scripture: A Scripture passage is to be taken literally whenever possible
- Soteriology: Moderate Calvinism
- Church Polity: Pastor Governed
- Primary Purpose of the Church: To teach and train Believers
- The Law: Was for Israel and is not an obligation of the church
- Tithing: Was an Old Testament requirement

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Introduction

The term “church” in the New Testament designates a totally unique group of believers who at the moment of conversion were called out of the cosmic system of Satan and were placed into union with the Lord Jesus Christ through the baptism of the Spirit. Consequently, they have been provided with totally unique privileges, responsibilities and opportunities to glorify God.

This term “church” is synonymous with other terms in the New Testament, which also designate this same group of believers, e.g., citizens of heaven, body of Christ, bride of Christ, branches, kingdom of priests, stones of the building, etc. This group of believers was first prophesied by our Lord in Matthew 16:18. They are totally unique by virtue of what God has provided them under His policy of grace. They are the beneficiaries of at least sixty things at the moment of conversion. Therefore, the church age is called the “**dispensation of grace**” (Ephesians 3:2). It began on the day of Pentecost fifty days after the Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection as recorded in Acts 2.

The dispensation of the church age is divided into two categories: (1) Pre-Canon: Before the New Testament was completed (Book Acts 30-96 A.D.) (2) Post-Canon: After the New Testament was completed (Epistles of New Testament 96 A.D.-Rapture).

The church age ends with a resurrection just as the dispensation of the hypostatic union. It is a unique dispensation because it is between the first two resurrections in history. The resurrection of the church is called by many as “the rapture.”

Chapter One: Vocabulary

Classical Usage of Ekklesia

The term “church” in the New Testament translates the Greek noun *ekklesia*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *ek*, “out from” and the verb *kaleo*, “to call,” thus it literally means “called out ones.”

Liddell and Scott list the following meanings: (1) Assembly duly summoned (2) In LXX, the Jewish congregation (3) In NT, the Church as a body of Christians (Page 509). So therefore, the word has three distinct stages of meaning: (1) Secular (2) Jewish (3) Christian.

As a secular term, *he ekklesia* was a technical term for the lawful assembly of free Greek citizens met to transact public affairs. That they were summoned is expressed in the verb *kaleo* and the preposition *ek* indicates that they were summoned out of the whole population as a select portion that included neither the populace, strangers, nor those who had forfeited their civic rights.

Both the calling and the calling out are the distinctives that make the word well adapted for its new Christian usage. The word was used in classical literature for the summons to the army to assemble. It is attested from Eurpides and Herodotus onwards (fifth century B.C.) and denotes in the usage of antiquity the popular assembly of the competent full citizens of the *polis*, “city.” It reached its greatest importance in the fifth century and met at regular intervals (in Athens about 30-40 times a year, elsewhere less frequently) and in cases of urgency as an extra-ordinary *ekklesia*. Its sphere of competence included decisions on suggested changes in the law (which could only be effected by the council of the 400), on appointments to official positions and-at least in its heyday-on every important question of internal and external policy (contracts, treaties, war and peace, finance). To these was added in special cases (e.g. treason) the task of sitting in judgment, which as a rule fell to regular courts.

The *ekklesia* opened with prayers and sacrifices to the gods of the city. It was bound by the existing laws. Every citizen had the right to speak and to propose matters for discussion, but a proposition could only be dealt with if there was an expert opinion on the matter.¹ A decision was only valid if it won a certain number of votes. Authorization to participate and the methods of summoning the assembly and of voting-by show of hands in Athens,² by acclaim,³ by ballot sheets or stones⁴-were strictly regulated, as was the control of the assembly, which originally lay with the president of the Prytaneis and from the 4th century B.C. with a college of nine.

Thus, *ekklesia*, centuries before the LXX and the NT was clearly characterized as a political phenomenon, repeated according to certain rules and within a certain framework. It was the assembly of full citizens, functionally rooted in the constitution of the democracy, an assembly in which fundamental political and judicial decisions were taken.

¹ Aristotle Ath. Pol. 45

² Aristotle Ath. Pol., 45

³ Thuc. 1.87

⁴ Xenophon Hell. 1.7.9

The scope of its competence varied in the different states. The word *ekklesia* throughout the Greek and Hellenistic areas always retained its reference to the assembly of the *polis*. In only three exceptional cases was it used for the business meeting of a cultic guild. Otherwise it was never used for guilds or religious fellowships. The Greeks had a well-developed vocabulary to describe their religious gatherings and offerings. Most of these terms are not found in the NT. *Ekklesia* was used in a very restricted sense while *sunagoge* was used especially for the cultic gatherings and various offerings to the pagan deities.

Septuagint Usage of Ekklesia

The noun *ekklesia* occurs 100 times in the Septuagint representing exclusively the Hebrew *qahal* (including once each for 4 derivatives of the root). Where *ekklesia* is used in the LXX for *qahal*, it indicates the assembly of the people of Israel (e.g. Deuteronomy 9:10; 23:3 ff.; Mic. 2:5). It also indicates, especially in the Chronicler, the assembly of the people for worship (e.g. 2 Chronicles 6:3 at the consecration of the temple; 30:2, 4, 13, 17 at Hezekiah's Passover; cf. also Joel 2:16 and in the Psalm 21:23, 26).

The noun *ekklesia* was used in the LXX primarily as an equivalent to *qahal*, a term which to some degree was itself a particular group within the people of God, even when it was translated by *sunagoge*. *Ekklesia* was used only infrequently for non-religious assemblies and it was never used for a pagan religious gathering.

New Testament Usage of Ekklesia

The term *ekklesia* is employed 114 times in the Greek New Testament. It appears only three times in the Gospels (Matthew 16:18; 18:17 twice). The word occurs most frequently in the Pauline epistles.

In the overwhelming majority of the New Testament passages, *ekklesia* is used as a fixed Christian term and is to be translated with congregation or congregational assembly or church. Early Christianity did not conceive of *ekklesia* primarily as an organizational, but rather as a theological entity or spiritual organism.

In the New Testament, the noun *ekklesia* was employed to designate the following regarding this group of believers who are in union with Christ by virtue of the baptism of the Spirit: (1) Local assembly of believers in a city or town. (2) Universal assembly of believers living throughout the world.

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition: (1) a regularly summoned legislative body, assembly (2) a causal gathering of people, an assemblage, gathering (3) people with shared belief, community, congregation (a) of OT Israelites assembly, congregation (b) of Christians in a specific place or area; of a specific Christian group assembly, gathering ordinarily involving worship and discussion of matters of concern to the community; congregation or church as the totality of Christians living and meeting in a particular locality or larger geographical area, but not necessarily limited to one meeting place (c) the global community of Christians (universal) church.⁵

⁵ Pages 303-304

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains: (1) A congregation of Christians, implying interacting membership – ‘congregation, church’⁶ (2) The totality of congregations of Christians – ‘church’⁷ (3) A group of citizens assembled for socio-political activities – ‘assembly, gathering’⁸

The use of *ekklesia* became more widespread than *sunagoge* as the church rooted itself more predominately in the soil of the Gentile world, breaking away from its Jewish roots. The use of *sunagoge* in the early first century church declined because it was permanently associated with the nation of Israel, while the use of *ekklesia* increased, not only because it was already familiar but also because it had an honorable meaning in Greek culture.

After the period of the exile it was the synagogue which dominated the religious life of the Jews. It was in the Greek Diaspora that the synagogue became accepted as the new designation for the *`edhah*. The name applied not only to the house of the synagogue but to the congregation of the synagogue as well.

Having this background in mind, it is very interesting that the Gentile Christian congregations did not use the designation of synagogue for their signification. The members of these first Christian congregations came in a large degree from the Jewish synagogues which consisted of both Jews and proselytes. These believers claim to represent true Jewish congregation (Romans 2:28-29) and the true Israel of God (Romans 9:6) since they were regenerate.

Although these ancient Christian congregations were patterned primarily after the Jewish synagogues, they avoided using the term synagogue. In fact, the term synagogue is used only one time in the New Testament as a designation for a Christian congregation (Jm. 2:2) since James was speaking exclusively to regenerate Jews.

In the Roman Empire, the synagogues stood as symbols of Jewish law and religion, and the new Christian religion. However, Christian congregations avoided association with this term. Instead, they adopted the term *ekklesia* which had fallen out of usage in Jewish circles.

As well as avoiding associations with the Jewish religion, the Christians also chose *ekklesia* as a way of distancing themselves from the terms utilized by the pagan Greek cults. Here a multitude of terms would have been at the disposal of the ancient Christians. Secular Gentile authors such as Lucian and Celsus did, however, identify the Christians congregations by the pagan term *thiasos*. More amazing than this though, the early Church historian Eusebius also used the term for the church.

Therefore, the term *ekklesia* was employed by the New Testament writers as a technical term to designate a totally unique group of believers who at the moment of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior were called out of the cosmic system of Satan and were placed into union with the Lord Jesus Christ through the baptism of the Spirit. Consequently, church age believers have been provided with totally unique privileges and opportunities to glorify God.

⁶ 11.32

⁷ 11.33

⁸ 11.78

The *ekklesia* began with the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost in June of 32 A.D. (Acts 2), and will leave this earth at the Rapture or resurrection of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). This group of believers is distinct from Old Testament saints who belong to the theocentric dispensations.

Chapter Two: Election

The Scriptures teaches that there are three elections in history: (1) Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6-7; 10:15; 14:2; Isaiah 44:1; 45:4; 48:12; Isaiah 65:9; Ezek. 20:5; Psa. 135:4; Acts 13:17; 15:7; Romans 11:5, 7, 28). (2) Christ (Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:18; Luke 9:35; 23:35; 1 Peter 2:4-6). (3) Church (Romans 8:30, 33; 9:24-26; 1 Corinthians 1:27; Ephesians 1:4, 18; 4:1, 4; Philippians 3:14; Colossians 3:12, 15; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2:10; Tit. 1:1; Hebrews 3:1; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:1, 15; 2:4, 9, 21; 3:9; 5:10, 13; 2 Peter 1:3, 10; Revelation 17:14).

The Scriptures teach that the church age believer is elected to the privilege of experiencing an eternal relationship and fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Election is never used in Scripture in relation to the unbeliever since 1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Peter 3:9 teach that God desires all men to be saved.

Ephesians 1:3 Worthy of praise and glorification is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who has blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in the Person of Christ. 4 When He elected us to privilege in Him before the foundation of the world for the purpose of being holy and blameless before Him. (Author's translation)

“**Elected to privilege**” is the verb *eklegomai*, which means, “elected and set apart for privilege.” When Paul teaches the Ephesians that they were chosen before the foundation of the world, he is referring to the doctrine of election.

God elected the church age believer before the foundation of the world in the sense that God, in His foreknowledge, which is based upon His omniscience, knew before anything was ever created, that they would believe in His Son in time and therefore, He elected them to the privilege of entering into fellowship with Him based upon the merits of our union with Christ. God elected the believer before the foundation of the world since He knew beforehand that the believer would accept Jesus Christ as Savior in time and therefore elected the believer to privilege.

Election means that God has a plan for the church age believer's life, which is to be conformed to the image of Christ.

Romans 8:28 In fact, we know without a doubt that for the benefit of those who are characterized as divinely loving God the Father, He (the Spirit), as an eternal spiritual truth, always works each and every circumstance together for the good, for the benefit of those who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, the chosen ones, in accordance with His predetermined plan. 29 That is, whom He knew in advance, He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son in order that He Himself would, as an eternal spiritual truth, be the firstborn among many spiritual brothers. 30 In fact, these very ones whom He predestined, He also effectually called and these very ones whom He effectually called, He also justified. In fact, these very ones whom He justified, He also glorified. (Author's translation)

The believer's election to privilege is a gift and irrevocable (Romans 11:29). Election is the expression of the sovereign will of God in eternity past (Ephesians 1:4). It is God's complete agreement with His own foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:1-2).

God has three kinds of knowledge: (1) Self-knowledge (2) Omniscience (3) Foreknowledge. Foreknowledge acknowledges only what is in the decree of God, which is God's eternal, holy, wise and sovereign purpose, comprehending at once all things that ever were or will be in their causes, courses, conditions, successions, and relations and determining their certain futurity (i.e., that they will certainly take place).

The decree of God is His eternal and immutable will regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence. It is the chosen and adopted plan of all God's works. Election is declared through God's foreknowledge.

God elected the believer before the foundation of the world since He knew beforehand that the believer would accept Jesus Christ as Savior in time and therefore elected the believer to privilege.

Election is based upon God's grace policy meaning that the believer does not merit his election but rather receives it based upon the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the Cross.

2 Timothy 1:8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity. (NASB95)

Church age believers have been elected to privilege in order that they may be freed from the bondage of the old sin nature and that they might serve one another through love (Galatians 5:13). Election is an expression of God's love for the believer (1 John 3:1-3). The church age believer has been elected in order that they may live in the eternal life they received when they believed in Christ for salvation (1 Timothy 6:12; Hebrews 9:15). They have been elected in order that they may receive eternal glory, which means that God is not only going to bless the church age believer with a resurrection body but also with an eternal inheritance, if they persevere and overcome (1 Peter 5:10). They have been elected in order that they may have fellowship (1 Corinthians 1:9). They have been elected in order to form the body of Christ, which will be completed at the rapture, i.e. resurrection of the church (Colossians 3:15).

Paul prayed that the Ephesian believers would be enlightened as to the confidence that this election can produce in them.

Ephesians 1:18 I make it a habit to pray that the eyes of our heart would receive enlightenment for the purpose of knowing for certain what is the confidence of His calling and what are the glorious riches, which is His inheritance distributed among the saints. 19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His divine omnipotence directed towards all of us who are believers. This is in accordance with the operative power, namely, the possession of power to overcome (the sin nature, the devil and his cosmic system) originating from His manifested power (through the resurrection and session of Christ) 20 which He (the Father) exercised through the Person of Christ by raising Him (Christ) out from among the dead and by seating Him (Christ) at His right hand in the heavenlies. 21 Far above each and every ruler and authority and command and dominion and each and every rank that has been bestowed, not only during this period of history, absolutely not, but also during the coming one. 22 Furthermore, He (the Father) subjected each and everything under His (Christ's) feet and appointed Him as head over each and every thing for

the benefit of the church 23 which (church) by its very character and nature is His body, the perfect complement and complete expression (of Christ) who (Christ) at the present time is fulfilling everything for Himself in every respect. (Author's translation)

The church age believer has a great responsibility to conduct himself or herself in a manner worthy of their election to privilege (Ephesians 4:1-3). God has elected them to sanctification and not immoral degeneracy (1 Thessalonians 4:7). They have been elected in order that they may go through undeserved suffering for Christ's sake (1 Peter 2:18-25).

In Romans 8:33, Paul teaches that no one can bring a charge against God's elect because God has declared the Christian justified through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies. (NASB95)

“**God's elect**” is composed of the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *eklektos*, “**elect**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos*, “**God's**.”

The noun *theos* refers to the Father since Paul teaches in Romans 8:28 that the “chosen ones,” i.e. Christians were elected according to the Father's predetermined plan. Further indicating that the Father is in view is that Paul teaches in Ephesians 1:3-4 that the Father elected the Christian to privilege in eternity past before the foundation of the world. The word functions as a, “genitive of possession” indicating that the Christian who is elected by the Father “belong to” the Father or in other words, are “owned” by the Father in the sense that legally the Christian has been adopted Roman style into the family of God by the Father. They “belong to” the Father in the sense that He predestined them according to His predetermined plan to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. He effectually called them, justified them and glorified them according to His plan.

In Romans 8:33, the adjective *eklektos* is composed of the preposition *ek*, “out from” and the verb *lego*, “to call,” thus the word literally means, “called out ones” or even “chosen out ones.”

Although *eklektos* occurs in literary and nonliterary material in classical Greek, there seems to be no evidence that it was anything other than a secular expression. In classical Greek, it is used in connection with a person or thing which is chosen.

The term had its origin in military language and was used in reference to the choosing of men for military service or the choosing of a person or group for special duty. It was also used in a political sense where it is used with reference to the election of persons to offices or duties.

The background and qualifications of the candidate were the basis for his election, which furnished that person with authority and imposed the specific responsibility upon him.⁹

The adjective *eklektos* changed in meaning when it was used to include decisions or choices. The Stoics used it in relation to personal decisions or choices between different possibilities. It was used in the papyri to convey the selection of specific things because of their quality.¹⁰

⁹ Coenen, “Elect,” The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown, General Editor, volume 1, page 536; Regency, Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967, 1969, 1971

In the Septuagint, *eklektos* translates nineteen Hebrew terms with the two most common being *bachar* and *barar*. The former is used in secular context and in contexts where God is the object in the sense of men choosing God, His will and His way as well as in contexts where God is the subject.

Eklektos is often applied to “select” products in secular contexts in the Septuagint (Nehemiah 5:18; Amos 5:11). It is used of individuals “picked” to fight (Judges 20:16).

The word is used to translate *bachar* in Genesis 6:2 where fallen angels “chose” wives for themselves among human women in order to prevent the incarnation of the Son of God. *Eklektos* was used with the selection of choice grazing land in Genesis 13:11 and in the “choosing” of warriors (Exodus 17:9) as well as the “selection” of a king (1 Samuel 8:18 [LXX 1 Kings 8:18]). It was used of the selection of stones for a sling (1 Samuel 17:40 [1 Kings 17:40]) and the choosing of an appropriate ox for sacrifice (1 Kings 18:25 [LXX 3 Kings 18:25]) as well as the selection of choice materials by a craftsman (Isaiah 40:20).

When God is the object of man’s selection, *bachar* is used infrequently. It is the strongest term however for God’s election of the nation of Israel and of the people’s choice to serve God.

The primary use of *bachar* in the Old Testament is God’s election of Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6-7; 10:15; 14:2). It is used of God choosing Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:44, 48; 11:13; 2 Kings 21:7; Nehemiah 1:9) and for selecting the great leaders of Israel (Nehemiah 9:7; Psalm 106:23 [LXX 105:23]; Psalm 105:26; 78:70).

The adjective *eklektos* appears a little over twenty times in the Greek New Testament. It is used of both born again Jew and Gentiles during the Tribulation period (Matthew 24:22; 31; Mark 13:20, 22, 27; Revelation 17:14).

The word is used to describe church age believers (Romans 8:33; 16:13; Colossians 3:12; 2 Timothy 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:4, 6, 9; 2 John 1, 13) and elect angels (1 Timothy 5:21).

Therefore, in Romans 8:33 the adjective *eklektos* means, “called out ones” or “chosen-out ones” and is used of church age believers. Church age believers are “chosen-out ones” or “called out ones” since they have been called or chosen out from the earth’s inhabitants who are enslaved to the sin nature and the devil and his cosmic system. It is directly related to the doctrine of election just as the adjective *kletos* in Romans 8:28.

Like the adjective *kletos*, the adjective *eklektos* is always used in Scripture of believers and never unbelievers. The adjective *eklektos* is a derivative of the verb *eklegomai*, which means, “elected and set apart for privilege” and appears in Ephesians 1:4 in relation to the Christian’s election.

¹⁰ Moulton-Milligan, page 196

Chapter Three: Predestination

The apostle Paul in Romans 8:29 teaches the Christians in Rome that they were foreknown by the Father and were predestined by Him to be conformed to the image of His Son so that His Son would be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren. (NASB95)

“**He foreknew**” is the third person singular aorist active indicative form of the verb *proginosko*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *pro*, “before” and the verb *ginosko*, “to know,” thus the word literally means, “to know beforehand” or “to know in advance.”

In secular Greek, the verb meant “to foreknow, to know beforehand.” It does not refer to electing, loving relationship or predestination. In classical Greek, the verb has three basic meanings.

First, it refers to having insight of something yet future.¹¹ Secondly, it may refer to prognosticating or foreshadowing something.¹² Lastly, it can mean “coming to a decision beforehand” as in Demosthenes¹³, “prejudiced by his own friends.”

In the Septuagint, the word is used only three times, non-that are canonical and always without any Hebrew equivalent (Wisdom 6:13; 8:8; 18:6). Josephus uses *proginosko* in relation to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. and states that no one who “knew” Jerusalem “before” would recognize it after its destruction by the Romans (War of the Jews 6.8).

The verb occurs only five times in the Greek New Testament (Acts 26:5; Romans 8:29; 11:2; 1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:17).

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature lists the following meanings for *proginosko*, “know beforehand, in advance, have foreknowledge of something” (page 703).

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following meanings for the verb: (1) to know about something prior to some temporal reference point, for example to know about an event before it happens – ‘to know beforehand, to know already, to have foreknowledge’¹⁴ (2) to choose or select in advance of some other event – ‘to choose beforehand, to select in advance’.¹⁵

The verb *proginosko* appears in Acts 26:5 where it is used in the context of Paul’s defense before Agrippa and with reference to Paul’s fellow countrymen “knowing” Paul “before” he became a Christian. In 2 Peter 3:17, Peter uses the word when addressing his Christian readers and reminding them that they “knew beforehand” to be on guard against false teachers. In Romans 8:29, 11:2 and 1

¹¹ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 2.4.11

¹² Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* 6.27.b.10

¹³ Orations 29.58

¹⁴ volume 2, pages 334-335

¹⁵ volume 2, pages 362-363

Peter 1:20, the verb *proginosko* is used with God the Father as the subject and means, “to foreknow” referring to His foreknowledge. In 1 Peter 1:20, the word in context refers to the Father’s “foreknowledge” of Christ that He would die for the sins of the world and then be raised from the dead.

The word is used by Paul in Romans 11:2 with reference to the Father’s “foreknowledge” of the nation of Israel whom the Father had not rejected since there would be a remnant in the nation of Israel that would in the future accept Christ as Savior and would thus receive the divine promises made to the patriarchs and the nation of Israel.

In Romans 8:29, the verb is used with reference to the Father’s “foreknowledge” of the church, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles. God’s foreknowledge is related to His attribute of omniscience and the divine decree. The “decree” of God is His eternal, holy, wise and sovereign purpose, comprehending at once all things that ever were or will be in their causes, courses, conditions, successions, and relations and determining their certain futurity (i.e., that they will certainly take place).

When I say comprehending I mean that the omniscience of God is the source of the divine decrees. When I say determining I mean that the sovereignty of God chose before anything has existed which things would actually become historical events.

The decree of God is His eternal and immutable will, regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence. It is the chosen and adopted plan of all God’s works.

The decree of God is His eternal purpose according to the counsels of His own will, whereby for His own glory He has foreordained whatever comes to pass. It is the sovereign choice of the divine will (His attribute of sovereignty) and mentality (His omniscience) by which all things are brought into being and controlled, made subject to His pleasure, and producing His glorification (Isaiah 46:10; Ephesians 1:9).

The will of God in common usage refers to what God desires of an individual or group in a particular situation. In relation to the divine decree the will of God refers to the decision God made in eternity past, from His attribute of sovereignty, which established that certain things would actually come into being while other things would not. The will of God is His sovereign choice as to what will take place in time. It refers here to His sovereign decision as to what would come into existence; in other words, the divine decrees. This will and purpose of God originated within Himself long before any creature of any kind existed. His will is always consistent with His perfect essence. The will and purpose of God—that is, the divine decree—was objectively designed for His own glory, pleasure, and satisfaction.

God’s decree rendered all things as certain to occur and He decided that they would exist. The divine decree took place in eternity past before anything was ever created and is God’s eternal and immutable will.

The “providence” of God is the divine outworking of the divine decree, the object being the final manifestation of God’s glory and expresses the fact that the world and our lives are not ruled by chance or fate but by God.

In the divine decree, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man co-exist in human history. No one can stop God’s plans from being accomplished since His divine decree or eternal plan has taken into

consideration both positive and negative decisions by His creatures and decreed that His sovereign will, will co-exist with the volition of men and angels.

God in eternity past decreed that angels and human beings would have volition and would be allowed to make decisions contrary to His sovereign will and without compromising His justice. In giving angels and men volition, God decreed that their decisions, whatever they might be, would certainly take place-even those that are contrary to His desires. Being omniscient, God had the good sense to know ahead of time what men and angels would decide. He not only decreed that those decisions would exist but He also decreed the exact manner, consistent with His integrity, in which He would handle their decisions.

Foreknowledge acknowledges only what is in the decree of God and so chronologically speaking, foreknowledge follows the divine decree since nothing can be foreknown until it is first decreed. There is a distinction between God's foreknowledge and His omniscience. With His omniscience God knows perfectly and eternally all that is knowable whether it is the actual or the possible or in other words the reality and the alternatives to that reality. However, God's foreknowledge only deals with reality.

Foreknowledge acknowledges what is in the divine decree. It merely acknowledges what is certain to take place in time. Foreknowledge refers only to those things, which God did decree or adopt as the plan of God-those things related to the believer only. Only the decree establishes certainty or reality; only reality can be foreknown; nothing can be foreknown until first decreed.

God's decree never originated from His foreknowledge. Although all three exist simultaneously in the mind of God, omniscience, the decree, and foreknowledge must be separated into a logical sequence for us to understand them.

First we have God's omniscience, then the decree, which is based on His omniscience and then lastly, we have God's foreknowledge, which is based on the decree. Election is declared through God's foreknowledge and is God's complete agreement with His own foreknowledge. God elected the believer before the foundation of the world since He knew beforehand that the believer would accept Jesus Christ as Savior in time and therefore elected the believer to privilege.

In Romans 8:29, the verb *proginosko* is used of the Father "knowing beforehand" or "knowing in advance" that the Christian would accept by faith Jesus Christ as Savior. Therefore, it is the Christian's faith in Christ as Savior that it is the object of the Father's foreknowledge. This verb emphasizes that the salvation of men is based upon God's initiative.

The Scriptures teach that the sinner does determine his own destiny in the sense that he must respond to God's initiation and invitation through the presentation of the gospel to enter into a relationship with Him by making the non-meritorious decision to accept by faith Jesus Christ as Savior (John 3).

The Scriptures teach that God seeks out the sinner in order to save the sinner. The sinner, who is spiritually dead, does not have the capacity or the desire to seek God out. The fact that God has to seek out the sinner in order to present him the gospel so that the sinner can make a decision to accept by faith Christ as Savior or reject Him indicates that the salvation of men is based upon God's initiative and sovereign choice. Therefore, God is sovereign in predestinating the Christian and electing the Christian since the salvation of man is based upon God's initiative and not the sinner's faith in Christ since the

sinner has no capacity or desire whatsoever to seek out or establish a relationship with God. If God did not take the initiative and seek out the sinner, the sinner would have no opportunity whatsoever to make a decision to accept or reject Christ as Savior. Therefore, the verb *proginosko* in Romans 8:29 emphasizes that God took the initiative in the Christian's salvation and means, "to know beforehand" or "to know in advance."

So, we can see that since Paul teaches that God the Father first foreknew the Christian and then predestinated the Christian to be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ that the predestination of the Christian is based upon God's foreknowledge.

"He predestined" is the third person singular aorist active indicative form of the verb *proorizo*, which like *proginosko* is a compound word and is composed of the preposition *pro*, "before" and the verb *horizo*, "to set a boundary," thus the word literally means, "to set a boundary in advance."

The word means, "to mark out beforehand" or "set the limits or boundaries in advance of any place or thing. When used of people, *proorizo* means to put limitations upon that person. Thus, the word conveys the idea of to determine a person's destiny. It means to plan in advance for someone.

Proorizo does not appear in the Septuagint and only six times in the Greek New Testament (Acts 4:28; Romans 8:29-30; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:5, 11).

Bauer, Gingrich and Danker list the following New Testament meanings for the word, "decide beforehand, predestine of God".¹⁶

Moulton lists the following New Testament usages, "to limit or mark out beforehand; to design definitely beforehand, ordain beforehand, predestine" (The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised page 345).

The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon list the following meanings, "to predetermine, decide beforehand, to foreordain, to appoint beforehand" (page 541).

Louw and Nida list the following meanings in the New Testament for the word, "to come to a decision beforehand" (Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains volume 2, pages 360-361).

The word appears in Acts 4:28 where John and Peter were defending themselves before the Sanhedrin and was used with God as the subject and in relation to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, which the Father "predestined" or "determined to take place in advance" or was "determined beforehand" by Him.

The verb is used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:7 where is used with reference to the wisdom of God in the cross of Christ, which was "predestined" or "determined beforehand or in advance" in eternity past by God the Father to take place in time.

¹⁶ A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature page 709

In Ephesians 1:5, the verb refers to the fact that God the Father before the foundation of the world “determined beforehand” or “predestined” the Christian to adoption as a son through Jesus Christ in order to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians 1:11, Paul teaches that God the Father has also predestinated every church age believer in eternity past in order to bless them with an eternal inheritance.

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at located in Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus. 2 Grace to all of you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 Worthy of praise and glorification is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who has blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in the Person of Christ. 4 When He elected us to privilege in Him before the foundation of the world for the purpose of being holy and blameless before Him. 5 By means of divine love He has predestined us for the purpose of adoption for Himself according to grace purpose of His will. 6 For the praise of the glory of His grace by means of which (grace) He has graced us out in the Person of the Beloved. 7 In whom (the Beloved) we have the redemption through His blood (Christ’s substitutionary spiritual death), the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. 8 From which (riches of His grace) He has directed infinite wealth toward all of us by means of all wisdom and perfect judgment. 9 When He made known to all of us the mystery of His will according to His grace purpose, which He (the Father) purposed in Him (Christ). 10 With respect to the dispensation of the fulness of the times to unite all things in the Person of Christ those in heaven and those on earth by means of Him (Christ). 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance when we were predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will. 12 For the purpose of us being for the praise of His glory, those of us who have confidently placed their trust in the Person of Christ. 13 In whom (the Person of Christ) you have confidently placed your trust after hearing the word of truth, namely, the gospel of your salvation, in the Person of whom (Christ), in fact, when you had trusted, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit who is the Promise 14 who (the Holy Spirit) is the guarantee of our inheritance until the deliverance of the purchased possession (church) for the praise of His glory. (Author’s translation)

Now, in Romans 8:29-30, the verb *proorizo* is used again with reference to the predestination of church age believers. However, in these verses the word is used of God the Father “determining beforehand” or “predestinating” the Christian in eternity past to be conformed into the image of Christ. Therefore, Romans 8:29 teaches that predestination is sharing the destiny of Jesus Christ. It is also related to the divine decree of God and describes the act of the infinite, eternal omniscience of God, which determined the certain future existence of events, which will happen in time to the believer.

The Bible does not teach double-predestination or that the unbeliever is predestined to the eternal lake of fire since the Bible teaches that God desires all men to be saved (John 3:16-18; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).

In Romans 8:29, Paul teaches that God the Father first foreknew the Christian and then predestinated the Christian to be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ, thus indicating that predestination is based upon God’s foreknowledge.

Romans 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren. (NASB95)

“**To become conformed to**” is the accusative masculine plural form of the adjective *summorphos*, which is a compound adjective composed of the preposition *sun*, “with, together with” and the noun *morphe*, “essence, nature,” thus the word literally means, “having the same essence as something.”

The compound adjective *summorphos* is found in the writings of Nicander (*Theriaca*, 321). Where *schema* speaks of the outward appearance of something, *summorphos* refers to the inward aspect of something or its essence. The word is not found in the Septuagint and appears only twice in the Greek New Testament (Romans 8:29; Philippians 3:21).

Bauer, Gingrich and Danker define it, “having the same form, similar in form”.¹⁷

Louw and Nida state that *summorphizomai* means “pertaining to that which has a similar form or nature – ‘similar in form, of the same form’”.¹⁸

In Philippians 3:21, the adjective *summorphos* is used in relation to perfective sanctification or in other words, the believer in a resurrection body.

In Romans 8:29, the adjective *summorphos* is not only used in relation to the Christian’s body being “conformed” to Christ’s resurrection body but it also is used in relation to the Christian’s character being conformed to Christ’s character. When the believer receives his resurrection body it will be the completion of his sanctification. This adjective describes the act of accomplishing this divine good of intrinsic quality and character or in other words, conforming the Christian into the image of Christ both inwardly and outwardly. This work of conforming the Christian into the image of Christ began the moment the Christian expressed faith alone in Christ alone. It continues after salvation in the believer who obeys the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the communication of the Word of God and it will be completed at the resurrection of the church.

The Father’s purpose for extending us grace, for crucifying us with Christ and burying us with Him as well as raising and seating us with Christ at His right hand is so that we might become conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ. The sole objective of God the Father saving us, justifying, sanctifying and glorifying us through His Son Jesus Christ is so that we might become like His Son Jesus Christ and by doing so bring many sons to glory. His purpose for giving us a new nature, the nature of Christ, the mind of Christ and the Spirit of Christ is so that we might become like His Son Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in Romans 8:29, the adjective *summorphos* refers to the Christian being “conformed” into the image of Christ, both inwardly (perfect Christ-like character) and outwardly (Christ’s resurrection body). It functions as an “accusative direct object” meaning it is receiving the action of the verb *proorizo*, “**He predestined.**” We will translate the word in a verbal form since the noun *eikon*, “**the image**” functions as an “objective genitive” meaning that it functions semantically as the direct object of the verbal idea implicit in the adjective *summorphos*, “**conformable.**” This is indicated in that *summorphos*, “**conformable**” can be converted into the verbal form *summorphizo* “**to be conformed to**”

¹⁷ A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature page 778

¹⁸ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, volume 2, page 586

and the noun *eikon*, “**the image**” into its direct object. Therefore, we will translate *summorphos*, “**to be conformed to.**”

“**The image**” is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *eikon* which in classical Greek, the term is derived from *eioka*, “to be like” and could refer to “pictures” or “statues” or “idols.” It stands for five Hebrew words in the Septuagint and was used in a negative sense for idols and in a positive sense referring to man as created in the image of God.

The word appears twenty-four times in the Greek New Testament where it was used to denote the image of a Roman emperor on a coin (Matthew 22:20), idols men made in exchange for the glory of God (Romans 1:23), or the image of Antichrist (Revelation 13:14-15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). It is used in relation to the Law in Hebrews 10:1 where the writer teaches that the Law is not the exact “image” of spiritual matters.

The noun *eikon* is also used in the New Testament of man being in the “image” of God (1 Corinthians 11:7) and of Adam’s descendants bearing his “image” or “likeness” (1 Corinthians 15:49). It is used of Christ who is the “image” of God (2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15) and of Christians being conformed to the “image” of Christ (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:10).

In Romans 8:29, the noun *eikon* refers to the Christian’s “likeness” to Christ “bodily” as well as “spiritually.” As we noted earlier, the word functions as an “objective genitive” meaning that it functions semantically as the direct object of the verbal idea implicit in the adjective *summorphos*, “**conformable.**” This is indicated in that *summorphos*, “**conformable**” can be converted into the verbal form *summorphizo* “**to be conformed to**” and the noun *eikon*, “**the image**” into its direct object.

The articular construction of *eikon* is “monadic” emphasizing the “uniqueness” of this likeness in that it belongs to the unique theanthropic person of history, the Lord Jesus Christ. We will translate the word, “**the likeness.**”

In Romans 8:30, the apostle Paul teaches the Christians in Rome that they have been predestinated, called, justified and glorified by God the Father.

Romans 8:30 And these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (NASB95)

“**He predestined**” is the third person singular aorist active indicative form of the verb *proorizo*, which appeared in Romans 8:29 and its meaning is retained here in Romans 8:30 where it is used with reference to the predestination of church age believers in the sense that God the Father “determined beforehand” or “predestinated” the Christian in eternity past to be conformed into the image of Christ. Therefore, Romans 8:29-30 teaches that predestination is sharing the destiny of Jesus Christ. It is also related to the divine decree of God and describes the act of the infinite, eternal omniscience of God, which determined the certain future existence of events, which will happen in time to the believer. As we noted in Romans 8:29, Paul teaches that God the Father first foreknew the Christian and then predestinated the Christian to be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus Christ, thus indicating that the predestination is based upon God’s foreknowledge.

Ephesians 1:5 teaches that the church age believer was predestined by the Father in eternity past for the purpose of adoption as sons.

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will. (NASB95)

“**Predestined**” is the verb *proorizo*, which refers to the fact that God the Father before the foundation of the world determined beforehand or predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ in order to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

“**Adoption**” is the noun *huiiothesia*, which means, “placing as a son.” It is not so much a word of relationship but of *position*. In regeneration, a Christian receives the new nature as a child of God. In adoption, they receive the *position* of a son of God at the moment of conversion through the Baptism of the Spirit. Every Christian obtains the place of a child and the right to be called a son the moment he believes in Jesus Christ for salvation (Galatians 3:25-26; 4:6; 1 John 3:1-2).

The believer’s heirship also means that the believer has an inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14, 18; Colossians 1:18), which confers upon the believer the responsibility to grow to spiritual maturity in order to receive this inheritance.

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance when we were predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will. (Author’s translation)

“**We have obtained an inheritance**” is the verb *kleroo*, which is in the passive voice meaning, “to receive an inheritance.”

God the Father at the moment of conversion qualified every church age believer to receive this inheritance, which is currently on deposit in heaven with the Person of Christ and will be given to the believer if he executes the Father’s plan in time.

Every church age believer has the opportunity to receive his eternal inheritance if he fulfills the condition of being faithful till death or the rapture whichever comes first and thus executes the Father’s will for his life.

In this sense, the eternal inheritance is analogous to an escrow account in which the contents of the escrow are on deposit and are released to the grantee by the grantor when the conditions of the escrow are fulfilled.

God the Father is the grantor, the contents of the escrow are with the Person of Christ and the believer is the grantee and will receive the contents of the escrow when he fulfills the condition of the escrow, which is to execute the Father’s will.

Both the Old and New Testament’s speak of an inheritance, which could be forfeited due to unfaithfulness.

The inheritance in the Bible: (1) Related to God's plan for the believer after salvation. (2) Added blessings to the Saved (i.e. Rewards on top of salvation). (3) Possession. (4) Is meritorious ownership of the kingdom (i.e. Millennium and eternal state) (5) Conditioned on faithful obedience to the will of God. (6) Can be forfeited through habitual disobedience to the will of God. (7) Two types of inheritance (God and the possession of land in the Millennium) (Every believer receives God has His inheritance).

At the moment of his or her conversion, the church age believer was qualified to receive this eternal inheritance.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding 10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God 11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. (NASB95)

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (NASB95)

In order to receive this eternal inheritance, the church age believer must do everything as unto the Lord.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality. (NASB95)

Although the church age believer's salvation *cannot* be merited but is received when a person expresses faith alone in Christ alone (cf. Eph 2:8-9), the believer's inheritance on the other hand is meritorious meaning he has to fulfill the condition of being faithfully obedient to the will of God till physical death or the rapture (i.e. resurrection of the Church). Because the church age believer can forfeit his eternal inheritance through unfaithfulness to the Lord, there are many warnings regarding being unfaithful (Hebrews 10:35-39; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:12-13). The believer is promised that if they fulfill the condition of being faithful till death, they will be given the privilege to reign with Christ (Romans 8:16-18). The church age believer must be an overcomer in order to receive his eternal inheritance. This involves perseverance, which by way of definition is steady persistence in a course of action, a purpose, and a state.

Chapter Four: Adoption

Romans 8:15 teaches that the church age believer has been adopted “Romans style” into the royal family of God.

Romans 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” (NASB95)

“**Adoption**” is the noun *huiiothesia*, which means, “placing as a son.” It is not so much a word of relationship but of *position*. In regeneration, a Christian receives the new nature as a child of God. In adoption, they receive the *position* of a son of God at the moment of conversion through the Baptism of the Spirit. Every Christian obtains the place of a child and the right to be called a son the moment he believes in Jesus Christ for salvation (Galatians 3:25-26; 4:6; 1 John 3:1-2).

The Scriptures teach that there two categories of believers who have been adopted by God: (1) Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6; Romans 9:1-5) (2) Church.

At the moment of conversion, the church age believer is adopted *Roman style* into the royal family of God through the baptism of the Spirit thus making him an heir of God and spiritual aristocracy.

Roman adoption was the process by which a person was transferred from his natural father’s power into that of his adoptive father. Roman style adoption was the custom of selectivity, selecting some to fulfill or take over the family estates and guarantee that the next generation will be as efficient as the last generation in Roman life.

Under Roman law the adopted son had the same status and privileges as the real son and the real Son is our Lord Jesus Christ. Roman style adoption served a useful purpose both socially and politically, as a childless individual could adopt and ensure the continuation of the estates of the family, bequeathing not just property to the heir, but the family as well, for the new member accepted the name and rank of the adoptive father.

Politically, adoption could be used to great advantage as a means of improving one’s prospects by becoming adopted into a higher-class family moving from the Plebeian to the Patrician class.

An example of Roman style adoption was the Emperor Augustus who, as Octavius, was adopted by the testament of his uncle Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., taking the full name Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus.

Adoption by testament, of course, was the naming of an heir through a will. As the adopted son of Gaius Julius Caesar, Octavius received not only the name and property of Caesar when he was assassinated in 44 B.C. but he received all the other benefits or social considerations as Caesar’s adopted son.

In Greek and Roman society adoption was, at least among the upper classes, a relatively common practice. Unlike the oriental cultures in which slaves were sometimes adopted, these people normally limited adoption to free citizens. But, at least in Roman law, the citizen so adopted became a virtual slave, for he came under the paternal authority of his adoptive father.

Adoption conferred rights and privileges but it came with a list of duties as well. For the believer, adoption is a gracious gift from God the Father that is totally undeserving on the believer's part. God the Holy Spirit performs the ceremony of adoption at the moment of conversion through regeneration (John 1:12), and the Baptism of the Spirit (Galatians 3:26-28).

The New Testament teaches that the church has been adopted into the royal family of God as adult sons thus conferring upon them all the privileges and responsibilities that go along with this new relationship with God.

The apostle Paul used the Roman style adoption analogy in his epistles to communicate to members of the churches throughout the Roman Empire their new relationship with God the Father that was acquired at the moment of faith in Christ.

As a Roman citizen, the apostle would naturally know of the Roman custom but in the cosmopolitan city of Tarsus and again on his travels, he would become equally familiar with the corresponding customs of other nations. He employed the Roman style adoption analogy to teach the *spiritual adoption* of church age believers much in the same manner that our Lord did in His parables. Paul utilized the Roman style adoption illustration to teach church age believers that God the Father's grace policy places them into the relation of sons to Himself.

The act of adoption is the conclusion of any action by which any person, usually a son, is brought into a new family relationship where he now has new privileges and responsibilities as a member of the family, and at the same time loses all previous rights and is divested of the previous duties of his former family relationship.

The church age believer has been removed from the cosmic system as a child of the devil and has been placed as an adult son into the royal family of God, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head (Colossians 1:13). One of the purposes of the incarnation of the Son of God was that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God. (NASB95)

Adoption means that the church age believer is spiritual aristocracy now and is intimately related to all three members of the Trinity. The adoption of the church age believer means: (1) Privileges as an adult son of God (2) Responsibility to grow to spiritual maturity.

The indwelling of the Spirit gives the guarantee of the believer's adoption (Galatians 4:6). The filling of the Spirit enables the believer to experience his adoption. The full manifestation of the believer's sonship awaits the resurrection of the church or the rapture which is called the "**redemption of the body**" (Romans 8:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Ephesians 1:14; 1 John 3:2). The believer's adoption into the royal family of God makes him an heir of God (Romans 8:15-17).

“**A spirit of slavery**” is composed of the accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, “**a spirit**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *douleia*, “**of slavery**.”

The noun *pneuma* appears twice in Romans 8:15. It appears in the expression “**a spirit of bondage**” (*pneuma douleias*) and “**a spirit of adoption**” (*pneuma huiotheias*). The word is translated “**spirit**” since the translators interpret the word as either referring to an attitude, disposition or mentality. This is how the word is used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 4:21 and 2 Timothy 1:7. Therefore, if we interpret *pneuma* as referring to an attitude, disposition or mentality in both instances where the word is used, this would mean that Paul is teaching in Romans 8:15 that the Christian has not received a mentality or spirit of bondage but rather a mentality or spirit produced by adoption.

There are also some who interpret the second *pneuma* as referring to the Spirit and the first referring to a mentality or attitude. Therefore, this would mean that Paul is teaching in Romans 8:15 that the Christian has not received a mentality or attitude of slavery but rather the Spirit who effects the Christian’s adoption into the family of God. However, there are several reasons why both of these interpretations are incorrect and that the word in both instances is a reference to the Holy Spirit.

The first is the context. In Romans 8:1-27, Paul is teaching regarding the Spirit’s work on behalf of the Christian as related to his sanctification. In Romans 8:1, Paul assured his Christian readers in Rome that there is never any condemnation, none whatsoever for them because of their union with Jesus Christ. Next, in Roman 8:2, he taught the Christians in Rome that the life-giving Spirit’s authoritative power, by means of Christ Jesus, has set them free from the authoritative power of the sin nature as well as spiritual death. Then, in Romans 8:3, Paul “explains how” or presents the “reason why” the life-giving Spirit’s authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ Jesus has set them free from the sin nature’s authoritative power as well as spiritual death. Romans 8:4 teaches that the Father’s purpose for sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an experiential sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but in submission to the Spirit. Then, in Romans 8:5, Paul teaches that those Christians who are in submission to the sin nature, occupy their minds with the desires of the sin nature whereas those who are in submission to the Spirit occupy their minds with desires of the Spirit.

Paul in Romans 8:6 teaches that the mind-set produced by the sin nature is temporal spiritual death, i.e. loss of fellowship with God whereas the mind-set produced by the Spirit is life, i.e. experiencing eternal life and peace. Then, in Romans 8:7, he teaches that the mind-set produced by the sin nature is antagonistic toward God and has no capacity to obey His Law.

Next, in Romans 8:8, Paul teaches that those in bondage to the flesh, i.e. the sin nature can never please God. In Romans 8:9, Paul teaches that the Christian is not in bondage to the sin nature in a positional sense but rather in subjection to the authority of the Spirit and is indwelt by the Spirit in contrast to the unbeliever who is not.

Paul teaches in the protasis of a first class condition that appears in Romans 8:10 that the Christian is indwelt by Christ. Then, in the apodosis, he teaches that while on one hand, the Christian’s body is dead due to the sin nature but on the other hand, the Spirit is life and peace because of imputed righteousness. Next, Paul in Romans 8:11 teaches that the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to the Christian’s mortal body through the Spirit who indwells the Christian.

Paul in Romans 8:12, Paul teaches that the Christian is by no means obligated to live in submission to the flesh. Then, in Romans 8:13a, Paul teaches that the Christian, who submits to his flesh, will lose fellowship with God. Whereas, in Romans 8:13b, he teaches that if by the Spirit, the Christian puts to death the deeds of the sin nature, then he will live and experience fellowship with God. Lastly, in Romans 8:14, Paul teaches that the Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

Therefore, up to Romans 8:15, when Paul uses *pneuma*, it is used with reference to the Holy Spirit exclusively. In Romans 8:16-27, Paul continues to emphasize the work of the Spirit on behalf of the Christian. In this passage, *pneuma* is used with reference to the Holy Spirit in every instance except in Romans 8:16 where the second time the word appears in the passage, it is used clearly with reference to the Christian's human spirit. Also, further indicating that the two occurrences of *pneuma* in Romans 8:15 are a reference to the Holy Spirit is that there is a clear connection that Paul is making between the believer's sonship and the Holy Spirit in Romans 8:14 and 23. Also, in Galatians 4:4-7, Paul teaches the Galatians regarding this connection.

In Galatians 4:5, Paul uses the noun *huiiothesia*, “**adoption as sons**” and the expression *Abba ho pater*, “**Abba, Father**” in Galatians 4:6, both of which appear in Romans 8:15. Some contend that the expression “**a spirit of bondage**” in Romans 8:15 refers to the Spirit's role in relation to the Law in convicting people of sin in the Old Testament dispensation. There is support for this since Paul teaches in Romans 7:14 that the Law is spiritual meaning inspired by God the Holy Spirit. In fact, in Romans 7:7-25, although He is not mentioned, it was the Spirit who convicted Paul as a Christian that he was breaking the Law since the Scriptures teaches that one of the ministries of the Spirit on behalf of the believer is to convict him of sin. However, nowhere in Romans does he teach that the Spirit is related to bringing the Christian into bondage to the Law or sin. He convicts of sin but never is He said to bring anyone into bondage to sin. He convicts the believer when he disobeys the Law but does not bring the believer into bondage to the Law in either the Old Testament dispensations or in the church age. Rather, it is just the opposite, Paul teaches that the Spirit sets the Christian free from sin and the Law.

Also, in Galatians 4:4-7, slavery is tied to being under the Law. In Romans 7:5-6, Paul contrasts the “letter” of the Law with the Spirit and teaches that the Spirit has freed the Christian from the bondage and condemnation of the Law as a result of the presence of the indwelling Adamic sin nature. Furthermore, 2 Corinthians 3:6-18 teaches that the Spirit gives life but the letter of the Law kills.

Therefore, it would appear that the noun *pneuma* in the expression “**a spirit of slavery**” in Romans 8:15 does not refer to the Spirit since the Scriptures do not teach that He is related to bringing the believer under any type of bondage to the Law or sin. However, in this expression, the noun *pneuma* does refer to the Spirit since it is used in a rhetorical sense. It is used in a hypothetical sense in contrast to the expression “**the Spirit of adoption.**” This means that he is teaching that the Spirit the Christians in Rome have received is *not* a “Spirit of bondage” or a “Spirit who effects or brings about slavery” but a Spirit, who effects or brings about their adoption as sons of God. So, he is not implying that the Spirit effects or brings into bondage to the Law or sin but rather He effects or brings about their adoptions as sons of God.

So, in Romans 8:15, Paul uses *pneuma* twice with reference to the Holy Spirit in order to teach two things regarding His work on behalf of the Christian. First of all, the Spirit in contrast to the sin nature does not enslave the Christian and does not condemn him like the Law. The second is that He effects the Christian's adoption into the royal family of God. He does not make the Christian a slave like the sin

nature did prior to justification, or condemn him like the Law but rather He makes the Christian a son of God. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Paul is speaking of the Spirit's work in relation to the Christian's sanctification in Romans 8:1-27.

The rhetorical use of *pneuma* in the expression “**a spirit of bondage**” is used in a hypothetical sense in contrast to the concept taught in the expression “**the Spirit of adoption**.” Paul does this in order to emphasize with his Christian readers in Rome that they have a familial and legal relationship with God so that they would be assured of their eternal salvation and that God is for them and not against them.

Paul uses the adoption metaphor and slavery metaphor together in order to appeal to the frame of reference of his readers since both were institutions in the Roman Empire in the first century when he penned this epistle. Cranfield, Moo, Murray and Morris agree with this interpretation.

Leon Morris writes, “There are problems with his (Paul's) use of ‘spirit’ and commentators are divided. We could use a small ‘s’ in both instances in this verse and understand the apostle to mean ‘a temper, mood or state’ (the ‘spirit of slavery’) or translate ‘the spirit of slaves...the spirit of sons’. Or we could take the first with a small ‘s’ and the second with a capital, as Moffat, ‘You have received no slavish spirit...you have receive the Spirit of sonship’ (so NIV). Or we could use the capital both times as Murray: “Ye did not receive the Holy Spirit as Spirit of bondage but as the Spirit of adoption” Any of these must remain a possibility. But throughout this whole passage the emphasis is on the work of the Holy Spirit, and it seems that Paul is here saying two things about the Spirit: first, negatively, that the Spirit believers received is not one of bondage; second, positively, he is a Spirit of sonship (for the Spirit believers receive cf. 1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Timothy 1:7). The Spirit does not make people slaves but sons.”¹⁹

Douglas Moo disagrees, he writes, “The heart of verse 15 is an antithesis between two ‘spirits: the ‘spirit of slavery,’ which believers have not received and the ‘spirit of adoption,’ which we have. What are these ‘spirits’? A few interpreters think that both refer to the human spirit, in the sense of an inner attitude or disposition, with ‘received’ being interpreted rhetorically. But, in light of the manifest connection between the Holy Spirit and the believer's sonship in verse 14 and verse 23-not to mention Galatians 4:6: ‘God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts’-the ‘Spirit of adoption’ must refer to the Holy Spirit. Because of this many expositors conclude that the ‘Spirit of slavery’ must also designate the Holy Spirit. Many of the Puritans (followed by Lloyd-Jones) saw a reference here to the sense of ‘slavery’ created by the working of God's law in the heart of the person under conviction by God's Spirit. Others take a less individualistic and more salvation-historical tack, viewing ‘Spirit of slavery’ as the Spirit's work in the old age under the law. Certainly there is support for such a conception in Paul, since he claims that the law is ‘spiritual’ (7:14) and yet argues that it has brought or confirmed, bondage to sin (7:23). In Galatians 4:1-7 the idea of slavery is specifically tied to the situation of being ‘under the Law’ (see also the contrast in Hebrews 12:18-24), cited by Calvin). But it may be questioned whether Paul would speak of this effect of the law as brought about by God's Spirit, in light of the contrast between ‘letter’ and ‘Spirit’ in 7:6 and 2 Corinthians 3:6-18. This makes it unlikely that ‘spirit of slavery’ refers directly to the Holy Spirit. Paul may, then, refer to the human spirit, enslaved to sin; but more likely he uses the word rhetorically, as a hypothetical antithesis to the ‘Spirit of adoption’: ‘the Spirit that you have received is not a ‘spirit of bondage’ but a Spirit of adoption.’”²⁰

¹⁹ The Epistle to the Romans; W. B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, page 314

²⁰ The Epistle to the Romans, page 500; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.

C.E.B. Cranfield writes, “The contrast between *pneuma douleias* and *pneuma huiiothesias* has been variously explained. Some have argued that *pneuma douleias* is most naturally understood as denoting a human disposition, and that *pneuma huiiothesias*, since it is contrasted with it (the same verb, *elabete*, being used in both cases), can scarcely be the Holy Spirit but must also be here a human disposition (albeit one inspired by the Holy Spirit), a filial sentiment; others, assuming that *pneuma huiiothesias* must refer to the Holy Spirit, have felt obliged to understand *pneuma douleias* also of the Holy Spirit (seeing a difference to life under the Old Dispensation). In either case the tendency has been to see a connection between *pneuma douleias* and the law. Another way has been to disallow the argument that *pneuma* must have the same sort of meaning in both parts of the sentence and to understand the first *pneuma* to denote a disposition and the second the Holy Spirit. Yet another explanation which has been given-and this seems the most probable-is that the sentence does not imply the actual existence of a *pneuma douleias* but means only that the Holy Spirit whom they have received is not a spirit of bondage but the Spirit of adoption.”²¹

Therefore, in Romans 8:15, the first time that the noun *pneuma* is used by Paul, it is a reference to the Holy Spirit in a rhetorical sense. The word functions as an “accusative direct object” meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *lambano*, “**you have received**” whose meaning is negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, “**by no means**.”

“**A spirit of adoption as sons**” is composed of the accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, “**a spirit**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *huiiothesia*, “**of adoption**.”

The noun *huiiothesia* occurs rarely before the Christian period. W. von Martitz indicates that it was known in the second century B.C.²² as well as Milligan.²³ There appears to be no precedent for the concept in the Old Testament despite the fact that the term does not appear in the Septuagint. *Huiiothesia* is a legal technical term in antiquity and does not appear in the nomenclature of religion.

The word appears only five times in the Greek New Testament (Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5).

Douglas Moo commenting on this word writes, “The word denoted the Greek, and particularly Roman, legal institution whereby one can ‘adopt’ a child and confer on that child all the legal rights and privileges that would ordinarily accrue to a natural child. However, while the institution is a Greco-Roman one, the underlying concept is rooted in the OT and Judaism. ‘Adoption’ is one of the privileges of Israel (9:4) and Israel, as we have seen, is regularly characterized as God’s ‘son’ or ‘sons’ in the OT and Judaism. Once again, then, Paul has taken a term that depicts Israel’s unique status as God’s people and ‘transferred’ it to Christians.”²⁴

Leon Morris has a slightly different interpretation of the word, he writes, “The word for ‘adoption’ is used only by Paul in the New Testament (five times, three being in Romans), and it does not occur in LXX, for the Jews did not practice adoption. Some Old Testament examples are suggested but most scholars agree that Paul took the concept from Roman or Greek law in both of which adoption was important. Francis Lyall argues convincingly that Paul’s concept is taken from Roman, not Jewish law.

²¹ A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, volume 1, page 396; T & T Clark, New York-London

²² Kittel’s Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 8, pages 397f.

²³ 648-649

²⁴ The Epistle to the Romans, page 501; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.

Most agree, though some think rather of Greek law. Sanday and Headlam cite E. L. Hicks for the information that ‘No word is more common in Greek inscriptions of the Hellenistic time: the idea, like the word, is native Greek. It is a useful word for Paul, for it signifies being granted the full rights and privileges of sonship in a family to which one does not belong by nature. This is a good illustration of one aspect of Paul’s understanding of what it means to become a Christian. The believer is admitted to the heavenly family to which he has no rights of his own. But he is now admitted and can call God ‘Father’.”²⁵

Lyall, cited by Morris writes, “that Paul’s use of the term ‘adoption’ in Romans, Ephesians and Galatians was a deliberate, considered and appropriate reference to Roman law’....The adoptee is taken out of his previous state and is placed in a new relationship with his new *paterfamilias*. All his old debts are canceled and in effect he starts a new life. From that time the *paterfamilias* owns all the property and acquisitions of the adoptee, controls his personal relationships and has rights of discipline. On the other hand he is involved in liability by the actions of the adoptee and owns reciprocal duties of support and maintenance.”²⁶

Morris cites W. von Martitz, who writes, “The continuity of the family and the family cultus was maintained by adoption...The adopted son entered at once into the rights of the parent and undertook out of the assigned income to keep the testator and his family to the end of their lives.”²⁷

In Romans 8:15 and Ephesians 1:5, the noun *huiiothesia* is related of course to the noun *huios* and means, “placing as a son.” The moment the Christian was declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone, as we noted, they were adopted *Roman style* into the royal family of God through the baptism of the Spirit thus making them an heir of God and spiritual aristocracy.

In Romans 8:15, the noun *huiiothesia*, “**adoption as sons**” functions as a “genitive of product” meaning that it is the “product” of the noun *pneuma*, “**the Spirit**” to which it stands related. This indicates that the Spirit “produces” or “effects” or “brings about” or “causes” the Christian to be adopted Roman style into the royal family of God.

The New Testament Scriptures teach that the church age believer has been adopted into the royal family of God as an adult son thus conferring upon them all the privileges and responsibilities that go along with this new relationship with God. The apostle Paul used the Roman style adoption analogy in his epistles to communicate to members of the churches throughout the Roman Empire their new relationship with God the Father that was acquired at the moment of faith in Christ. Paul utilized the Roman style adoption illustration to teach church age believers that God the Father’s grace policy places them into the relation of sons to Himself.

Archaeological Study Bible makes the following comment on Paul’s use of Roman adoption in Romans 8:14-17, they write, “Adoption was widely practiced in the ancient world; examples have been found from Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman and ancient Jewish sources. For example, according to Exodus 2:10 Moses was a foundling adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter. Generally speaking,

²⁵ The Epistle to the Romans; W. B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, pages 314-315

²⁶ Lyall, Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXVIII (1969), page 458-466; cited by Morris, The Epistle to the Romans; W. B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, pages 314-315

²⁷ Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 8, pages 397-398; cited by Morris, The Epistle to the Romans; W. B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, pages 314-315

only free men (not women or slaves) could adopt, and the adoptee was often an adult rather than a child. Sometimes adoption was undertaken partially for the benefit of the adopter. For example, an older man whose natural children had already died might adopt a younger man as his heir; the adoptee would be responsible to care for the adopter in his old age. Roman law recognized two kinds of adoption: *adrogatio*, in which a man and all those under his authority were adopted into another family, and *adoptio*, in which an individual was adopted into a family. In *adrogatio* the adopted family in effect ceased to exist as a separate entity and became a part of the adopter's family. An adopted man or boy no longer belonged to his father's household and legally became a child of the adopter. The adoptee in the Roman world took the adopter's name and rank and became his legal heir. Adoption had to be carried out under a specific protocol (e.g. in the presence of the governor), and a will was often prepared in conjunction with the official process. The association of these two activities reveals the connection between the legal, familial status of the adoptee and his inheritance rights. Paul embraced the metaphor of adoption in Romans 8 in order to describe the status of Christians in relation to God. God as the Father of his adopted children has authority over them, while they in turn have taken on his identity. Paul also wrote of the inheritance that belongs to believers because God has adopted them as his children (Gal 4:4-7). The redemption of the body is one aspect of the Christian's inheritance that Paul highlighted in Romans 8:23.²⁸

The noun *huiiothesia* emphasizes that the believer receives the "position" of being a son of God, the moment they were declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone (Galatians 3:26-28; 4:6; 1 John 3:1-2). The Spirit makes this adoption real to the Christian's experience (Galatians 4:6). The indwelling of the Spirit gives the guarantee of the believer's adoption (Galatians 4:6). The filling of the Spirit enables the believer to experience his adoption (Ephesians 5:18).

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

The full manifestation of this adoption takes place at the rapture of the church (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 John 3:2).

The adoption of the church age believer means: (1) Privileges as an adult son of God (2) Responsibility to grow to spiritual maturity.

Robert Haldane writes, "Adoption is not a work of grace in us, but an act of God's grace without us. According to the original word, it signifies putting among children. It is taking those who were by nature children of wrath from the family of Satan, to which they originally belonged, into the family of God. By union with Jesus Christ, being joined with Him, we are one body, and we enter into the communion of His righteousness and of His title as the Son of God, so that, as we are righteous in Him, we are also in Him, as His members, the sons of God who, in the moment that the Holy Spirit unites us to Jesus Christ, receives us as His children. All this shows us how great is the benefit which we obtain when we receive the Spirit of adoption and communion with the Son of God. We are thus made children of God, the sons of the Father of lights-a title permanent and a nature immortal and Divine. Our adoption reminds us of our original state as children of wrath and rebellion and strangers to the covenant of God. It discovers to us the honor to which God has called us, in becoming our Father and making us His children-including so many advantages, rights, and privileges and at the same time imposing on us so

²⁸ NIV Archaeological Study Bible; page 1849; Zondervan

many duties. These may be comprised under four heads. The first regards the privilege and glory of having God for our Father and being His children. The second includes the rights which this adoption confers, as of free access to God, the knowledge of His ways and the assurance of His protection. The third implies God's love for us, His jealousy for our interest and His care to defend us. The fourth, all the duties which the title or relation of children engages us to perform towards our Father and our God. The term adoption is borrowed from the ancient custom, especially prevalent among the Romans, of a man who had no children of his own adopting into his family the child of another. The father and the adopted child appeared before the praetor when the adopting father said to the child, 'Wilt thou be my son?' and the child answered, 'I will.' The allusion to this custom reminds believers that they are not the children of God otherwise than by His free and voluntary election; and that thus they are under far more powerful obligations to serve Him than are their own children to obey them, since it is entirely by His love and free good pleasure that they have been elevated to this dignity. We should also remark the difference between the adoption of man and the adoption of God. In choosing a son by adoption, the adopting party has regard to certain real or supposed qualities which appear meritorious or agreeable; but God, in adopting His people, Himself produces the qualities in those whom He thus chooses. Man can impart his goods and give his name to those whom he adopts, but he cannot change their descent nor transfer them into his own image; but God renders those whom He adopts not only partakers of His name and of His blessings but of His nature itself, changing and transforming them into His own blessed resemblance. This adoption, then, is accompanied with a real change and so great a change, that it bears the name of that which is the real ground of sonship, and is called regeneration."²⁹

²⁹ Exposition of Romans, Sovereign Grace Publishers, Inc. PO Box 4998; Lafayette, IN 47903; Copyright by Jay P. Green, Sr. 2001

Chapter Five: Baptism of the Spirit

There are seven baptisms in the Word of God: (1) Baptism of John (Matt. 21:25; Luke 7:39; 20:4) (2) Baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:16; (3) Christian water baptism in the pre-canon period of the church age (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13, 16, 36, 38; 1 Cor. 1:16-17) (4) Baptism of Moses (5) Baptism of the Cross (Luke 12:50) (6) Baptism of Fire (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16) (7) Baptism of the Spirit (Mark 1:8; Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21).

During the dispensation of the church age when a sinner exercises faith alone in Christ alone, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit places that person in an eternal union with Christ, thus identifying the believer positionally with Christ in His crucifixion, death, resurrection and session. This results in making the believer a permanent member of the royal family of God, a new spiritual species and eternally secure (Mark 16:16; John 7:37-39; 14:20; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:11-13; 1 Pet. 3:21). This identification with Jesus Christ is called the “baptism of the Spirit.”

This ministry of the Spirit never took place before the day of Pentecost in June of 32 A.D. The baptism of the Spirit distinguishes the church age from other dispensations. There was no church before the baptism of the Spirit.

Vocabulary

There are two important words in the Greek New Testament that related to the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They are *baptisma*, “baptism” and the verb *baptizo*, “baptized.”

The verb *baptizo* belong to the following word group: (1) *Bapto* (verb), “to dip, to dye, to stain, to wet, to moisten” (2) *Baptisma* (noun), “identification” (3) *Baptismos* (noun), “the ritual washing of cups, utensils, bowls.”

The verb *bapto* is seldom found in the Greek New Testament but is found extensively in classical and Hellenistic writings. Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides, Aristotle, Sophocles, Euripides, Epictetus, Aristophanes, all used the verb *bapto*. It is used 16 times in the Septuagint and is found once in Luke 16:24, twice in John 13:26, and once in Revelation 19:13. It has many diverse meanings and usages during the classical and Hellenistic periods.

Bapto is never used to put an object into a fluid to remain there permanently or for an unlimited amount of time. Nor is it used to draw up anything out of a liquid, which it had not first put into it.

There are two categorical usages from which there are several modifications, namely, primary and secondary usages. *Bapto* in its primary usage expresses a sharply defined action. It demands a movement, which carries its object momentarily, within a fluid element. Examples: “if anyone should dip into wax”³⁰ and “He dipped a vessel into water”.³¹

³⁰ Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 3.12

³¹ Constantine, *Epigr of Hermolaus*

From this primary usage, *bapto* can mean, “to wet, to moisten, to wash, to plunge.” In the ninth book of the Odyssey, Homer uses the word to compare the hissing sound of Cyclops punctured eye with the sound cold water makes when a blacksmith plunges (*bapto*) a red hot iron into it.³²

The secondary usage means, “to dye.” Examples: “When it drops upon the garments they are dyed” (Hippocrates). *Bapto* in its secondary usage expresses a condition or quality of color to be secured. *Bapto* in its secondary usage demands a condition, which is met by flowing, pouring, or sprinkling. From this secondary usage, *bapto* can mean, “to stain, to smear, to paint, to temper, to impregnate, to make gold or inlay with gold.”

Out of this secondary usage of the verb *bapto* grew *baptizo*. Homer, Aristotle, Plutarch, Polybius, Epictetus, Hippocrates, Aristophanes, Strabo, Josephus and Philo all used *baptizo*. It is only found four times in the Septuagint and many times in the Greek New Testament.

Baptizo has many diverse meanings and usages in the classical and Hellenistic periods. Its primary usage can also be called its literal usage and its secondary usage can also be called its metaphorical or figurative usage.

Baptizo is the intensified form of *bapto*. The suffix *-izo* introduces a causative notion to *bapto*. *Baptizo* refers to that which literally “causes a thoroughly complete change of condition or permanent change of condition.”

The literal usage refers to an object’s thoroughly changed condition that has been brought about by the object being introduced into some new circumstance.

Baptizo in its primary or literal usage refers to placing an object in any fluid that could change the object’s condition without respect to time. After the object’s condition has been changed, the enveloping fluid has no further power to effect additional change on the object.

In the literal or physical sense *baptizo* refers to that which is destructive for persons and for things and this is why it is not found in classical writings of ritual bathes.

The literal usages of the word are “to immerse, to plunge, to submerge, to wash, to make clean by dipping in water, to bath oneself, to drown, to perish, to sink a ship, to sink in the mud.”

Example 1: “We all, therefore, changed our position to the higher parts of the ship, so that we might raise up the baptized part of the ship”.³³

Example 2: “Alexander, falling upon the stormy season, and trusting, commonly, to fortune, pressed on before the flood went out, and through the entire day the army marched baptized up to the waist”.³⁴

Baptizo developed a secondary or metaphorical usage from this primary or literal usage. In its secondary or metaphorical usage, *baptizo* referred to being placed into an element that could affect a thoroughly changed or permanently changed condition without regard to time. It refers to a condition

³² Od. 9, 392

³³ Achilles Tatius 3.1

³⁴ Strabo, 14.3.9

that results from baptism and to the cause of that condition, regardless of the way in which the condition is affected.

The metaphorical usage of the word is “to overwhelm, to inflict great and abounding calamities on someone, to be overwhelmed with faults, desires, sicknesses, magical arts, to sink into sleep, intoxication, impotence, to flood a city with crowds, to be soaked in wine, to be over one’s head and ears in debt, to be in deep water, i.e., trouble, to draw wine by dipping a cup in a bowl.”

The Greek author and soldier, Xenophon in his work *Anabasis* describes Greek and barbarian soldiers before going into battle placing (*baptizo*) the points of their swords and spears in a bowl of blood, which symbolized or represented the blood of their enemy.

The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised lists the following meanings for the verb, “to dip, immerse; to cleanse or purify by washing; to administer the rite of baptism, to baptize; metaphorically with various reference to the ideas associated with Christian baptism as an act of dedication, e.g. marked designation, devotion, trial, etc.; middle, to procure baptism for one’s self, to undergo baptism.”³⁵

A Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature lists the following meanings, “dip, immerse, mid. Dip oneself, wash, plunge, sink, drench, overwhelm; fig. soak.”

They list the following usages: (1) of Jewish ritual washings (2) in special sense baptize (a) of John the Baptist (b) of Christian baptism-performed by Jesus’ disciples. As the sacrament of initiation after Jesus’ death (3) In figurative sense though related to the idea of Christian baptism (a) Typologically of Israel’s passage through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:2). (b) Baptism of fire (c) Of martyrdom.³⁶

The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon lists the following meanings: (I) (1) Properly to dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge (a) to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water; in the middle and the first aorist passive, to wash oneself, bathe (3) Metaphorically, to overwhelm (II) In the NT it is used particularly of the rite of sacred ablution, first instituted by John the Baptist, afterwards by Christ’s command received by Christians and adjusted to the contents and nature of their religion, an immersion in water, performed as a sign of the removal of sin, and administered to those who, impelled by a desire for salvation, sought admission to the benefits of the Messiah’s kingdom (a) The word is used absolutely, to administer the rite of ablution, to baptize; passively, to be baptized; Passive in a reflexive sense, to allow one’s self to be initiated by baptism, to receive baptism (b) with prepositions; *eis*, to mark the element into which the immersion is made; to mark the end; to indicate the effect; to bring by baptism into fellowship with Christ, into fellowship in His death, by which fellowship, we have died to sin (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3); *en* with dative of the thing in which one is immersed; passively, *epi*, relying on the name of Jesus Christ; *hyper*, on behalf of the dead, i.e. to promote their eternal salvation by undergoing baptism in their stead”.³⁷

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following meanings for the verb *baptizo*: (1) to wash (in some contexts, possibly by dipping into water), with a

³⁵ Page 65

³⁶ pages 131-132

³⁷ pages 93-94

view to making objects ritually acceptable – ‘wash, to purify, washing, purification’.³⁸ (2) to employ water in a religious ceremony designed to symbolize purification and initiation on the basis of repentance – ‘to baptize, baptism’.³⁹ (3) to cause someone to have a highly significant religious experience involving special manifestations of God’s power and presence – ‘to baptize’.⁴⁰

As we will note later on in detail in this article, in Romans 6:3, 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:27, the verb *baptizo* is employed in a figurative or metaphorical sense to denote the Holy Spirit causing the believer to be “identified” with Christ.

John the Baptist and Jesus Christ’s Prophecies Regarding the Baptism of the Spirit

John the Baptist prophesied of the baptism of the Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). God the Father tells John the Baptist that the Lord Jesus Christ will be responsible for the Baptism of the Spirit (John 1:33). John the Baptist places a clear distinction between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit (Mark 1:8; Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16). His reference to the baptism of the Spirit was of course related to believers whereas his reference to the baptism of fire is related to the unbeliever (Luke 3:16).

The Lord Jesus Christ prophesied about the baptism of the Spirit (John 7:37-39).

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (NASB95)

Jesus described the baptism of the Spirit as “**rivers of living water**” (John 7:38). At that time, the baptism of the Spirit had not yet taken place when our Lord issued this prophesy (John 7:39). In this passage, John writes that the reception of the baptism of the Spirit is contingent upon believing in Christ (John 7:38) and that the giving of the Spirit was contingent upon our Lord’s glorification (John 7:39). The last day of the great feast refers to the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles, which lasted eight days (Lev. 23:36), and was considered the climax to the Feast.

Seven days symbolized Israel’s wandering the desert and the eighth day was a solemn day of rest depicting the eternal state of the believer in Christ. There was a ceremony during the eighth day in which water was drawn from the Pool of Siloam and then poured out, commemorating God’s provision for Israel in the desert. Our Lord was interpreting the meaning of this ceremony, which depicted the baptism of the Spirit.

The phrase “**from His innermost being shall flow rivers of living water**” refers to the soul of the believer which receives eternal life (John 4:14; 1 Cor. 10:4).

³⁸ volume 2, page 536

³⁹ volume 2, page 537

⁴⁰ volume 2, page 539

“**Shall flow**” is the Greek verb *rheo*, “to gush, overflow,” and was used in the ancient world of gushing or overflowing rivers. Our Lord uses it figuratively of the soul of the believer which has received eternal life.

In John 14:16, our Lord promises to send the Spirit in His Upper Room Discourse.

John 14:16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever.” (NASB95)

Our Lord promises the disciples that He will send them “**another**” (*allon*) “**Helper**” (*parakletos*) to assist them while in the devil’s world. *Parakletos* means “one who is called or sent for to assist another.” God the Holy Spirit would act in this capacity for believers during the church age dispensation.

In John 14:20, the phrase “**in that day**” refers to the day of Pentecost when the apostles would be placed in union with Christ by the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit.

John 14:20 “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” (NASB95)

“**You in Me**” is our Lord’s prophesy concerning the baptism of the Spirit, which is something they had never read in the Scriptures before because it was never known to Old Testament saints. It is exclusive to the church age.

The phrase “**in Me**” (*en emoi*) is a locative of sphere meaning that the apostles will be identified with Christ. This prepositional phrase speaks of the believer’s intimate, eternally secure position in Christ. It speaks of the believer’s union and identification with Christ that makes the believer eternally the object of the Father’s divine-love. It alludes to the doctrine of positional truth and the justified sinner’s union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, His death and His resurrection.

In John 14:26, the Lord taught His disciples that God the Father would send the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in His name.

John 14:26 “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” (NASB95)

At that time, it was still future to our Lord’s thinking. God the Holy Spirit is our true teacher of bible doctrine. God the Holy Spirit would bring to remembrance all that our Lord said during this night before He was to go to the Cross.

“**In My name**” has a five-fold meaning. First, it refers to the “person” of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is undiminished deity and true humanity and, thus, the unique theanthropic person of history and creation. Second, the word refers to the “character” of the Lord Jesus Christ, the aggregate features and traits of the Lord Jesus Christ’s divine and human nature. It also refers to the Lord Jesus Christ’s work during His First Advent, which ended with His greatest accomplishment, His substitutionary death on the cross. His death fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Mosaic Law, destroyed the works of the devil, redeemed the entire human race from the slave market of sin, propitiated the Father’s righteous demands that every sin in history be judged, and reconciled the entire human race to God. What an

accomplishment! The phrase also alludes to Christ's resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father (Eph 1:21; Phi 2:5-11; Heb 1:4), since it refers to His reputation before mankind as the Savior of the world, redeemer of all mankind, and sovereign ruler of history. Lastly, it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ's position before the Father as righteous and holy and as His Beloved Son. Essentially, this all refers to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only person holy enough to have merit before God the Father.

In Acts 1:5, our Lord distinguishes between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit.

Acts 1:4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (NASB95)

This prophecy took place on the day of our Lord's ascension and session. Not many days turned out to be ten days. Ten days after our Lord's ascension, the baptism of the Spirit took place and the church age began. Luke states in Acts 1:3 that our Lord appeared to His disciples over a period of forty days.

Pentecost means fiftieth and designated among the Jews the fiftieth day after Passover. Our Lord was crucified on the Passover and rose three days later, ascended into heaven on the fortieth day after Passover and then sent the Spirit ten days later on Pentecost.

The baptism of the Spirit could not take place until our Lord was glorified which was about to take place after He finished saying these things to His apostles. Our Lord had to go away.

In Acts 1:8, our Lord repeats His promise to the apostles of sending them the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (NASB95)

Our Lord gives the apostles the promise of a Person (God the Holy Spirit), a power (the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit) and a program (missionary activity to the Jews, the Samaritans and the entire world). Throughout the dispensation of the church age believers would have available to them one hundred percent availability of divine power to execute the plan of God the Father. The baptism of the Spirit makes this possible.

Both Jew and Gentile Believers Receive the Baptism of the Spirit

The baptism of the Spirit first took place among Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost in approximately June of 32 A.D. and was a fulfillment of the prophecies made by John the Baptist and our Lord. It also took place among the Gentiles as recorded by Luke in Acts 10:34-38, 19:1-7, thus making it universal in scope in the church age (Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13). It unites Jewish believers with Gentile believers making them a new humanity under the headship of Jesus Christ who is the head of the new creation.

This ministry of the Spirit never took place before the day of Pentecost and will not take place after the rapture. The completion of the royal family of God at the rapture will mark the end of this ministry of the Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit distinguishes the church age from other dispensations. There was no church before the baptism of the Spirit.

Acts 2:1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. (NASB95)

Pentecost is one of the seven great feasts of Israel: (1) Passover: Leviticus 23:4-5; 1 Corinthians 5:7. (2) Unleavened Bread: Leviticus 23:6-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. (3) First Fruits: Leviticus 23:9-14; 1 Corinthians 15:23. (4) Pentecost: Leviticus 23:15-22; Acts 2:1-4. (5) Trumpets: Leviticus 23:23-25; 1 Corinthians 15:52. (6) Day of Atonement: Leviticus 23:26-32; 1 John 2:2. (7) Tabernacles: Leviticus 23:33-44; John 7:2.

It was the second national festival in Israel and took place fifty days after the Passover Sabbath (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:25-21; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-12). It was designated the Feast of Weeks which celebrated the wheat harvest in Israel and was a one-day feast of celebration. It was originally the festival of the first fruits of the grain harvest (Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:17-22; Num. 28:26-31). It was called the Feast of Weeks because it came after a period of seven weeks of harvesting that began with the offering of the first barley sheaf during the Passover celebration and ended with the wheat harvest.

Pentecost took place fifty days after the Feasts of First fruits, which spoke of our Lord's resurrection. It was celebrated in Israel as the anniversary of the giving of the Mosaic Law at Mount Sinai in 1441 B.C., which was the beginning of the dispensation of the Law. The dispensation of grace began on the day of Pentecost with the baptism of the Spirit. So, God is setting a contrast between the Law and Grace.

Pentecost was looked upon in Judaism as one of the three great pilgrim festivals in Judaism along with Passover preceding it and Tabernacles some four months later. Because it was a great festival in Israel, there were many pilgrims from around the Roman Empire in Jerusalem at this time who spoke many different languages.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. (NASB95)

Luke states that the tongues were like fire, which would be of great significance to Jew in the first century. Fire in the Old Testament was a symbol of God's presence in Israel. The Lord spoke to Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:2-5), the pillar of fire guided Israel by night through the wilderness (Ex. 13:21), the consuming fire on Mount Sinai (Ex. 24:17) and the fire that hovered over the wilderness Tabernacle (Ex. 40:38). Luke states the baptism of the Spirit was like tongues of fire, or as tongues of fire, which denotes the fact that it wasn't fire or tongues or some ecstatic experience.

The word translated "as" in the New American Standard is the comparative particle *hosei*, which means "as," or "like." The sign of the fire was for the benefit of the disciples to give them the confidence that the Lord was indeed present among them and gave them confidence to speak the Gospel boldly.

Acts 2:5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. **6** And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. **7** They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? **9** Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs -- we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” **12** And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” **13** But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.” **14** But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. **15** For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; **16** but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: **17** ‘AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,’ God says, ‘THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; **18** EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT’ And they shall prophesy. **19** ‘AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. **20** THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. **21** AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.’ **22** Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know **23** this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. **24** But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. **25** For David says of Him, ‘I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN. **26** THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE; **27** BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. **28** YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.’ **29** Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. **30** And so, because he was a prophet and knew that ‘GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE,’ **31** he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that ‘HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.’ **32** This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. **33** Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. **34** For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, ‘SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, **35** UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.’ **36** Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus whom you crucified.” **37** Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do? **38** Peter said to them, Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the

gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” 40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!’ 41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.” (NASB95)

The initial outpouring came on the day of Pentecost, and there were other outpourings in the books of Acts. Some of these outpourings came to those who had been baptized in water, and some came to those who had not yet been baptized in water (Acts 8:15-17; 10:44-48; 11:15-16; 19:1-6).

Now the book of Acts documents the difficult transition from the dispensation of Israel to the dispensation of the church age. In the book of Acts, God the Holy Spirit is the most prominent member of the Trinity. God the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity that actively guides the early Jewish believers in the church in this transition from the Law to Grace...from the dispensation in which they previously lived to a new dispensation with a new *modus operandi*.

The apostle Peter of course was a Jew who lived his entire life attempting to live in accordance with the mandates of the Mosaic Law. The apostle Peter did not understand that God has begun a new dispensation called the church age. In Acts 10 and 11 we find God instructing Peter regarding this transition from the Law to Grace. God teaches Peter that he no longer makes any racial distinctions between Jew and Gentiles by instructing Peter to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles so that they too might receive the Baptism of the Spirit.

The fact that the Gentile believers like the Jewish believers could receive the same awesome invisible asset of the baptism of the Spirit as a result of faith alone in Christ alone was a shocking, revolutionary thing for Jewish believers such as Peter during the first century. The apostle Peter's obedience to God's directives resulted in Cornelius and his family getting saved and receiving the baptism of the Spirit. Peter's presentation of the Gospel to the Gentiles set an example for other Jewish believers to follow.

God had gotten his message across to Peter regarding the new dispensation that began among only Jewish believers initially on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem in June of 32 A.D. that there would be no racial distinctions in the church age. Those of Gentile origin and those of Jewish racial descent would all be under the federal headship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Any biological or racial Jew who believes in Christ as his Savior during the church age, is considered by God to be “church” or “body of Christ” since according to 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:26-28, there are no racial distinctions in the church age. After the conclusion of the church age, any Jew racially or biologically that accepts Christ as his Savior during the Tribulation dispensation (aka “Daniel's 70th week”) that follows the church age, becomes a member of “regenerate” or “born-again” Israel. In the same way Gentiles who believe in Christ after the church age. They become “regenerate” or “born-again” Gentiles.

Now, Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles, for Jesus clearly commissioned him to do so as recorded in Acts 9:15. Paul had already declared the Gentiles were not excluded writing (cf. Rom. 1:16).

In Galatians Paul taught that the Gentiles were not excluded from receiving the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us -- for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE” 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (NASB95)

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

The Baptism of the Spirit Unites Jewish and Gentile Believers in One Body

In Ephesians Paul emphasized that salvation was made available to the Gentiles. In Ephesians 2:11-22, Paul teaches that God the Holy Spirit is building a spiritual temple, which is the church and it is composed of both Jew and Gentile races. Both Jews and Gentiles were reconciled into the body of Christ through the baptism of the Spirit.

The church in Ephesus was composed primarily of Gentiles racially rather than those of Jewish descent.

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands. (NASB95)

The term “**circumcision**” refers to people who are Jewish racially whereas the term “**uncircumcision**” refers to those people who are not Jewish in racial descent, which is synonymous with the term “Gentiles.”

The term “**uncircumcision**” was actually a derogatory term used by the Jews among themselves when referring to the Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (NASB95)

In Ephesians 2:11, Paul gives five-fold description of the Gentiles: (1) “**Separate from Christ**”: The Gentiles were not saved and under condemnation since salvation is received through faith alone in Christ alone. (2) “**Excluded from the commonwealth of Israel**”: The Gentiles were not citizens of the nation of Israel, which God had specifically separated from the heathen to represent Him in the world. (3) “**Strangers to the covenants of promise**”: The Gentiles were “not” the beneficiaries of the four unconditional covenants to Israel: (1) New (2) Palestinian (3) Davidic (4) Abrahamic. (4) “**Having no hope**”: The Gentiles were under the deception and tyranny of Satan, in fear of death and having no understanding of the true meaning and purpose of human life, which is to love and serve and worship

the Lord Jesus Christ. (5) **“Without God in the world”**: The Gentiles did not know or have a relationship or fellowship with the true and living God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. (NASB95)

Ephesians 2:14, teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ’s substitutionary death on the cross demolished the barrier that separated Jew and Gentile races from being united. Our Lord’s death united both Jew and Gentile races and made both groups into one new entity and organic unit.

“The barrier” is a reference to the Jewish Temple, which was divided into various courts: (1) Holy of Holies (2) Holy Place (3) Priests (4) Israel (5) Women (6) Gentiles.

A wall, about three or four feet high, ran through the temple area separating the Court of the Gentiles from the inner court into which Jews only were permitted. This wall contained an inscription, which read: “No foreigner may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”

The inner court is where the worship of God took place and the Gentiles were not allowed but Christ’s work has enabled the Gentiles to worship God.

Ephesians 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace. (NASB95)

The term **“His flesh”** refers to the perfect “human nature” of our Lord. **“The enmity”** is a reference to the Mosaic Law. The cause of the enmity was the Mosaic Law, because the Law made a definite distinction between Jews racially and Gentiles. The Mosaic Law was perfectly fulfilled by the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union during His First Advent (Romans 10:4). The Law was designed to show man his total helpless and hopeless condition before a righteous and just God and to lead him to the Savior.

Ephesians 2:16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (NASB95)

Ephesians 2:16 teaches that one of the purposes of Christ’s death was to not only fulfill the righteous demands of the Mosaic Law but also make effect a reconciliation between the Jewish and Gentiles races into one body.

The head and body metaphor is one of eight metaphors used in the New Testament to describe the relationship between the church and the Lord Jesus Christ: (1) The last Adam and the New Creation (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 5:17a). (2) The Great Shepherd and the Sheep (Heb. 13:20). (3) The True Vine and the Branches (John 15:5a). (4) The Chief Cornerstone and the Stones in the building (Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:5-6). (5) The Great High Priest and members of the Royal Priesthood (Heb. 4:14a; 1 Pet. 2:9a). (6) The Groom and the Bride. (Our wedding occurs at the Second Advent) (Rev. 19:7). (7) The King of Kings and the Royal Family of God (Rev. 19:14-16).

Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology has the following comment, they write “The body of Christ as a metaphor for the church is unique to the Pauline literature and constitutes one of the most significant concepts therein (Rom. 12:4–5; 1 Cor. 12:12–27; Eph. 4:7–16; Col. 1:18). The primary purpose of the metaphor is to demonstrate the interrelatedness of diversity and unity within the church, especially with reference to spiritual gifts. The body of Christ is the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), the new humanity of the endtime that has appeared in history. However, Paul’s usage of the image, like the metaphor of the new temple, indicates that the church, as the body of Christ, still has a long way to go spiritually. It is ‘not yet’ complete.”⁴¹

Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible “Paul is alone among NT writers in speaking of the church as ‘the body of Christ’ (1 Cor 12:27; Rom 12:5; Eph 1:22, 23; 4:12; see also 1 Cor 10:16, 17; 12:12, 13), or as ‘the body’ of which Christ is the ‘head’ (Eph 4:15; Col 1:18). The origin of this way of speaking about the church is not clear. Among a number of suggestions, two are particularly revealing about Paul’s thought: (1) The Damascus Road experience. According to the account in Acts (9:3–7; 22:6–11; 26:12–18), Jesus identifies himself with his persecuted disciples. By persecuting these early Christians, Paul was actually fighting against Christ himself. It is possible that later reflection on this experience led Paul to the conviction that the living Christ was so identified with his community that it could be spoken of as ‘his body,’ that is, the concrete expression of his real presence. (2) The Hebrew concept of corporate solidarity. Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews (Phil 3:5), and his thinking was thoroughly Jewish. In that context the individual is largely thought of as intimately tied into the nation as a whole; the individual does not have real existence apart from the whole people. At the same time, the entire people can be seen as represented by one individual. Thus, ‘Israel’ is both the name of one individual and the name of a whole people. The ‘servant’ of Isaiah 42–53 can be both an individual (Is 42; 53) and the nation of Israel (Isa 49:1–6). This idea of corporate solidarity (or personality) is the background for the intimate connection Paul makes between ‘the first Adam’ and sinful humanity as well as between ‘the last Adam’ (Christ) and renewed humanity (1 Cor 15:45–49; see also Rom 5:12–21). The reality of the intimate relation between Christ and his church is thus expressed by Paul as the organic unity and integration of the physical body (Rom 12:4–8; 1 Cor 12:12–27). For Paul, the Lord’s Supper is a specific manifestation of this reality: “The bread which we break, is it not participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor 10:16b–17). Since this is the case, Paul goes on to argue, all the functions of the body have their legitimate and rightful place. Division within the body (i.e., the church) reveals that there is something unhealthy within. It is this image of the church as the ‘body of Christ’ which lies behind Paul’s repeated call for and insistence upon unity within the Christian community. The equation of Christ and the church in this image of ‘body’ leads to a very particular understanding of the nature of Christian existence. Paul speaks of the life of faith as life ‘in Christ.’ To be ‘in Christ’ is to be a ‘new creation’ (2 Cor 5:17). But for Paul, this is not just an individual experience, a kind of mystical union between the believer and Christ. For in a real sense, to be ‘in Christ’ is at the same time to be in the church. To be ‘baptized into Christ’ (Gal 3:27) is to become one with a community where the traditional barriers of human society are overcome—‘for you are all one in Christ Jesus’ (Gal 3:28). Again, to be ‘in Christ’ is to be ‘baptized into one body’ (1 Cor 12:12, 13), for ‘you are the body of Christ and individually members of it’ (1 Cor 12:27). There is then for Paul no such thing as a Christian in isolation, nurturing an individual relationship with Christ. To be a Christian is to be incorporated in a community of persons that is

⁴¹ Elwell, W. A., & Elwell, W. A. (1996). In *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology* (electronic ed.). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

growing toward expressing, in its ‘body life,’ the reality of Christ, fleshing out this reality in its common life and work.”⁴²

J. Hampton Keathley III writes “The figure of the church as the body reminds us of a number of elements: (1) *Submission*—the church is always to submit to its head. (2) *Union*—every member of the body is in vital union with Christ who is its source of life. (3) *Unity*—the church is one body of mutually adapted parts that are to be working together as a team, as one. (4) *Diversity*—the church is a diversity of abilities and gifts varying in function, in strength, and in honor, yet all are vital to the body. (5) *Mutuality*—each member is dependent on one another as are the members of our body. No man is an island. (6) *Necessity*—the growth, care, function, and submission of each member of the body to its Head is vital for the effective function of the body.”⁴³

Ephesians 2:17 “AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR.” (NASB95)

Where Ephesians 2:14 teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ is our peace, Ephesians 2:17 teaches that He proclaimed God’s peace treaty to those were “**far away**,” which refers to the Gentiles and to those “**near**,” which refers to the Jews.

Ephesians 2:18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household. (NASB95)

Paul is teaching the Ephesians that their citizenship is in heaven and are now members of God’s household (Philippians 3:20).

Ephesians 2:20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone. (NASB95)

The phrase “**the foundation of the apostles and prophets**” refers to the “teaching” of the mystery doctrine for the church by the apostles and the “New” Testament prophets who proclaimed the mystery doctrine for the church age until the New Testament canon was closed in 96 A.D.

The Person of Jesus Christ and His teaching is the Chief Cornerstone of the church.

Psalms 118:22 “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. 23 This is the LORD'S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.” (NASB95)

Ephesians 2:21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord. (NASB95)

Both Jewish and Gentile believers are said to be growing into a holy temple in the Lord, which is accomplished by growing up spiritually and becoming like Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16).

⁴² Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). In *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (pp. 459–460). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

⁴³ Keathley, J. Hampton III, *Paul's Letter to the Colossians: An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary*; page 75; Biblical Studies Press 2002

Ephesians 2:22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. (NASB95)

God does not dwell now in a temple built with human hands but now dwells in His new temple, which is constructed not from inanimate materials but of living believers. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit now permanently indwell every church age believer, both Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 1:25-27; Romans 8:11).

Ephesians 3:1-13 teaches that it was a mystery that the Gentiles through faith in Christ and the baptism of the Spirit would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel.

Ephesians 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles. 2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you, 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief (in Ephesians 1:8-9). (NASB95)

“**Mystery**” is the noun *musterion*, which refers to doctrines that centered upon the Person of Christ and members of His body and were doctrines never revealed to Old Testament saints.

Ephesians 3:4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ (that which is disclosed in Christ), 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. 6 To be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (NASB95)

The mystery is *not* that the Gentiles would be saved since this was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 11:10; 60:3). Rather, the mystery concerning the Gentiles is that they would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members with Jewish believers in the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the covenant promises to Israel.

The content of this mystery is three-fold: (1) The Gentile believers are fellow heirs with Jewish believers in the sense that they share in the spiritual riches God gave them because of His covenant with Abraham.

(2) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow members of the body of Christ with Jewish believers. There is one body, the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:4), which has no racial distinctions (1 Corinthians 12:13) and has the Lord Jesus Christ as its head (Ephesians 5:23). Each individual member of the body of Christ shares in the ministry (Ephesians 4:15-16).

(3) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel.

The four great unconditional covenants to Israel will be fulfilled: (1) Abrahamic deals with the race of Israel (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18). (2) Palestinian is the promise of land to Israel (Genesis 13:15; Numbers 34:1-12). (3) Davidic deals with the aristocracy of Israel (2 Samuel 7:8-17) (4) New deals with the future restoration of Israel during the millennium (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Although, the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel were specifically given to Israel (Romans 9:1-6), the church will still and does benefit from them since they are in union with Christ who is the ruler of Israel.

Ephesians 3:7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. (NASB95)

Ephesians 3:7 teaches us that the Gentile believer's union with Christ gives them the 100% availability of divine power that was manifested in the life of Paul and His proclamation of the Gospel.

Ephesians 3:8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ. (NASB95)

Ephesians 3:8 teaches that the Gentile believer's union with Christ gives them infinite wealth.

Ephesians 3:9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things 10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. (NASB95)

Ephesians 3:9-10 teaches that this mystery concerning the Gentiles is important to the angels both elect and non-elect since it reveals the multifaceted wisdom of God.

Ephesians 3:11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. 13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. (NASB95)

Paul told the Colossians that salvation was available to the Gentiles.

Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him, 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (NASB95)

Water Baptism Versus Spirit Baptism

The Bible teaches that water baptism is emphatically not the means by which a person gets saved. The sinner is saved through faith alone in Christ alone (John 3:16-18; Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16).

“Baptismal regeneration” is the teaching which contends that a sinner is regenerated by observing water baptism. It is taught by the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, some Pentecostal sects (notably the anti-trinitarian United Pentecostal Church and other “Jesus Only” groups), and pseudo-christian cult groups such as the Mormons. Baptismal regeneration is also the doctrinal stance of many teachers and preachers within the Restoration Movement, sometimes called

Campbellism (from its founder, Alexander Campbell), whose members are mainly found in churches called Churches of Christ or Independent Christian Churches.

Proponents of baptismal regeneration argue that water baptism is an essential part of salvation because, in their view, it is in the act or ceremony of water baptism that we are born again.

The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Ephesians 4:5 state dogmatically that there is only one baptism that matters, Spirit baptism. Both passages teach that there is one Spirit, God the Holy Spirit and therefore, only one baptism.

In 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, Paul addresses the problem of divisions in the Corinthian church and he specifically mentions water baptism. Some believers made water baptism an issue, which resulted in divisions among believers in the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 that water baptism was a non-essential and he emphasizes the fact that Christ sent him to preach the gospel and not to baptize with water (1 Corinthians 1:17). The apostle emphasizes the importance of having the same mind, which refers to being unified in their doctrine (1 Corinthians 1:10). The Corinthians were occupied with non-essentials such as tongues and water baptism and not with Bible doctrine, which is the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit was defined by John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ, as being a distinctive part of the ministry of Christ. He contrasted the baptism of water with the baptism in the Spirit.

Mathew 3:11 “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” (NASB95)

Mark 1:8 “I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” (NASB95)

Luke 3:16 John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” (NASB95)

John 1:32 And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’” (NASB95)

In Romans 6, it is obvious that the context is being placed into Christ and the passage dwells on the believer’s identification with Christ, with His death, and with His resurrection. In this passage, the believer is not baptized into water, but into the death of Christ or more accurately identified with Christ in His death.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us

who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. (NASB95)

Colossians 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (NASB95)

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you -- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience -- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

Notice what Peter says as he states that it is not water that is used in baptism, it is the Spirit who is poured out and regenerates the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior. It is also significant that Jesus never performed water baptism on anyone. If water baptism was essential to salvation, why wasn't the Lord practicing it?

John 4:1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. 3 When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.” (NIV)

Water baptism was a teaching aid to instruct believers that when they believed in Christ, the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Christ identifying them with Christ in His death and resurrection. When the believer was dipped underneath the water, this portrayed the reality that the Holy Spirit identified them with Christ in His death and when they were taken up out of the water, this portrayed that they were identified with Christ in His resurrection.

When the believer was dipped underneath the water, this portrayed that he was now dead to the cosmic system of Satan, the Law and the old sin nature and when he was taken up out of the water, this portrayed the fact that he was now a new creation and was to walk in newness of life. Baptism meant a clean break with the past and the old creation marred by sin and ruled by Satan.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB95)

Characteristics of the baptism of the Spirit: (1) Invisible. (2) Eternal in Nature. (3) Not related to any form of human merit or works. (4) Obtained at the moment the sinner is declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. (5) Performed by God the Holy Spirit and not by men. (6) Not water baptism. (7) Not

felt. (8) Not an experience. (9) Not an external activity. (10) Not speaking in tongues. (11) Not emotion. (12) Can't be improved upon.

There is a passage in Matthew 28:19-20 which is used by churches throughout history as documentation to support the observance of the ritual of water baptism. This is the only passage in the Gospels where our Lord mentions water baptism and it is not even a command. So, the question we must ask ourselves is that should we observe this ritual of water baptism as we do the Lord's Table. Did our Lord command it of His disciples?

Matthew 28:16 But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (NASB95)

“Go” is the nominative masculine plural aorist passive participle form of the verb *poreuomai* (πορεύομαι), which means “to depart, to travel, to journey” since it pertains to moving away from a reference point. The word pertains to moving over an area and often with the point of departure or destination specified. It is used of traveling a considerable distance and going from one destination to another. Therefore, the word is used here of the disciples of Jesus Christ traveling from place to place.

“Make disciples” is the second person plural aorist active imperative form of the verb *mathēteuō* (μαθητεύω) which means “to cause someone to become a disciple or follower of,”⁴⁴ to cause one to be a pupil.”⁴⁵ Therefore, in Matthew 28:19, this verb denotes the disciples of Jesus Christ causing sinners to become their disciples and thus disciples of Jesus Christ. It not only speaks of the Lord's disciples evangelizing unregenerate sinners who would become disciples of Jesus Christ by trusting in Him as Savior but also instructing them with regards to proper Christian conduct after being declared justified through faith in Christ.

In Jesus' day, those who sat under the teaching of a *didaskalos* were called *mathetes*, “disciples.” The word was used of students who lived in close fellowship with their teacher, they traveled with him, ate with him, and attended festive occasions with him. The students of a teacher were characterized by complete submission to the authority of the teacher, as well as by a devotion to him which was to surpass devotion to father or mother and which displayed itself in service to the teacher.

The teaching or learning method was to sit at the feet of the teacher listening to him. It also involved engaging in a question and answer encounter with the teacher as well as observing the actions of the teacher, especially how he conducted himself in regard to the Law or solved problems of conduct through his knowledge of Law and tradition. After the strenuous studies the student was ordained through the laying on of hands and received the right to be called Rabbi. He then had the responsibility to pass on that which he had learned from his teacher and to make disciples himself.

⁴⁴ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 470). New York: United Bible Societies.

⁴⁵ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 609). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

John the Baptist had his disciples (Matt. 9:14), the Pharisees had theirs (Matt. 22:16), even Paul had his (Acts 9:25), and of course, the Lord had many disciples (Luke 6:17). A New Testament disciple is one who is under biblical instruction. The Lord expected discipleship to involve total commitment if one was going to be able to fully follow through as a disciple, but being a disciple and being a believer are not one and the same. Salvation is a free gift but being a disciple means counting the costs. All believers should be disciples, but not all believers actually follow through as disciples.

Wiersbe writes “The term ‘disciples’ was the most popular name for the early believers. Being a disciple meant more than being a convert or a church member. *Apprentice* might be an equivalent term. A disciple attached himself to a teacher, identified with him, learned from him, and lived with him. He learned, not simply by listening, but also by doing. Our Lord called twelve disciples and taught them so that they might be able to teach others (Mark 3:13ff). A disciple, then, is one who has believed on Jesus Christ and expressed this faith by being baptized. He remains in the fellowship of the believers that he might be taught the truths of the faith (Acts 2:41–47). He is then able to go out and win others and teach them. This was the pattern of the New Testament church (2 Tim. 2:1–2). In many respects, we have departed from this pattern. In most churches, the congregation pays the pastor to preach, win the lost, and build up the saved—while the church members function as cheerleaders (if they are enthusiastic) or spectators. The ‘converts’ are won, baptized, and given the right hand of fellowship, then they join the other spectators. How much faster our churches would grow, and how much stronger and happier our church members would be, if each one were discipling another believer. The only way a local church can ‘be fruitful and multiply’ (instead of growing by “additions”) is with a systematic discipleship program. This is the responsibility of *every* believer, and not just a small group who have been ‘called to go.’”⁴⁶

“**Baptizing**” is the nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *baptizomai* (βαπτίζομαι), which means “to employ water in a religious ceremony designed to symbolize purification and initiation on the basis of repentance,⁴⁷ to use water in a rite for purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship w. God.”⁴⁸ Water baptism was a public declaration of the sinner justified through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ regarding their new life in Christ.

Leon Morris writes “Jesus goes on to speak of *baptizing* these new disciples ‘*in*⁴⁹ *the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*.”⁵⁰ This expression has caused endless controversy among exegetes. There are two separate problems, the institution of baptism as a rite of initiation for disciples, and the use of the Trinitarian formula. On the former question it is pointed out that Jesus did not habitually engage in baptism as John the Baptist, for example, did. Throughout his ministry he did not call on his followers to baptize those who wished to become adherents. From this it is argued that baptism was a rite established by the church, and the command to continue it is viewed as having been read back onto the lips of Jesus. But against this is the fact that baptism was part of church life from the

⁴⁶ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, pp. 107–108). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁴⁷ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 536). New York: United Bible Societies.

⁴⁸ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 164). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁴⁹ Turner insists that εἰς here has its proper sense and is not to be taken as equivalent to ἐν; it refers to “baptism *into* the name, i.e. a relationship as the goal of baptism” (M, III, p. 255).

⁵⁰ C. K. Barrett points out that Eusebius quotes the passage in the form “Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all the Gentiles in my name,” which omits the reference to baptism and to the Trinitarian formula. But he points out that no trace of this reading is found in any MS of Matthew or indeed in any writing other than that of Eusebius. He finds it “very difficult to believe that if this (the short reading) is what Matthew wrote, not one copy of his unaltered MS succeeded in escaping revision” (*The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* [London, 1947], p. 103).

very first. On the Day of Pentecost Peter preached to the crowd in Jerusalem, and when they asked, ‘What shall we do, brother men?’ he responded without consultation and without hesitation, ‘Repent and be baptized’ (Acts 2:37–38). We have no knowledge of a time when the church was without baptism or unsure of baptism. It is difficult to explain this apart from a definite command of Jesus.”⁵¹

“**Teaching**” is the nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *didaskō* (διδάσκω), which means, “to teach, to educate, to train, to impart information in a public assembly.”

The verb *didaskō* in the Greek New Testament means, “to provide instruction in the Word of God in a local public assembly” (Matthew 4:23; John 18:20; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Colossians 1:28-29; 3:16). In the Gospels, the verb was used of the Lord Jesus Christ “educating, teaching and instructing” His disciples in regards to the kingdom of God. Our Lord was often addressed as the *didaskalos*, “teacher,” or Rabbi (Matt. 8:19; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25; John 3:2; 20:16).

The verb *didaskō* is used of the Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching ministry in which He was always teaching publicly whether in the Temple in Jerusalem, the synagogues or outside in the open air (Matt. 4:23, 5:2; 9:35; 11:1; 26:55; 28:20; Mark 1:21-22; 2:13; 4:1-2; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:35; 14:49; Luke 4:15, 31; 5:3, 17; 6:6; 11:1; 13:10, 22; 19:47; 20:1; 21:37; 23:5; John 6:59; 7:14, 28; 8:2, 20; 18:20; Acts 1:1).

In Matthew 28:20, the verb *didaskō* means “to teach, instruct” and speaks of “providing authoritative instruction” in the Word of God in a formal setting, namely the public worship service. The verb denotes the preservation and communication of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ is commanding His disciples to authoritatively teach the Word of God to those who trust in Him as Savior.

The aorist tense of this verb *poreuomai* is an ingressive aorist which is used to stress the beginning of an action or entrance into a state. Here it emphasizes the disciples of Jesus Christ entering into the activity of traveling from place to place for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

The participle form of this verb *poreuomai* is an attendant circumstance participle which is used to communicate an action that is coordinate the finite verb. This type of participle is not dependent because it is translated like a verb. However, it is semantically dependent because it cannot exist without the main verb. Therefore, this type of participle “piggy-backs” on the mood of the main verb. It also expresses a prerequisite before the action of the main verb can occur and has something of an ingressive force to it. So here in Matthew 28:19, the participle form of the verb *poreuomai* is coordinate with the second person plural aorist active imperative form of the verb *matheteuo* expressing a prerequisite action before the disciples of Jesus Christ can fulfill the command to make disciples.

The NET Bible has the following note, they write “According to *ExSyn* 645 the first participle (πορευθέντες, *poreuthentes*, “Go”) fits the typical structural pattern for the attendant circumstance participle (aorist participle preceding aorist main verb, with the mood of the main verb usually imperative or indicative) and thus picks up the mood (imperative in this case) from the main verb (μαθητεύσατε, *mathēteusate*, “make disciples”). This means that semantically the action of ‘going’ is commanded, just as ‘making disciples’ is. As for the two participles that follow the main verb

⁵¹ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 747). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.
n *ExSyn Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*.

(βαπτίζοντες, *baptizantes*, “baptizing”; and διδάσκοντες, *didaskontes*, “teaching”), these do not fit the normal pattern for attendant circumstance participles, since they are present participles and follow the aorist main verb. However, some interpreters do see them as carrying additional imperative force in context. Others regard them as means, manner, or even result.”⁵²

Dan Wallace writes “As for the Greek, it is true that the word translated ‘go’ is a participle. But it is not a present participle, which is the one that would be required if the meaning were ‘as you are going.’ It is an aorist participle, πορευθέντες (*poreuthentes*). As such, it hardly means ‘as you are going’ or ‘while you are going.’ The basic idea would be ‘after you have gone,’ and as such would presuppose that one would have gone forth before making disciples. But in collocation with certain kinds of verbs this basic meaning is altered. When an aorist participle is followed by an aorist imperative in narrative literature, it almost invariably piggy-backs on the force of the imperative. That is, it is translated like an imperative because the author is trying to communicate a command. A great illustration of this is found in Matt 2.13-14: “‘Get up and take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to look for the child to kill him.’ Then he got up and took the child and his mother during the night, and fled to Egypt.” In v. 13, ‘Get up and take’ is a translation of an aorist participle followed by an aorist imperative. That the reader is to understand that this was a dual command is seen in the fact that Joseph got up *during the night* and *fled* to Egypt. The urgency was not in taking Jesus and Mary only; it was in getting up quickly, then taking the child and his mother out of Bethlehem. The construction in which the participle and verb combine so that the participle borrows from the mood of the main verb is known as *attendant circumstance*. With the same participle as is found in Matt 28.19, we see this idea repeated elsewhere in Matthew. Here are all of the passages in Matthew of the aorist participle of *poreuomai* followed by an aorist imperative (each time the translation of the participle is italicized): Matt 2.8: “*Go* and look carefully for the child.” Matt 9.13: “*Go* and learn what this means.” Matt 11.4: “*Go* and tell John what you hear and see.” Matt 17.27: “*Go* to the lake and throw out a hook” Matt 28.7: “*Go* quickly and tell his disciples” Matt 28.19: “*Go* and make disciples” Matthew 9.13 even has both the same participle and the same imperative as Matt 28.19. What you will notice is that in every instance the *main* idea is what the imperative says (*look* carefully, *learn*, *tell* John, *throw out* a hook, *tell* his disciples). But the participle is *never* to be taken in a casual sense of ‘as you are going.’ However, when the present participle of *poreuomai* is used, the idea of ‘as you are going’ is indeed found. Here are all the references in Matthew (with the translation of the participle in italics): Matt 10.7: “*As you go*, preach this message” Matt 11.7: “*While they were going away*, Jesus began...” Matt 28.11: “*While they were going*, some of the guard went into the city...” Check any English translation. They should all tell the same story. If Matthew had wanted to say ‘as you are going, make disciples’ he would have used the present participle of *poreuomai* instead of the aorist. In every other instance when the aorist participle is followed by an imperative in Matthew, the force of the participle is a command. However, you should also notice that the command to go is a *necessary prerequisite* for fulfilling the main injunction in the sentence. It cannot be dispensed with, but neither is it the main point. This is why Greek uses the participle instead of two imperatives: the second imperative is almost invariably the main point, while the aorist participle is the necessary prerequisite. For example, Peter could not throw a hook in the lake until he went to the lake (Matt 17.27); the women could not tell Jesus’ disciples that he had been raised from the dead until they went (Matt 28.7). How does this relate to the Great Commission? Essentially, it means that the apostles *must go before they could make disciples*.”⁵³

⁵² Biblical Studies Press. (2005). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

⁵³ Dan Wallace, The Great Commission or the Great Suggestion? <https://danielbwallace.com/>

The aorist imperative form of the verb *matheteuo* is an ingressive aorist imperative which emphasizes the beginning of an action which the context usually makes clear is not a momentary action. Therefore, it expresses the idea of the disciples of Jesus Christ beginning to perform the action of making disciples. This is not a constative aorist imperative which emphasizes the solemnity and urgency of the action and is used in general precepts since this type of aorist imperative is used often in commands in which the action has been going on. Up to this point in Matthew, the disciples of Jesus had not been obeying this command since this was the first time they had received it.

J. Hampton Keathley commenting the writes “Why this construction? Why not use two regular imperatives? Is it just an idiom without significance? First, the participle with the main verb is used in order to stress that there is one primary objective—making disciples. Making disciples is the core or heart of the commission. Second, the use of the participle shows the action of the participle is closely connected or vitally related to the main verb. It proposes the necessary way to fulfill the main verb. Without going, the command to make disciples is impossible, especially when it involves all nations. Going is not a secondary option. You don’t catch fish in a barrel. We must do something that puts us in contact with people so we can win them to Christ and begin the process of making disciples. The going involves anything we do from hosting outreach Bible studies, getting acquainted with neighbors, or by crossing oceans to take the gospel to lost tribes. Both words, ‘go’ and ‘make disciples’ are in aorist tense which, in Greek, makes the action definite and urgent. The idea is ‘go and perform your calling.’”⁵⁴

The present tense of the verb *baptizomai* is a customary present which is used to signal either an action that regularly occurs or an ongoing state. Here the former is in view expressing the idea that the Lord wants His disciples to make it their habit of baptizing in water those who trust in Him as Savior.

The participle form of this verb is a participle of means which indicates the means by which the action of its controlling verb is accomplished. This would indicate that the Lord wanted His disciples to make disciples “by means of” baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The present tense of the verb *didaskō* is also customary present expressing the idea that the Lord wants His disciples make it their habit of teaching those who trust in Him as Savior all that He had commanded them.

The participle form of this verb is also a participle of means which would indicate that the Lord wanted His disciples to make disciples “by means of” teaching them all that He had commanded them.

Charles Ryrie writes “Baptizing is a single act; teaching is a continuous process. Disciples have to be baptized (an evidence of salvation—therefore, one may say that disciples must first be saved); then they have to be taught over and over to obey (observe all things). In New Testament times, baptism served as one of the clearest proofs that a person had accepted Christ. Baptism was not entered into casually or routinely as is often the case today. Although it is clear in the New Testament that baptism does not save, to be baptized was to signify in no uncertain terms that one had received Christ and was also associating himself with the Christian group, the church.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ ABC’s for Christian Growth: Laying the Foundation, Third Edition; by J. Hampton Keathley III; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1996, 1998, 1999

⁵⁵ Charles C. Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL, 1989, p. 103.

So, the early church practiced water baptism in obedience to the Lord's command in Matthew 28:19. In every recorded instance in Acts after trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior, the believer was baptized (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13, 38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5).

Therefore, it is clear from our study of Matthew 28:19-20 that our Lord commanded His disciples to observe the practice of water baptism. However, it was not to be a means of salvation but rather it was to be one of the means, along with teaching, in which to make disciples of Jesus Christ, those who have been declared justified through faith in Him.

But there is a problem with this since it would appear in several passages that water baptism was not practiced by our Lord and was not always practiced by the apostles themselves. John 4:2 reveals that the Lord Himself never personally baptized anyone in water but rather His disciples baptized people. Furthermore, it would appear from several of Paul's statements in 1 and 2 Corinthians that he followed the Lord's practice by not personally baptizing people upon their acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. In 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul states that he became the spiritual father of the Corinthian believers through the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 9:1, he says that they are his work in the Lord. Then, in 1 Corinthians 15:1, he states that they accepted the gospel which he proclaimed to them. In 2 Corinthians 11:2, he says that he betrothed them to one husband, Jesus Christ. Lastly, in 1 Corinthians 1:14-17, Paul says he baptized none of the Corinthians except for Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanus. He asserts that Christ did not send him to baptize but to preach the gospel.

From these statements, it would appear Paul did not personally baptize everyone in the Corinthian Christian community when they trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior which would seem to imply that he did not observe the practice except in a few instances. Thus, Paul did not observe water baptism as an ordinance. This leads to the question, should the church observe water baptism today? The answer is yes. The reason why Paul did not personally baptize the Corinthians when they became new converts to Christianity is that he followed the practice of the Lord Jesus who did not personally baptize anyone but rather delegated this responsibility to His disciples. Therefore, men such as Timothy and Titus would have baptized the Corinthians when they trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior on behalf of Paul and under his direction. Peter followed the same practice according to Acts 10:48 which teaches that he ordered Cornelius and his family to be baptized in water upon receiving Jesus Christ as their Savior through faith. Paul did not regard water baptism to be a sacrament or ordinance that required the administration of "apostolic hands."

Identification with Christ

In Romans 6:3, 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:27, Paul is using the verb *baptizo* in a figurative or metaphorical sense to denote the Holy Spirit causing the believer to be "identified" with Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13 By means of one Spirit, we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greek (Gentiles), slaves or free, and we are all made to drink into one Spirit. (NASB95)

Galatians 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with the nature of Christ. (Author's translation)

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? (NASB95)

“Have been baptized” is the first person plural aorist passive indicative form of the verb *baptizo*, “to cause the believer to be identified with the Lord Jesus Christ.”

At the moment of conversion, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Baptism of the Spirit results in positional sanctification and the potential to experience sanctification in time and the promise of perfective sanctification at the resurrection of the church.

By positionally, I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ since at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ, identifying him with Christ’s crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1).

Therefore, in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:27 and Romans 6:3, the verb *baptizo* does not refer to water baptism but rather it refers to the act performed by the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit on behalf of those sinners who exercise faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. This act places the believer in Jesus Christ in an eternal union with Jesus Christ and identifies them with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session.

The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Romans 6:3, the aorist tense of the verb *baptizo* is a “constative” aorist describing in summary fashion the moment that Paul and his fellow Christians were identified with Christ, which was when they were declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

The passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Therefore, the passive voice means that the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as their Savior as the subject received the action of being identified with Christ by the unexpressed agency of God the Holy Spirit. Although the Holy Spirit is not explicitly mentioned as the agency as identifying the believer with Christ, Matthew 3:11, John 7:37-39, Acts 2 and 10 and 1 Corinthians 12:13 make clear that He was the member of the Trinity that performed this act.

James Montgomery Boice commenting on the verb *baptizo* writes, “The clearest example that shows the meaning of *baptizo* is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (*bapto*) into boiling water and then 'baptised' (*baptizo*) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism... mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with Him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!”

Leon Morris makes the following comment regarding the verb *baptizo* in Romans 6:3, he writes, “We may perhaps miss something of what he (Paul) is saying because for us baptized evokes liturgical associations; it points to a comforting and inspiring piece of ceremonial. But in the first century, while the verb could denote this ceremony and Paul certainly means that here, to “baptize” evoked associations of violence. It meant “immerse” rather than “dip.” It was used, for example, of people being drowned, or of ships being sunk. Josephus used it metaphorically of crowds who flooded into Jerusalem and “wrecked the city” (Bell. 4.137; Loeb translation). It is quite in keeping with this that Jesus referred to His death as baptism (Mk. 10:38; Lk. 12:50). When it is applied to Christian initiation we ought not to think in terms of gentleness and inspiration; it means death, death to a whole way of life. It is this that is Paul’s point here. Christians are people who have died, and their baptism emphasizes that death. Death runs through this passage and is mentioned in every verse up to verse 13. We should not let the modern associations of baptism blinds us to the point Paul is making so strongly. He is saying that it is quite impossible for anyone who understands what baptism means to acquiesce cheerfully in a sinful life. The baptized have died to all that.”⁵⁶

Kenneth Wuest explains that the verb “can be illustrated by the action of the smith dipping the hot iron in water, tempering it, or the dyer dipping the cloth in the dye for the purpose of dying it...The word refers to the introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition. While the word...had other uses, yet the one that predominated above the others was the above one. Observe how perfectly this meaning is in accord with the usage of the word in Romans 6:3, 4, where the believing sinner is baptized into vital union with Jesus Christ. The believing sinner is introduced or placed in Christ, thus coming into union with Him. By that action he is taken out of his old environment and condition in which he had lived, the First Adam, and is placed into a new environment and condition, the Last Adam. By this action his condition is changed from that of a lost sinner with a totally depraved nature to that of a saint with a divine nature. His relationship to the law of God is changed from that of a guilty sinner to that of a justified saint. All this is accomplished by the act of the Holy Spirit introducing or placing him into vital union with Jesus Christ. No ceremony of water baptism ever did that. The entire context is supernatural in its character. The Greek word here should not be transliterated but translated, and the translation should read; “As many as were introduced (placed) into Christ Jesus, into His death were introduced. Therefore, we were buried with Him through the aforementioned introduction into His death.”⁵⁷

Allen Ross makes the following insightful comment, he writes, “What does Paul mean when he talks about being baptized in the likeness of his death. What kind of baptism is this? The word “baptism” is a difficult one to define in all its nuances. The background of the word refers to the ritual with water whereby someone is immersed (in the first century by self-immersion in a ritual bath with an authority figure witnessing it [but not touching the person]), either as a purification ritual, or an initiation rite. But it can be used in the Bible to mean identification with something, such as judgment (a baptism by fire), or regeneration (a baptism by the Holy Spirit). So what kind of baptism does Paul mean here? (1) One view is that it could be water baptism. In support of this we have the common use of the word baptism, as well as the truths that the rite sets forth, death, burial, and resurrection. Moreover, verse 3 sounds as if not all the readers had been baptized (‘as many as are’), whereas all believers have been baptized by the Spirit (according to 1 Corinthians 12:13). And so according to verse 5 we have been united with him in the likeness of his death. His death was physical and representative; our death in Christ is spiritual and

⁵⁶ The Epistle to the Romans; pages 246-247; W. B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press

⁵⁷ Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: Studies in the Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

judicial. There is a likeness, but both are real. (2) The other view is that it is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Paul has in mind. Water is in the picture when we talk of baptism; but water is the physical representation of the spiritual reality. For example, when John baptized Jesus, it was an actual act using water. But that act inaugurated Jesus' ministry which was to lead to the suffering at the cross. John's baptism prepared the way for the death of Christ. So when people respond to the preaching of the Gospel and want to be baptized, the water baptism is a testimony of the spiritual reality, that is, Spirit baptism. If they have come to faith in Christ, they have already been 'united with' Christ (baptized) by the Spirit; the ritual now becomes the sign (as circumcision was in the Old Covenant with Abraham). The point Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 12:13 is clear: all believers have been baptized by the Spirit into one body, the Church. There could be no regeneration (new birth) without the Holy Spirit. So the idea of the term 'baptism' is that of 'identification with' Christ. There is a mystical union between the believer and his Lord. If anyone is 'in Christ' by faith, that person has 'died' in Christ. When God the Father beholds the cross of Calvary, he sees the Savior dying for our sins; but he also sees the believer dying in Christ unto sin. Our sins were placed on Christ; but we were in him in an identifying union. His death for sin was our death to sin. Our burial with him is a spiritual fact which demonstrates the reality of our death to sin (see Galatians 2:20). This language is hard for many to understand, but it has to be grasped as spiritual language to describe what saving faith means. If I truly believe in Christ (not just believe things about him), then I am identifying myself, my life, my destiny with him. When I accept Christ as my Savior, then I am receiving by faith the salvation that he purchased for me on the cross. And if that faith is saving faith, I am so identified with Christ, I am so committed to Christ, that it will change my life to be like his. And the basis for the change is in my identification by faith with his death on the cross. So Paul can say it is as if we died on the cross, and were buried, and rose to a new life—if we have the kind of faith that places our whole life in him. Perhaps an illustration of this will help. In the Old Testament the Israelite brought an animal to sacrifice on his behalf. He placed his hand on the head as the throat was slit, and the animal would die at his hands and crumple lifeless to the ground. By laying his hands on the animal, the worshiper was identifying with the animal to be slain; and when the animal died, the believer knew that that should be his blood spilled, and that should be his body on the ground. But God in his grace allowed a substitute, an animal for the sinner. For all spiritual purposes, he died with and in that animal. That truth would have a profound impact on the way the believer lived in the future, knowing that only by God's grace could he walk away from judgment of the burning altar. So too the believer today knows that faith in Christ is that kind of identification. The Christian faith is not a nice little philosophy of life, or some moral teachings to live by; it is salvation through the death of Christ—a salvation that not only delivers us from the judgment of God, but also changes the way we live today. How can we cling to a sinful life-style when we have so identified with Christ who was slain on our behalf for that life-style that God declared sinful? To express how it should change us, Paul speaks symbolically about our dying with Christ."⁵⁸

Warren Wiersbe makes the following comment on the verb, he writes, "The Greek word has two basic meanings: (1) a literal meaning-to dip or immerse (2) a figurative meaning-to be identified with."

He makes the following comment on the word's usage in Romans six, he writes, "It appears that Paul had both the literal and the figurative in mind in this paragraph, for he used the readers' experience of water baptism to remind them of their identification with Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. To be 'baptized into Jesus Christ' (Romans 6:3) is the same as 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body' (1 Corinthians 12:13). There is a difference between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit (John 1:33). When a sinner trusts Christ, he is immediately born into the family of

⁵⁸ The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, pages 27-28; the Biblical Studies Foundation; www.bible.org

God and receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. A good illustration of this is the household of Cornelius when they heard Peter preach (Acts 10:34-38). When these people believed on Christ, they immediately received the Holy Spirit. After that, they were baptized. Peter's words, "Whosoever believes in Him shall receive remission of sins" gave to them the promise that they needed. They believed-and they were saved. Historians agree that the mode of baptism in the early church was immersion. The believer was 'buried' in the water and brought up again as a picture of death, burial and resurrection. Baptism by immersion (which is the illustration Paul is using in Romans 6) pictures the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. It is an outward symbol of an inward experience. Paul is not saying that their immersion in water put them 'into Jesus Christ,' for that was accomplished by the Spirit when they believed. Their immersion was a picture of what the Spirit did. The Holy Spirit identified them with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection."⁵⁹

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? (NASB95)

"Have been baptized" is the first person plural aorist passive indicative form of the verb *baptizo*, which is employed this time with the prepositional phrase *eis ton thanaton autou*, **"into His death"** and thus means, "to cause the believer to be identified with" the Lord Jesus Christ in His death.

This identification with Jesus Christ in His death is called in theology, "retroactive positional truth" meaning that when Christ died spiritually on the Cross, God the Father considers and views the believer as having died with Christ at that moment.

At the moment of conversion, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ's death.

The aorist tense of the verb *baptizo* is a "constative" aorist describing in summary fashion the moment that Paul and his fellow Christians were identified with Christ in His death, which was when they were declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

The passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Therefore, the passive voice means that the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as their Savior as the subject received the action of being identified with Christ in His death by the unexpressed agency of God the Holy Spirit. Although the Holy Spirit is not explicitly mentioned as the agency as identifying the believer with Christ, Matthew 3:11, John 7:37-39, Acts 2 and 10 and 1 Corinthians 12:13 make clear that He was the member of the Trinity that performed this act.

"Into His death" is composed of the preposition *eis*, **"into"** and the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *thanatos*, **"death"** and the genitive masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos*, **"His"**

In Romans 6:3, the noun *thanatos* refers to the unique voluntary substitutionary spiritual death of the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union.

⁵⁹ The Bible Exposition Commentary, volume 1, page 531

Our Lord's spiritual death is recorded in Matthew 27:46.

Matthew 27:45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" (NASB95)

When the Lord Jesus Christ cried out "**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**" He was experiencing spiritual death meaning that in His human nature he was separated from His Father.

In John 19:30, the Lord triumphantly said "**It is finished**" while He was still alive and which statement refers to the payment of our sins.

John 19:30 "Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. (NASB95)

Therefore, it was His spiritual death that was the payment for our sins and not His physical death. In His sinless human nature, our Lord suffered the loss of fellowship with the Father during those last three hours of darkness on the Cross so that we might never suffer the second death in the eternal lake of fire, which is eternal loss of fellowship with God.

Therefore, God the Father considers Christ's spiritual death to be the believer's since this death dealt with the believer's problem of real spiritual death. Every person that is born into the world is physically alive yet spiritually dead and possesses a sin nature as a result of God imputing Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden to his posterity, i.e. the human race. This sin nature and spiritual death manifest itself in the life of a human being through the function of the volition in obeying the desires of the sin nature.

The fact that our Lord's spiritual death was the payment for our sins and not His literal blood is illustrated in Isaiah 53.

Isaiah 53:10 But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. (NASB95)

"**Anguish of His soul**" refers to the intense suffering of our Lord's human soul as a result of being separated from the Father on the Cross and experiencing spiritual death as a perfect sinless human being. This suffering no angel or man will ever be able to identify with since no angel or man has kept themselves experientially sinless.

Notice that Isaiah says that the anguish of the Son's soul while experiencing spiritual death "**satisfied**" the Father, which refers to propitiation. This passage further substantiates that it was the Lord Jesus Christ's spiritual death that propitiated the Father and not His literal blood.

The greatest suffering the humanity of Christ endured on the cross was "not" the physical and mental torture of the cross but rather when He experienced separation from His Father during those last three

hours on the Cross as a result of receiving the imputation of the sins of the entire world by the justice of God the Father.

The physical suffering that our Lord endured through the scourging and beatings at the hands of the Jews and Romans as well as the crucifixion itself were in fact part of His bearing the judgment for our sins.

Remember, the unbeliever will suffer eternity in the Lake of Fire in a resurrection body according to Daniel 12:1, Romans 2:7, Revelation 20:11-15 and many other passages. This suffering is not only spiritual death but also physical suffering. Thus, since our Lord died spiritually so that no human being will be separated from God for all of eternity in the Lake of Fire so Christ suffered the physical torture so that no human being will suffer physically forever in the Lake of Fire.

Our Lord's loss of fellowship with His Father in His humanity during those last three hours in darkness on the Cross was infinitely more painful to our Lord than the physical suffering He had endured and was enduring.

Our Lord's loss of fellowship with His Father in His humanity during those last three hours in darkness on the Cross was valued infinitely more by the Father than the shedding of His literal blood or His physical suffering. This is not to say that the Father did not value the physical suffering of His Son, or His literal blood, which was sinless, He did, but literal blood though sinless cannot resolve man's problem of separation from God under real spiritual death.

The separation from God of a perfect human being whose soul was never contaminated by sin was the penalty that had to be paid in order to redeem human souls from the curse of Adam sin of disobedience and real spiritual death.

Our Lord died spiritually and was separated from His Father during those last three hours on the Cross so that we might never be separated from God for all of eternity due to sin. During the last three hours on the cross, God the Father imputed every sin in human history-past, present and future to the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union. Consequently, Christ voluntarily suffered the penalty for this imputation as our Substitute, which was spiritual death (2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13).

This spiritual death served as the propitiation for these sins, the reconciliation of the world to God, the redemption of the entire human race out of the slave market of sin and the basis for the forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation.

Imputation is the function of the justice of God in crediting something to someone for cursing or for blessing.

There are two categories of imputations: (1) Real: "crediting to a person something which belongs to him" (2) Judicial: "crediting to a person something which does not belong to him."

A real imputation has a target or a home whereas as a judicial imputation has no target or home, and emphasizes the Source, the justice of God. To complete a judicial imputation divine justice must immediately pronounce a verdict, cursing or blessing.

Judicial Imputations: (1) Imputation of human sin to Christ (2) Imputation of divine righteousness to sinful mankind through faith in Christ.

Sin is any thought, word or action that is contrary to the will and holy character of God and is thus disobedience to the commands and prohibitions of God.

Therefore, during the last three hours on the cross, God the Father imputed every sin in human history-past, present and future to the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union.

During the last three hours on the Cross, God the Father credited to the impeccable humanity of Christ something, which did not belong to Him, namely the sins of the entire world-past, present and future! When the sins of mankind were imputed to the impeccable humanity of Christ, the justice of God took action and pronounced a guilty verdict. Therefore, when Christ was receiving the imputation of the sins of the world, God was not projecting into the soul of the human nature of Christ the sins of the world, nor does imputation put Him into contact with sin.

This imputation made the Lord a curse for us and set Him up to receive the penalty for our sins, which is spiritual death, i.e. separation from God.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us – for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE.” (NASB95)

When Christ cried “**My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?**” He was suffering the “consequences” for our sins, which was separation from the Father and was “not” coming into contact with our sins, nor was He becoming literal sin.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is (spiritual) death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NASB95)

Christ could not experience or come into contact with sin unless He Himself chose to sin. You cannot experience or come into contact with sin unless one chooses to sin. Therefore, there is no way possible that the Lord could come into contact with our sins or experience them.

Furthermore, the imputation of every sin in history to Christ does “not” mean that Christ became literal sin, which is a heretical statement. If the Lord did become literal sin, then He would no longer be qualified to be our perfect Substitute.

Therefore, Jesus Christ died spiritually meaning that in His human nature, He was separated from His Father in the sense that He lost fellowship with His Father during those last three hours on the Cross. He suffered this spiritual death so that no member of the human race should have to. Thus, the believer is identified with our Lord’s spiritual death since this death spared the believer from the second death in the eternal lake of fire.

Remember, Adam died spiritually first and then physically. This pattern holds true as noted in Romans 5:12-21 for his posterity, the human race. Jesus Christ’s obedience to the Father’s will in dying a spiritual death negated Adam’s spiritual death and its effects, namely, physical death and eternal condemnation. Therefore, the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ is delivered from all three.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, based on this (principle), just as, through one man, the sin nature entered into the human race so that spiritual death entered through this sin nature. Thus, in this manner, spiritual death spread to each and every member of the human race without exception because each and every member of the human race sinned (the moment Adam sinned). 13 For you see, prior to the giving of the Law, personal sin was habitually taking place among the individual members of the human race however personal sin is never, as an eternal spiritual truth, charged to one's account while the Law does not exist. 14 Yet, in spite of this, spiritual death reigned as king from the fall of Adam to the giving of the Law to Moses, specifically, over those who had not sinned according to the same exact transgression committed by Adam, who is, as an eternal spiritual truth, an illustration of the One destined to come. 15 However, on the other hand, absolutely not like this transgression is, as an eternal spiritual truth, also, in the same way, the gracious act. For if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that by means of this transgression committed by the one, the entire human race died. Of course, we know this is true. How much more then has the grace originating from God and the gracious gift on the basis of grace, which is specifically, on the basis of the obedience of the one Man, who is Jesus, who is the Christ been generously and graciously offered to the entire human race. 16 In fact, the condemnation through the one who sinned is absolutely not, as an eternal spiritual truth, like the gift itself. On the one hand the verdict arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation while on the other hand, the gracious act arose from innumerable transgressions resulting in justification. 17 For if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that by means of the transgression committed by the one, spiritual death reigned as king through this one. Of course, we know this is true. Then, how much more those who do receive His transcendent grace, specifically, the gracious gift, which is His righteousness, will, as a certainty, reign as kings by means of life through the One, who is Jesus, who is the Christ. 18 Therefore, as previously stated, just as through the one who committed the transgression resulted in condemnation affecting each and every member of the human race without exception in the same way also through the One who committed the righteous act resulted in the basis for the offer of justification, which produces (eternal) life, affecting each and every member of the human race without exception. 19 For you see, just as through the one man's disobedience, the entire human race has been rendered sinners in the same way also through the One's obedience, many will, as a certainty, be rendered righteous. 20 Now, the Law was an addendum in order that the transgression might increase but where personal sin increased, grace infinitely abounded. 21 In order that just as, the sin nature reigned as king in the realm of spiritual death in the same way, also grace would reign as king through righteousness resulting in eternal life through Jesus, who is the Christ, who is our Lord. (Author's translation)

Romans 5:12-21 taught us that the sin nature came into the world through Adam's transgression and spiritual death through the sin nature. God imputed Adam's transgression to every member of his posterity, i.e. the human race. Therefore, every member of the human is born into this world, physically alive yet spiritually dead and in need of justification.

The sin nature resides in the physical body (Romans 6:6). Personal sin is the result of obeying the desires of the sin nature. Spiritual death is the result of possessing a sin nature and committing personal sin perpetuates this status. Therefore, the human race had three major problems that are interconnected, the sin nature, spiritual death and personal sins. Jesus Christ's spiritual and physical deaths dealt with all three.

Spiritual death is the product of the sin nature and personal sin perpetuates this status of spiritual death. The human race is under the status of real spiritual death because of the sin nature, which was passed down from Adam. Spiritual death is the consequence of not only possessing but also obeying the desires of the sin nature and committing personal sin. Instead, of the human race suffering the consequences of possessing a sin nature and obeying its desires and committing personal sin, Jesus Christ died spiritually in their place as their Substitute. Therefore, our Lord had to die spiritually to solve the problem of spiritual death in the human race. His spiritual death dealt with the consequences of the human race possessing a sin nature and obeying its desires.

Adam acquired a sin nature when he disobeyed the Lord's command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This sin nature was passed down to his posterity, i.e. the human race through sex and resides in the genetic structure of every body of every human being. Therefore, the status of spiritual death was passed down to Adam's posterity since spiritual death entered the human race through the sin nature. Spiritual death is the status of possessing a sin nature due to the imputation of Adam's original sin in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, our Lord had to die physically to solve the problem of the sin nature, which resides in the body of every human being. Our Lord's resurrection body replaces the sinful body of Adam. The believer will receive a resurrection body like Christ in order to replace their physical bodies that possess the sin nature, the Adamic body.

Therefore, God the Father viewed His Son's spiritual death as negating spiritual death in the human race and viewed His physical death as negating the sin nature. Personal sin perpetuated the status of real spiritual death and through the function of human volition is the product of the sin nature.

Consequently, the sinner who is declared justified through faith in Christ is identified with Christ in His spiritual death in order to solve the sinner's problem of real spiritual death whereas the sinner is identified with Christ in His physical death in order to solve the sinner's problem with the old sin nature. Therefore, Christ's spiritual and physical death resolved the human race's problem with the sin nature, spiritual death and personal sins.

The first Adam sinned. Then, he died spiritually while simultaneously acquiring sin nature and then he died physically (Genesis 5:5). The last Adam obeyed the Father, died spiritually as a Substitute for Adam and his posterity, and then died physically to break the power of the sin nature. Then, the last Adam was raised from physical death and received a resurrection body, which would be passed down to His spiritual posterity, those who trust in Him as Savior.

In Romans 6, Paul follows this pattern. In Romans 6:3, he speaks of the justified sinner being identified with Christ in His spiritual death so as to solve the believer's problem of being spiritually dead. Then, in Romans 6:4, he speaks of the justified sinner being identified with Christ in His physical death so as to solve the problem of possessing a sin nature. In Romans 6:5, the apostle teaches that the justified sinner is identified with Christ in His resurrection in order that the believer might receive a resurrection body like the last Adam, Christ so as to replace his sinful body.

Therefore, in Romans 6:3, the noun *thanatos*, "**death**" is a reference to the spiritual death of Christ, which dealt with the consequences of obeying the desires of the sin nature and committing personal sin, namely, spiritual death. However, in Romans 6:4, Paul teaches that the believer is identified with Jesus Christ in His physical death since *thanatos*, "**death**" is used in relation to our Lord's burial, which certified that a person was physically dead.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (NASB95)

“**Through baptism**” is composed of the preposition *dia*, “**through**” and the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *baptisma*.

The noun *baptisma* does not appear in classical writings or the Septuagint and is unique to the New Testament. The word means, “the identification of one thing with another resulting in a change.”

In Romans 6:4, the noun means that God the Holy Spirit places the church age believer in union with Christ at the moment of conversion resulting in a permanent change of condition for the believer. It does not refer to water baptism but rather it refers to the act performed by the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit on behalf of those sinners who exercise faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. This act places the believer in Jesus Christ in an eternal union with Jesus Christ and identifies them with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session.

The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Romans 6:4, the articular construction of the noun *baptisma* is “anaphoric” indicating that the word’s synonym, the verb *baptizo* was used in Romans 6:3 referring to the same ministry performed by the Holy Spirit on behalf of the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior. The articular construction also emphasizes that this ministry performed by the Holy Spirit is “well-known” to Paul’s readers.

The preposition *dia* functions as a marker of means and the noun baptism as a “genitive of means” indicating that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the means by which the believer has been identified with Christ in His physical death.

“**Into death**” is composed of the preposition *eis*, “**into**” and the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *thanatos*, “**death**.”

Since burial of a dead body certified the reality of physical death, the verb *sunthapto* indicates that the noun *thanatos*, “**death**” is not being used in reference to Christ’s spiritual death in Romans 6:4, which it was in Romans 6:3 but rather that it is being used with reference to His physical death. Therefore, the articular construction is not anaphoric since *thanatos* in Romans 6:3 was used for the spiritual death of Christ but rather, it is functioning as a possessive pronoun.

Therefore, in Romans 6:4, Paul is teaching that the believer has been identified with Christ in His physical death whereas in Romans 6:3, he taught that the believer has been identified with Christ in His spiritual death.

The physical death of our Lord is recorded in the Gospels (Matthew 27:47-50; Mark 15:22-40; Luke 23:33-49; John 19:16-30).

The Lord Jesus Christ did “not” die from suffocation or exhaustion, nor did He bleed to death, or die of a broken heart but rather He died unlike any person in history, namely by His own volition. Remember what our Lord said in John 10:18.

If He had bleed to death, He would have fainted. The Lord Jesus Christ was in total control of His faculties and was totally and completely alert throughout all His suffering on the cross. Our Lord’s voluntary physical death was another indication to those observing Him at the Cross that He was indeed the Son of God. He died like no other man in history, namely, of His own choosing. This is why the centurion stated that our Lord was the Son of God.

Matthew 27:50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. (NASB95)

“**Yielded up**” is the aorist active indicative form of the verb *aphiemi*, “to dismiss, to release, to let go.”

The aorist tense of the verb is a culminative aorist, which views an event from its existing results, the Lord Jesus Christ's physical death.

The active voice expresses the fact that the Lord Jesus died of His own volition since the active voice indicates that the subject produces the action of the verb.

The Lord is the only human being in history to dismiss His own spirit from His body. Every human being that dies physically as a result of a sovereign decision of God but here the Lord chooses to die physically. He died physically so that He could be raised for our justification.

Our Lord’s voluntary physical death was another indication to those observing Him at the Cross that He was indeed the Son of God. He died like no other man in history, namely, of His own choosing.

Our Lord’s burial is recorded in John 19:38-42.

The perfect sinless humanity of Christ was born trichotomous: (1) Body (2) Soul (3) Spirit.

Therefore, our Lord’s physical death was unique because it was a trichotomous separation: (1) His physical body went to the grave (Luke 23:50-53). (2) His human spirit went to heaven (Luke 23:46; John 19:30). (3) His human soul went into Paradise a compartment of Hades (Luke 23:43; Acts 2:27; 2:31; Ephesians 4:9).

The Lord was brought back from the dead by three categories of divine omnipotence: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father sent back our Lord’s human spirit to the body in the grave (Acts 2:24; Romans 6:4; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Peter 1:21). (2) Omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit sent back our Lord’s human soul to the body in the grave (Romans 1:4; 8:11; 1 Peter 3:18). (3) Omnipotence of God the Son raised His physical body from the grave (John 2:20-23; 6:39-40, 54 10:17-18).

Understanding the nature of the baptism of the Spirit and its implications is so very important for the Christian to understand and apply to his own life. The Father’s viewpoint of the believer is directly

related to the baptism of the Spirit. As we have noted the believer is identified with Christ in His crucifixion, His death, His burial, His resurrection and session. God views the believer as He views His Son in the sense that He looks at the believer as having been crucified with His Son, to have died and been buried with Him and raised and seated with Him at His right hand. This is all the result of the work of the Spirit. The believer's responsibility is to appropriate by faith this fact! Doing so, results in the believer experiencing his sanctification and deliverance from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system. Ultimately, it leads to the glorification of the Father since if the believer appropriates by faith His position in Christ, he will manifest the character of Christ and to manifest the character of Christ is to glorify God. To glorify God is to manifest His character. No wonder the devil has done enormous amount of work in this area to cloud and confuse Christendom's knowledge of this truth.

Chapter Six: Sanctification and the Baptism of the Spirit

As we noted in the previous chapter, the church age believer's "sanctification" is directly related to the baptism of the Spirit. "Sanctification" is a technical theological term for the believer who has been set apart through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of conversion in order to serve God exclusively and is accomplished in three stages: (1) Positional (2) Experiential (3) Perfective.

Sanctification deals with conforming the believer to the holiness of God and reproducing it in the believer. At the moment of the moment the believer was declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit caused the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, His spiritual and physical death, His burial, resurrection and session. It also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The baptism of the Spirit results in positional sanctification and the potential to experience sanctification in time and the guarantee of perfective sanctification at the resurrection of the church.

By positional, I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ since at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ, identifying him with Christ's crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1).

"Positional sanctification" is the believer's "entrance" into the plan of God for the church age resulting in eternal security as well as two categories of positional truth (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:26-27; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Romans 6:3, 8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).

"Retroactive" positional truth is the church age believer's identification with Christ in His death and burial (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:12). In other words, when Christ, died God considers the believer to have died with Him.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption. (NASB95)

Colossians 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (NASB95)

"Current" positional truth is the church age believer's identification with Christ in His resurrection, ascension and session (See Ephesians 2:4-6; Colossians 3:1-4). In other words, when Christ was raised and seated at the right hand of the Father, the Father considers the believer to have been raised and seated with Christ as well.

“Positional sanctification”: (1) What God has done for the church age believer. (2) His viewpoint of the church age believer. (3) Sets up the potential to experience sanctification in time. (4) Provides the believer with the guarantee of receiving a resurrection body.

“Experiential sanctification” is the function of the church age believer’s spiritual life in time through obedience to the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God (John 17:17; Romans 6:19, 22; 2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7; 1 Timothy 2:15).

The will of the Father is for the believer to obey the Spirit’s teaching in the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ, which constitutes experiencing sanctification.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

“Experiential sanctification” is the post-salvation experience of the believer who is in fellowship with God by confessing any known sin to the Father when necessary followed by obedience to the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the Word of God.

Experiential sanctification is only a *potential* since it is contingent upon the church age believer responding to what God has done for him at the moment of conversion, therefore, only believers who are obedient to the Word of God will experience sanctification in time.

The believer who experiences sanctification is walking in “**newness of life**” and he does this by obeying the teaching of the Word of God, which states that the believer has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ and which teaching is inspired by the Holy Spirit (See Romans 6).

The believer can experience this victory and deliverance by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ (Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17). This is what Paul did.

The believer’s faith in the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ will express itself in obedience, which results in the believer experiencing sanctification.

The believer who appropriates by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died and buried with Christ will experience deliverance from the lust patterns of the old sin nature.

Galatians 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (NASB95)

The believer is to consider the members of his body to be dead to these lust patterns of the old sin nature since they were crucified at the cross and he has died with Christ.

Colossians 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified so that the believer might not live for the lusts of the old sin nature but for the will of God (See 1 Peter 4:1-3).

Prior to salvation, the believer was enslaved to the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature since he was under real spiritual death meaning he had no capacity to experience fellowship with God (See Ephesians 2:1-3).

At the moment of conversion, through the baptism of the Spirit, the omnipotence of the Spirit identified the believer with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session (See Romans 6:4-7; Ephesians 2:4-6).

Also, at the moment of conversion, God gave the believer a new divine nature that gives him the capacity to experience deliverance from the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature (See 2 Peter 1:4).

Galatians 3:27 For all of you who were identified with Christ have clothed yourselves with the nature of Christ. (Author's translation)

1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new spiritual species; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB95)

2 Peter 1:4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (NASB95)

1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (NASB95)

The new Christ nature that indwells every believer is the holiness of God and is perfectly holy just as Christ is and thus cannot sin. Believers sin because they choose to obey the temptations of the old sin nature and the lies of Satan's cosmic system. The new Christ nature provides the believer the capacity to experience the holiness of God in his life and Christ-likeness is the production or the result of having a lifestyle of living in the new Christ nature.

The new Christ nature functions when the believer is obedient to the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God and constitutes putting on the new man or the new self or new nature.

Ephesians 4:24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (NASB95)

Fruit bearing, i.e. Christ-like character is the result of experiencing the holiness of God, which is synonymous with “experiential sanctification” since the believer cannot experience fellowship with a holy God unless he himself is holy.

Sanctification is experiencing the holiness of God or in other words manifesting the character of God through one's thoughts, words and actions. Since the believer has been crucified with Christ and has died with Him, he is commanded to consider himself dead to the sin nature.

Romans 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

Therefore, since the believer has been crucified, died and buried with Christ and has been raised and seated with Him and has been given a new divine nature, he is commanded to abstain from the various lust patterns of the old sin nature, which wage war against the believer's soul and is to flee them.

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (NASB95)

The believer is prohibited from obeying the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature and is commanded to put on the nature of Christ, which is accomplished by obeying the Word of Christ and this constitutes walking by means of the Spirit (See Romans 6:12-13; 13:14; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 4:17-24).

The believer sins because he chooses to disobey the teaching of the Word of God that his sin nature was crucified with Christ at the Cross and thus allows the sin nature to control and influence his soul so that he produces mental, verbal and overt acts of sin (See James 1:13-15).

The believer's sin nature will not be totally eradicated until he physically dies or when the rapture of the church takes place when the believer will receive a resurrection body to replace the body he now has, which contains the old sin nature (See 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Philippians 3:20-21).

In the meantime, the believer has a battle raging within him since he has two natures, which are diametrically opposed to one another and he must choose between the two since the old sin nature wars against the Spirit.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (NASB95)

Having died with Christ and being raised with Christ and possessing the new Christ-nature sets the Christian free from the old Adamic nature. We utilize the new Christ-nature by obeying the Word of God, which constitutes experiencing fellowship with God (1 John 2:3-5) and walking by means of the Spirit since the Spirit speaks to the believer through the Word of God.

Galatians 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (NASB95)

The believer loses fellowship through obeying the sin nature and committing personal sins. However, he is restored through the confession of sin (1 John 1:9).

1 John 1:9 If any of us does at any time confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing. (Author's translation)

This fellowship is maintained by bringing one's thoughts into obedience to the teaching of Jesus Christ, which constitutes obeying the commands of Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by means of the Spirit and Colossians 3:16 to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul since both produce the same results.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

Therefore, obedience to the Word of God will enable the believer to experience fellowship with God, which is synonymous with experiencing sanctification.

1 John 2:5 But, whoever, at any time does observe conscientiously His Word, indeed, in this one, the love for the one and only God is accomplished. By means of this we can confirm that we are at this particular moment in fellowship with Him. (Author's translation)

This obedience constitutes loving the Lord.

John 14:15 If you love Me, you will observe conscientiously My commandments. (Author's translation)

So, this battle rages between the flesh, the sin nature and the Spirit. The believer's soul is a battleground. The battle in the soul is related to whether they will live for self in the old sin nature or live for God in the new nature. Paul relates this battle in his own life as a believer in Romans 7:14-25.

"Experiential" sanctification is experiencing the holiness or in other words manifesting the character of God through one's thoughts, words and actions (1 Peter 1:14-16).

"Perfective sanctification" is the perfection of the church age believer's spiritual life at the rapture, i.e. resurrection of the church, which is the completion of the plan of God for the church age believer (1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Galatians 6:8; 1 Peter 5:10; John 6:40). It is the *guarantee* of a resurrection body and will be experienced by every believer regardless of their response in time to what God has done for them at salvation.

All three stages of sanctification refer to the process of conforming the believer into the image of Jesus Christ, which is the Father's plan from eternity past (Romans 8:28-30).

Chapter Seven: Salvation and the Church Age Believer

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at located in Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus. 2 Grace to all of you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 Worthy of praise and glorification is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who has blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in the Person of Christ. 4 When He elected us to privilege in Him before the foundation of the world for the purpose of being holy and blameless before Him. 5 By means of divine love He has predestined us for the purpose of adoption for Himself according to grace purpose of His will. 6 For the praise of the glory of His grace by means of which (grace) He has graced us out in the Person of the Beloved. 7 In whom (the Beloved) we have the redemption through His blood (Christ's substitutionary spiritual death), the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. 8 From which (riches of His grace) He has directed infinite wealth toward all of us by means of all wisdom and perfect judgment. 9 When He made known to all of us the mystery of His will according to His grace purpose, which He (the Father) purposed in Him (Christ). 10 With respect to the dispensation of the fulness of the times to unite all things in the Person of Christ those in heaven and those on earth by means of Him (Christ). 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance when we were predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will. 12 For the purpose of us being for the praise of His glory, those of us who have confidently placed their trust in the Person of Christ. 13 In whom (the Person of Christ) you have confidently placed your trust after hearing the word of truth, namely, the gospel of your salvation, in the Person of whom (Christ), in fact, when you had trusted, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit who is the Promise 14 who (the Holy Spirit) is the guarantee of our inheritance until the deliverance of the purchased possession (church) for the praise of His glory. (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 1:13, “**salvation**” is the noun *soteria*, which belongs to the following word group: (1) *Sozo* (verb), “to save, to keep from harm, to preserve, to rescue.” (2) *Soter* (noun), “Savior, redeemer, deliverer, preserver.” (3) *Soterios* (adjective), “delivering, saving, salvation.” (4) *Diasozo* (verb), “to save, to recover, to heal perfectly, to convey safely.”

The stem of these words *so* means, “whole, fresh, healthy.” Words derived from this root have a broad understanding in classical Greek. They may depict being rescued from serious danger such as war, shipwreck, etc. They may involve being assisted out of a difficult legal situation, or being helped by a physician in a time of illness. They also might describe a safe return from a perilous journey.

Inherent in the words are the ideas of protection, mercy and security. They also imply healthy, prosperous condition, an inner well-being and personal self-esteem.

Greek-English Lexicon, Liddell and Scott, New Edition: (1) Of people: “Deliverance, preservation”; “A way of means of safety”; “Safe return”; “Salvation” (2) Of things: “Keeping safe, preservation”; “Security, guarantee for safety”; “Security, safety”; “Security against”; “Bodily health, well-being” (page 1751).

Soteria is found 151 times in the Septuagint preserving many of the same senses as in classical usage. The concept of deliverance from one's enemies both temporal and spiritual is the basic usage of the noun *soteria* in the Septuagint. It predominately translates the form of the root *ysh`*, “deliver, protect,

preserve” and on three occasions *soteria* translates the Hebrew *shalom*, “peace, health, prosperity” (Genesis 26:31; 28:21; 44:17).

The word is used of deliverance from enemies and adverse circumstances as well as deliverance from spiritual death and eternal condemnation.

Adolph Deissmann notes two examples of *soteria* usage in the papyri where it is translated “health.” “Apion to Epimachus his father and lord many greetings. Before all things I pray that thou art in health and that thou dost prosper and fare well continually together with my sister and her daughter and my brother. I thank the lord Serapis that, when I was in peril in the sea, he saved me immediately. When I came to Miseni I received as viaticum (journey money) from the Caesar three pieces of gold. And it is well with me. I beseech thee therefore, my lord father, write unto me a little letter, firstly of thy health (*soterias*), secondly of that of my brother and sister, thirdly that I may do obeisance to thy hand because thou has taught me well and I therefore hope to advance quickly, if the gods will”.⁶⁰

“Sempronius to Saturnila his mother and lady many greetings. Before all things fare thee well, I pray, together also with my brethren unbewitched. And withal I make my intercession for you daily to the lord Serapis. So many letters have I sent unto you, and not one have ye written back again unto me, though so many have sailed down. Besought (art thou), my lady, to write unto me without delay for your health (*soterias*), that I also may live more free from cares”.⁶¹

Soteria appears 46 times in the Greek New Testament. The noun *soteria* has a wide range of meanings in the Greek New Testament as it has in classical Greek.

In the Greek New Testament, the noun *soteria* can refer to “salvation” or “deliverance” in the spiritual sense and “deliverance” in the literal sense.

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition: (1) deliverance, preservation with focus on physical aspect from impending death especially on the sea (2) salvation with focus on transcendent aspects.⁶²

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains (volume 2): (1) To rescue from danger and to restore to a former state of safety and well being – ‘to deliver, to rescue, to make safe, deliverance’.⁶³ (2) A state of having been saved – ‘salvation’.⁶⁴ (3) The process of being saved – ‘salvation’.⁶⁵

The noun *soteria* is used with reference to the deliverance of the nation of Israel from her enemies (Lk. 1:69; 77). It can be used with reference to experiential sanctification meaning the believer’s spiritual life after getting saved (2 Corinthians 1:6; 7:10; Philippians 2:12; 2 Timothy 2:10; Hebrews 2:3, 10; 1 Peter 2:2).

⁶⁰ Light from the Ancient East, page 180

⁶¹ Light from the Ancient East, page 194

⁶² Pages 985-986

⁶³ page 241

⁶⁴ page 241

⁶⁵ page 242

The word is often used of deliverance or rescue from one's enemies or difficult circumstances (Luke 1:71; Acts 7:25; Philippians 1:19; Hebrews 11:7; Revelation 12:10; 19:1). It is used in reference to one's physical health and well-being (Acts 27:34).

The noun *soteria* further denotes spiritual prosperity (2 Corinthians 7:10; Philippians 1:19, 28; 2 Timothy 3:15). It can refer to perfective sanctification and receiving one's resurrection body (Romans 13:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9; Hebrews 1:14; 9:28; 1 Peter 1:5).

Like the church age believer's sanctification, their deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system is accomplished in three stages:

(1) Positional: At the moment the believer exercised faith alone in Christ alone, they were delivered "positionally" from real spiritual death and eternal condemnation, the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 19:9; John 4:22; Acts 4:12; 13:26, 47; 16:17; Romans 1:16; 10:1, 10; 11:11; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 1:13; Philippians 1:28; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:10; 5:9; 6:9; 1 Peter 1:9-10; 2 Peter 3:15; Jude 3; Revelation 7:10).

By "positionally," I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ, which was accomplished at the moment of conversion through the Baptism of the Spirit when the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit placed the believer in an eternal union with Christ. In other words, the "positional" aspect of the believer's salvation refers to the past action of God saving us from sin, Satan, his cosmic system and eternal condemnation when we trusted in Jesus Christ as our Savior.

1 Timothy 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (NASB95)

In 1 Timothy 2:4, "**to be saved**" is the verb *sozo*, which has the basic meaning of rescuing or delivering someone one from great peril. Additional nuances include to protect, keep alive, preserve life, deliver, heal, and be made whole.

The verb *sozo* is found in the writings of Homer in the eighth century B.C. and was used in the sense of deliverance from danger, whether from enemies or the elements of weather. The word also conveys the idea of preservation from them, which the Greek mystery religions attributed to the gods.

In the Septuagint, the verb *sozo* translates 23 different Hebrew terms where it was used to express in the Old Testament the concept of deliverance from external and internal distress, captivity and enemies. Also, the word was used to express the results of this deliverance, namely, peace, relief, liberty, rest and safety.

Sozo often denotes an idea very similar to the Hebrew concept of *shalom*, "peace, unity, completeness, happiness." In the Septuagint, *shalom* is rendered by forms of the *sozo* word group 68

times. *Sozo* was used of God delivering people spiritually as well as in a physical from one's enemies or danger.

The verb is used extensively in the Greek New Testament. The verb *sozo* and its cognate noun *soteria* has a broad range of meanings and thus strict attention to the context is critical in arriving at a correct and accurate translation of the word.

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following meanings for the verb *sozo*: (1) To rescue from danger and to restore to a former state of safety and well-being – 'to deliver, to rescue, to make safe, deliverance'.⁶⁶ (2) To cause someone to experience divine salvation – 'to save'.⁶⁷ (3) To cause someone to become well again after having been sick – 'to heal, to cure, to make well, healing'.⁶⁸

In the Greek New Testament, *soteria* can mean deliverance in a "temporal" sense from one's enemies or adverse circumstances (Luke 1:71; Acts 7:25; Hebrews 11:7; Revelation 12:10; 19:1) and can refer to physical health and well-being (Acts 27:34).

A Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition defines *sozo*: (1) to preserve or rescue from natural dangers and afflictions (a) save from death (b) bring safely out from a situation fraught with mortal danger (c) save or free from disease (d) keep, preserve in good condition (e) passively, thrive, prosper, get on well (2) Save or preserve from transcendent danger or destruction, save/preserve from eternal death, from judgment, and from all that might lead to such death, e.g. sin, also in a positive sense bring Messianic salvation, bring to salvation (3) Certain passages belong under 1 and 2 at the same time in contrast to destruction by fire and to denote the bestowing of salvation.⁶⁹

Sozo can also refer to the acts of delivering someone in a temporal sense from their enemies or adverse circumstances (Matthew 8:25; 14:30; 27:42; Luke 23:35, 37; 23:39; John 12:27) and it too can refer to physical health and well-being (Matthew 9:21-22; Mark 5:23, 28; 6:56; 10:52; 15:30; Luke 8:36, 48, 50; 18:42).

Soteria can refer to spiritual prosperity in the sense of experiencing all the blessings, invisible assets and privileges that are a result of being identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session (Philippians 1:19, 28).

In 1 Timothy 2:4, the verb *sozo* is used of the Father's desire of delivering each and every member of the human race without exception from personal sin, the sin nature, Satan, his cosmic system, condemnation from the Law, spiritual and physical death and eternal condemnation through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

The verb *sozo* is used of the believer's deliverance in a "positional" sense in Ephesians 2:8.

⁶⁶ 21.18

⁶⁷ 21.27

⁶⁸ 23.136

⁶⁹ pages 982-983

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (NASB95)

The believer's deliverance positionally sets up the "potential" for him to experience this deliverance in time since this deliverance can only be experienced after salvation through obedience to the teaching of the Word of God. It also guarantees the believer's ultimate deliverance at the rapture, which is based upon the sovereign decision of God rather than the volition of the believer.

(2) Experiential: After salvation, the believer can "experience" deliverance from the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ. This constitutes the believer's spiritual life after being delivered from real spiritual death (2 Corinthians 1:6; 7:10; Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Philippians 2:12; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17; 2 Timothy 2:10; 3:15; Hebrews 2:3, 10; 1 Peter 2:2). In other words, the "experiential" aspect of salvation is used of the believer's deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system in the present moment.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (NASB95)

The verb *sozo* is used of the believer's deliverance in an "experiential" sense in 1 Corinthians 1:18.

1 Timothy 4:16 Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. (NASB95)

In this verse, the verb *sozo* refers to Timothy experiencing his deliverance from sin and Satan and his cosmic system by obeying Paul's previous command to continue making it his habit of persevering in exemplifying Christ-like character, which is the direct result of obeying the first command in 1 Timothy 4:16. Timothy will continue to exemplify Christ-like character by obeying this first command to continue making it his habit of paying attention to himself, i.e. his character and conduct. Consequently, by obeying these two commands he will experience his deliverance from sin and Satan.

The verb also refers to those who adhere to Timothy's teaching experiencing their deliverance from sin and Satan as well. They will experience this deliverance if Timothy obeys the second command in 1 Timothy 4:16 to continue making it his habit of persevering in teaching sound doctrine. This second command is the direct of the first command, which called for Timothy to continue making it his habit of paying attention to his teaching. Thus, if Timothy teaches sound doctrine, his listeners will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan as well.

(3) Perfective: At the resurrection, the believer will be delivered "in a perfective sense" and permanently from the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature when he receives his resurrection body at the rapture of the church, which is imminent (Romans 13:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9; Hebrews 1:14;

9:28; 1 Peter 1:5). In other words, the “perfective” aspect of salvation is used of the believer’s future deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system (Philippians 3:20-21).

The verb *sozo* is used of the believer’s deliverance in an “perfective” sense.

e church is now nearer to taking place than when they first became Christians.

Romans 13:11 So then, all of continue making it your habit of practicing this because all of you are well aware of the significance of this particular period of history characterized by urgency and opportunity, demanding immediate action, namely that, it is now already the moment for each and every one of you to be awake from sleep because our deliverance is now nearer to taking place than when we believed. (Author’s translation)

“**Deliverance**” is the noun *soteria*, which means “deliverance” and is used with reference to Paul and his fellow Christian readers’ deliverance from the sin nature, Satan, his cosmic system at the rapture of the church.

In Hebrews 9:24-28, all three stages of the believer’s salvation are referred to.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (experiential aspect of the believer’s salvation); 25 nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (This makes possible the “positional” aspect of salvation) 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (This refers to the “future” deliverance of the believer at the rapture). (NASB95)

Warren Wiersbe commenting on Hebrews 9:24-28, writes, “Did you notice that the word ‘appear’ is used three times in Hebrews 9:24–28? These three uses give us a summary of our Lord’s work. He has appeared to put away sin by dying on the cross (Hebrews 9:26). He is appearing now in heaven for us (Hebrews 9:24). One day, He shall appear to take Christians home (Hebrews 9:28). These ‘three tenses of salvation’ are all based on His finished work.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Wiersbe, W. W. The Bible Exposition Commentary. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books

Chapter Eight: The Christian Way of Life

This chapter deals with the Christian way of life or in other words, the church age believer's spiritual life, which is based upon the filling of the Spirit that is unique to the church age since the command to be filled with the Spirit is never found in the Old Testament. It is one of the seven salvation ministries of the Holy Spirit. At the moment of conversion every believer is filled with the Spirit, but he loses it through committing personal sin. It is recovered by confessing any known sin to the Father (1 John 1:9) and is maintained by obedience. Therefore, it is "dynamic" whereas the indwelling of the Spirit is "static" meaning it never changes. Every believer in the church age is commanded to be filled with the Spirit, or as we will note, they are to permit the Holy Spirit to influence their soul (Ephesians 5:18).

The filling of the Spirit takes place when the believer is obeying the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through prayerful study of the Word of God. It is not an emotion (though it will result in emotions such as joy) but rather is the mental state of the believer who does not have any unacknowledged sins in the stream of consciousness and is applying the Word to his thought process. The filling of the Spirit takes place in the soul of the believer when he allows God the Holy Spirit to influence his soul, which He does through the Word of God.

The filling of the Spirit is the operational power of God the Holy Spirit, which empowers the believer to execute the will of God the Father. It enables the believer to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ meaning to become like Him experientially in His death and resurrection. It enables the believer to become like Jesus Christ in thought, word and action or in other words, it gives the believer the ability to acquire experientially the character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is necessary for the believer to allow himself to be influenced by the Spirit in order that he may walk by the Spirit. Walking by the Spirit is actively choosing to conduct oneself by means of the Spirit. The filling of the Spirit and walking by the Spirit are two sides of the same coin. You cannot walk by the Spirit unless you are filled with the Spirit since the filling of the Spirit is directly related to the believer's mental attitude whereas walking by the Spirit is directly related to how the believer conducts himself or in other words, how he speaks and acts. A person's words and actions are governed by his mental attitude and volition. Therefore, a believer cannot walk by the Spirit if he is not first filled or influenced by the Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit is directly related to being a doer of the Word of God since only believers who are obedient to the Word of God are filled with the Spirit since the Spirit speaks through the Word of God. Therefore, the believer who is applying the Word of God is filled with the Spirit or more accurately is influenced by means of the Spirit. The Spirit takes the doctrines of Christ, i.e., the Word of God and makes them understandable to the believer. The Spirit does not act independently of the mind of Christ, i.e., the Word of God (John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16). Therefore, the believer who is influenced by means of the Spirit is a doer of the Word. The Spirit of God and the Word of God work in concert with one another on behalf of the believer who has no acknowledged sin in his stream of consciousness and is applying the Word of God to his thought process. In fact, the Spirit inspired the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:20-21).

The filling of the Spirit is the only means of spirituality in the church age. Spirituality is the filling of the Spirit. It is an absolute meaning that you are either filled with the Spirit or you are living in carnality or in other words, you are governed by the old sin nature and thus out of fellowship with God. The

filling of the Spirit is the only means of having fellowship with God (John 4:23-24). It is the only means by which the Holy Spirit reproduces Christ-like character in the believer. The filling of the Spirit is the only means by which the believer can execute the plan of God. The filling of the Spirit is a power option meaning that the believer has to choose whether or not to allow God the Holy Spirit to fully influence his soul.

Person of the Holy Spirit

When discussing the doctrine of the filling of the Spirit we must of course, note the person and work of God the Holy Spirit who is the third person of the Trinity. In theology, God the Holy Spirit is identified as the third person of the Trinity. The Scriptures teach that the Spirit is a person not a thing (John 15:26; 16:7; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2). The Holy Spirit is the unseen power of God. He reveals the plan of God on earth and is the agent for executing the Christian way of life.

The Titles of God the Holy Spirit: (1) **“Spirit of holiness”** (Romans 1:4) (2) **“Spirit of life”** (Romans 8:2) (3) **“Spirit of knowledge”** (Isaiah 11:2) (4) **“Spirit of truth”** (John 14:17). Titles related to God the Father: (1) **“Spirit of God”** (2) **“Spirit of our God”** (Genesis 1:2; Matthew 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11) (3) **“Spirit of your Father”** (Matthew 10:20). Titles related to God the Son: (1) **“Spirit of Christ”** (2) **“Spirit of Jesus Christ”** (Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19) (3) **“Spirit of His Son”** (Galatians 4:6) (4) **“Spirit of the Lord”** (Acts 5:9). These titles do speak of an attribute because an attribute would not be designated by a personal pronoun such as **“He,” “Him,”** and **“His.”**

John 14:16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” (NASB95)

John 14:26, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” (NASB95)

John 16:5 “But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. 12 I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.” (NASB95)

God the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct Person in the Godhead. He is called **“Lord”** in 2 Corinthians 3:17 just as God the Father and God the Son are.

The Holy Spirit has the attributes of personality: (1) Intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Romans 8:27). (2) Emotion (Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 10:29; James 4:5). (3) Will (1 Corinthians 12:11; Acts 16:6-11). (4) He has a mind, and therefore He thinks, searches and teaches.

The Spirit performs the actions of personality: (1) Teaches (John 14:26; 16:13-15). (2) Testifies or bears witness (John 15:26). (3) Guides and Leads (R. 8:14). (4) Performs miracles (Acts 8:39). (5) Convinces (John 16:7-8). (6) Restrains (Genesis 6:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7). (7) Commands (Acts 8:29). (8) Intercedes in prayer (R. 8:26). (9) He receives ascriptions of personality. (10) He can be obeyed (Acts 16:6-7). (11) He can be lied to (Acts 5:3). (12) He can be resisted (Acts 7:51). (13) He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12:31). (14) He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). (15) He can be insulted (Hebrews 10:29).

The Promise of the Spirit

Forty days after His resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, He received power and authority and the title of *kurios*, “**Lord**” over history and creation. Ten days later on the day of Pentecost in June of 32 A.D., the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to permanently indwell those who had exercised faith in Him for eternal salvation. On this day, the baptism of the Spirit first took place.

Jewish believers were the first to receive it and this event is recorded in Acts 2. It took place among Gentile believers not too long after this and is recorded in Acts 10. The Spirit proceeds from the Lord Jesus Christ to permanently indwell the sinner who trusts in the Lord Jesus as his Savior. (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:5-15; Acts 1:8; 2:33).

The Work of the Spirit

God the Holy Spirit’s role in man’s salvation: (1) Common Grace: Makes the gospel understandable (John 16:7-11; 2 Corinthians 2:14b). (2) Regeneration: Creates a human spirit at the moment of conversion (John 3:1-16). (3) Efficacious Grace: Makes the believer’s faith in Christ effective for salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Seven salvation ministries of god the Holy Spirit: (1) Efficacious Grace: Makes faith in Jesus Christ effective for salvation (2 Corinthians 6:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-9). (2) Regeneration: Creates a human spirit for the purpose of the imputation of eternal life (John 3:1-16; Titus 3:5). (3) Baptism of the Spirit: Places every believer in union with Jesus Christ (John 7:37-39; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:5; 1 Peter 3:21). (4) Indwelling: Creates a temple for the indwelling of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16). (5) Filling: Influences the soul of the believer in executing the plan of God for the church age (Ephesians 5:18). (6) Sealing: Puts His stamp on the believer to guarantee their salvation (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). (7) Distribution of Spiritual Gifts: Gives every believer a spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

God the Holy Spirit’s post-salvation ministries on behalf of the believer: (1) Empowers the believer to execute the plan of God (John 14:16, 26; Galatians 5:16, 25; Ephesians 5:18; Philippians 2:13). (2) Reproduces Christ-like character in the believer (Galatians 4:19; 5:5, 16-23). (3) Teaches the believer the doctrines of Christ (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 John 2:20, 27). (4) Convicts the believer of sin (John 16:7-11; Romans 8:4-14; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). (5) Leads the believer in

worshipping the Father (John 4:24; Philippians 3:3; Romans 8:4-13). (6) Promotes spiritual maturity (Galatians 5:1-5; Hebrews 5:11-6:6). (7) Applies truth to the believer's experience (John 14:26; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 6:18). (8) Gives power to the believer's prayer life (John 15:7; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20). (9) Promotes worship of God (John 4:23-24; Ephesians 5:18-21; Philippians 3:3; Isaiah 59:1-2). (10) Gives capacity, burden and direction for witnessing (Acts 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). (11) Gives capacity for ministry (1 Corinthians 1:12-14). (12) Provides fellowship for the believer (2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:1).

God the Holy Spirit teaches the believer through the Word of God (John 14:26; 15:26). Several passages state that the believer is to give heed to what the Spirit is saying to the churches because of this spiritual principle that the Spirit takes the doctrines of Christ and makes them understandable to the believer. The Spirit speaks to the church through the communication of the Word of God.

Acts 21:11 This is what the Holy Spirit says. (NASB95)

Acts 28:25 The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. (NASB95)

Hebrews 3:7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:7a "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:13, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

The church age believer is totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit in order to attain Christ-likeness and as a result execute the plan of God (Galatians 5:5, 16; Ephesians 3; 16-17). He is the believer's true teacher (John. 14:16-20, 26; 15:26; 16:7-16; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 5:5, 16-25; Ephesians 3:16-19; 5:18; 1 John 2:20-27). The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to produce Christ-like character in the believer (Galatians 5:22-23; Philippians 2:13). He takes the Word and empowers, guides and directs the believer in the process of executing the Father's plan (Acts 8:29; Romans 8:14, 26; Philippians 3:3; 2 Peter 1:21; cf. Hebrews 4:12). He calls attention sin in the life of the believer by taking the Word of God and using it to convict him (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; cf.

John 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19). Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity Who reveals whether the believer is living in accordance with the doctrines of Christ or not (John 16:7-16; Romans 8:14).

God the Holy Spirit produces peace in the soul of the believer who applies the Word of God and in particular applies the doctrine of prayer.

Philippians 4:6 At this very moment, all of you stop continuing to be anxious about absolutely anything, but rather, concerning anything at all by means of reverential prayer in the presence of the Father and by means of petition accompanied by the giving of thanks, let your specific detailed requests be repeatedly made known in the presence of the Father 7 and as a result the peace produced by God the Holy Spirit, which is always superior to any and every human conception, will as a dogmatic statement of fact cause your hearts to be protected and as a result your thoughts by means of the doctrine of Christ Jesus. (Author's translation)

The Disciple's Study Bible presents the following summary note on the Holy Spirit, they write, "The Spirit is not a possession we hold on to but a Person we love and obey. People must choose between the way of the flesh or sinful nature and the way of the Spirit. We should choose 'the Spirit of life' (Ro 8:2-note), 'the Spirit' (Ro 8:4-note), 'the Spirit of Christ' (Ro 8:9-note), 'the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus' (God, Ro 8:11-note), 'the Spirit of God' (Ro 8:14-note), and 'the Spirit of sonship' (Ro 8:15-note). The Spirit gives life (Ro 8:2-note), peace (Ro 8:6-note), freedom (Ro 8:9-note), leadership (Ro 8:14-note), assurance (Ro 8:16-note), hope (Ro 8:23-note; Ro 8:24-note), and help (Ro 8:26-note). The Spirit is with all Christians (Ro 8:9-note, Ro 8:14-note). The Spirit makes Christians God's children and able to say 'Father' when we pray (Ro 8:15-note). The Spirit assures us that we are in fact God's children (Ro 8:16-note), and that, even though we pass through much suffering, we will eventually share in the glory of Christ (Ro 8:17-note). With all this we remain free. We must choose to follow the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit (Ro 8:5-note), to set our minds on what the Spirit desires (Ro 8:5-note), to be controlled by the Spirit (Ro 8:9-note), to put to death the old way of life (Ro 8:13-note), and to be led by the Spirit (Ro 8:18-note). These phrases all refer to a serious commitment to live as Christians with the help of God's Spirit. This includes high moral standards (Ro 8:4-note) and more. Obeying the Spirit means a personal loyalty and obedience to Christ which expresses itself by following the leadership of the Spirit in all life's decisions. This is active cooperation as well as passive yielding. The Spirit's work is not irresistible. The Spirit prefers to wait and allow us to obey His leadership freely. Paul's call to obey the Spirit makes no sense at all if the Spirit is only an impersonal power or force. The Spirit is personal, and this leads to the commands to respond to the Spirit in a fully personal manner."⁷¹

Fourteen Affirmations about the Spirit in Romans 8:1-28

In Romans 8:1-28, the apostle Paul makes fourteen affirmations about the Holy Spirit that constitute His work in the life of the believer.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now, as an eternal spiritual truth, never any condemnation, none whatsoever for the benefit of those in union with Christ who is Jesus. 2 Because, the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ, who is

⁷¹ Disciple's Study Bible

Jesus, has set you free from the sin nature's authoritative power as well as spiritual death. (Author's translation)

In Romans 8:1, another merciful act is revealed in that the justified sinner is never under any condemnation whatsoever as a result of being placed in union with Christ. Romans 8:2 affirms that the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, has set them free from the authoritative power of the sin nature as well as spiritual death.

Romans 8:3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:3-4 affirms that the Father's purpose for sacrificing His Son was so that the righteous requirement of the Law, i.e. perfect obedience would be fulfilled in an experiential sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but in submission to the Spirit.

Romans 8:5 For you see those who at any time exist in the state of being in submission to the flesh are, as an eternal spiritual truth, preoccupied with the things produced by the flesh. However, those in submission to the Spirit, the things produced by the Spirit. 6 In fact, the mind-set produced by the flesh is, as an eternal spiritual truth temporal spiritual death. However, the mind-set produced by the Spirit is, as an eternal spiritual truth life as well as peace. (Author's translation)

The third affirmation about the Spirit is that submission to the Spirit is the basis for experiencing eternal life and the peace of God, i.e. fellowship with God and failure to submit to the Spirit is loss of fellowship with God.

Romans 8:9 presents the fourth affirmation.

Romans 8:9 However, all of you, without exception are, absolutely not, as an eternal spiritual truth, existing in the state of being in bondage to the flesh but rather in subjection to the authority of the Spirit, if in fact-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument the Spirit, who is God does dwell in all of you. Of course, He does. However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument anyone does not possess at all the Spirit proceeding from Christ, then this one, as an eternal spiritual truth, by no means belongs to Him. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:9 affirms that the indwelling presence of the Spirit is the distinguishing mark of a Christian in contrast to the unbeliever who is not indwelt by the Spirit.

Romans 8:10 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument Christ does, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist in all of you. Of course, He does! Then, on the one hand, the body is, as an eternal spiritual truth dead because of the sin nature while on the other hand, the Spirit is, as an eternal spiritual truth, life in all of you because of righteousness. (Author's translation)

Paul teaches in the protasis of a first class condition that appears in Romans 8:10 that the Christian is indwelt by Christ. Then, in the apodosis, he teaches that while on one hand, the Christian's body is dead due to the sin nature but on the other hand, the Spirit is life and peace because of imputed righteousness. Therefore, the fifth affirmation about the Spirit is that the Spirit, who is inherently eternal life indwells the Christian and thus eternal life indwells the Christian because the Christian possesses the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Romans 8:11 presents the sixth affirmation about the Spirit.

Romans 8:11 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument the Spirit, proceeding from the One (the Father) who raised the unique Person of Jesus from the dead ones, does dwell in all of you. Of course, He does! Then, the One (the Father) who raised Christ from the dead ones, will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who does permanently dwell in all of you. (Author's translation)

Therefore, we can see that in Romans 8:11 Paul teaches that the Spirit will transform the mortal body of the Christian at the resurrection of the church, thus giving them a resurrection body to replace their present bodies that contain the sin nature.

The seventh affirmation is found in Romans 8:13.

Romans 8:12 Indeed, therefore, spiritual brothers, we, as an eternal spiritual truth, are debtors, by no means to the flesh, that is, a lifestyle in submission to the flesh 13 because, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument, you, at any time, live in submission to the flesh, then, you will certainly die. However, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit, you, at any time, put to death the actions produced by the body, then, you will certainly cause yourself to live. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:13 affirms that the Christian puts to death the deeds of the sin nature and experiences eternal life by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit.

In Romans 8:14, we have the eighth affirmation about the Spirit.

Romans 8:14 Because, all of us who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, led by means of the Spirit, who is God, these are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God's sons. (Author's translation)

The eighth affirmation about the Spirit is that the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

The ninth and tenth affirmations are found in Romans 8:15.

Romans 8:15 Because by no means have all of you received the Spirit who brings about slavery resulting in fear again. On the contrary, all of you have received the Spirit who brings about the adoption as sons by means of whom, we, as an eternal spiritual truth, cry out, "Abba! Father!" (Author's translation)

The ninth affirmation is that the Spirit adopted the Christian “Roman style” into the family of God. The tenth affirmation is that the Spirit is the means by which the Christian cries out to God and addresses Him as “Abba! Father!”

The eleventh affirmation is found in Romans 8:16.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth, bears witness to our human spirit that we are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God’s children. (Author’s translation)

This passage teaches that the Spirit bears witness to the Christian’s human spirit that they are a child of God.

The twelfth affirmation about the Spirit appears in Romans 8:23.

Romans 8:23 Furthermore, not only this, because, we ourselves, as an eternal spiritual truth, possess the first fruit, namely, the Spirit, we ourselves also always groan within ourselves. Consequently, we are always eagerly waiting for the adoption as sons, the redeeming of our body. (Author’s translation)

This passage teaches that the twelfth affirmation about the Spirit is that He is both the evidence and the guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

The thirteenth affirmation is presented by Paul in Romans 8:26-27.

Romans 8:26 Furthermore, in the same way, the Spirit, as an eternal spiritual truth, also assists with our weakness because we are totally uncertain as to what to pray for in accordance with that which is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely essential but rather the Spirit Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth, intercedes on behalf of us with inexpressible groanings. 27 That is, the one who, as an eternal spiritual truth, searches our hearts, knows perfectly and intimately what is eternally the Spirit’s mind-set because He always intercedes on behalf of the saints in accordance with God the Father’s will. (Author’s translation)

Romans 8:26-27 affirms that the Spirit assists the Christian in his weakness because the Christian does not always know what to pray for by interceding on behalf of the Christian in accordance with the Father’s will, with inexpressible groanings to the Father.

Then, lastly the fourteenth and final affirmation about the Spirit is presented by Paul in verse 28.

Romans 8:28 In fact, we know without a doubt that for the benefit of those who are characterized as divinely loving God the Father, He (the Spirit), as an eternal spiritual truth, always works each and every circumstance together for the good, for the benefit of those who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, the chosen ones, in accordance with His predetermined plan. (Author’s translation)

The fourteenth affirmation about the Spirit that is contained in Romans 8:1-28 is that the Spirit works both positive and negative circumstances together for the good, i.e. conforming the Christian into the image of Christ.

Ephesians 5:18

The apostle Paul who wrote the Ephesian epistle spent a large amount of time in Ephesus, which was one of the seven churches of Asia mentioned by the apostle John in the book of Revelation. Not only did Paul spend a lot of time there but John did as well. Ephesus was the gateway to the Roman province of Asia, which is now known as Turkey.

The city of Ephesus was located on the western part of Turkey and was situated at the mouth of the Cayster River. It was the entrance for shipping from the West and the point of departure for the caravans between the Ionian coast and the East. The highway led from Ephesus across central Asia Minor through the Cilician Gates to Antioch and from there across Syria to the Euphrates valley, Persian and India. It had a large harbor.

The city of Ephesus had been founded by colonists from Athens in the eleventh century B.C. They displaced the original inhabitants and began a Greek civilization on the Ionian coast. The strategic location of the city favored its growth and it became a military prize for both the naval states of Greece and those who dominated Asia Minor thereafter, the Lydians and the Persians. Alexander the Great received the homage of the Ephesian rulers in 334 B.C. In 188 B.C. the Romans took it from Antiochus the Great and then in turn gave it to the king of Pergamum. The Romans got it back again and incorporated it into the province of Asia. Ephesus became the chief city of the province. It was home to one of the seven wonders of the world...the Temple of Artemis or Diana of the Ephesians. There was a great marble street in Ephesus, the Arkadiane. There was also the Odieon Theater, which served the city as a council chamber.

A great library was located in the city and of course the great agora or marketplace. Carved into the great sidewalk leading to the building on the marble street is the mark of a bare foot, the ancient sign of direction to a house of prostitution-a reminder that Ephesus was a port city with many visitors and sailors. There was a stadium constructed during the reign of Nero. South of the stadium was the theater, set in the side of a mountain which was the scene of a riot when the apostle Paul was accused of ruining the business of the silversmiths in Ephesus who made a substantial profit in relation to the worship of Artemis (Acts 19:23-24). The silversmith's union in the city, which made quite a profit from making idols of the fertility goddess Artemis were enraged at Paul and his teaching against worshipping idols. The business community did not like Christianity because it cut into their profits. But the riot was dispersed by the town clerk and he rebuked them for their conduct. Paul went to Macedonia but returned at a later date. Asia and in particular Ephesus was a fruitful field for evangelism. In three years the entire region of Asia Minor heard the Christian message. Churches were founded in almost every city and town...large and small.

The city of Ephesus was steeped in paganistic worship as noted by Luke in Acts 19. This pagan worship entailed alcohol and sex and Paul in Ephesians 5:18 makes a reference to their former pagan practice. He tells the Ephesians not to permit themselves to get involved with drunkenness, which was a part of their former pagan worship of the Greek god Dionysus. In order to avoid this they were to permit themselves to be influenced by the Holy Spirit. So, it is important to keep in mind the pagan background of the Ephesians when we view this passage.

The Prohibition in Ephesians 5:18

Ephesians 5:18 “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. (NASB95)

This passage can be divided into two sections, namely a prohibition and a command. It begins with the connective use of the conjunction *kai*, “**and**.” Next, we have the negative particle *me*, “**not**,” and with it, we have the second person plural present passive imperative form of the verb *methuskomai*.

Methuskomai is the passive form of *methusko* and is related to *methuo*, “to drink to intoxication.” Both the active and passive forms appear in classical and Greek of the Septuagint (LXX), but only the passive appears in the New Testament. The passive form appears in the writings of Herodotus and Xenophon. The passive form means “to get drunk, to become intoxicated.” It is an inceptive or ingressive verb marking the process of entering into the state of being drunk with wine or intoxication. The word only appears three times in the New Testament (Lk. 12:45; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:7). All three passages warn about the dangers of drunkenness.

The Christians of the early church lived in the Roman Empire and spoke *Koine* or the common Greek and were raised as pagans worshipping the Greek and Roman pantheon of gods. One of these gods was called Dionysus. He was also called Bacchus or in Rome, Liber. Dionysus was the god of fruitfulness and vegetation, especially known as a god of wine and ecstasy.

The worship of Dionysus flourished long in Asia Minor. As we have already noted Ephesus was located on the western coast of Asia Minor or what is now Turkey. The worship of Dionysus flourished particularly well in Phrygia and Lydia.

The cult of Dionysus was closely associated with that of numerous Asiatic deities. The followers of Dionysus included spirits of fertility, such as the satyrs and in his ritual the male phallus was prominent. As the god of the vine, Dionysus or Bacchus, he was thought to communicate his power to his devotees through the intoxicating influence of wine, stimulating them to orgiastic excesses, wild dancing and music, and sexual promiscuity. They worshipped booze and sex. Sounds like many of our towns and cities in America.

The Ephesians were very much exposed to this cult and it was apart of their pagan background. The worship of booze and sex is still around here in the 21st century. It is a part of our hedonistic western culture.

So, the apostle Paul by employing this verb *methuskomai* is addressing the area of weakness of their old sin natures. This verb in the passive voice means “to get drunk, or intoxicated with alcohol.”

The verb is in the present imperative form and this form in prohibitions can have one of two senses: (1) Cessation of Activity in Progress (Progressive): “Stop continuing.” (2) General Precept (Customary).

The context of the book indicates that this is a general precept since there is nothing in the book that would indicate that the Ephesian believers were making it a habit of getting drunk. In fact, in Ephesians 1:15 Paul states that the Ephesians already “**have love for all the saints**,” thus the Ephesian believers

were already permitting themselves to be fully influenced by the Spirit since they could not operate in the love of God if they were getting drunk.

Here we have a present prohibition, which has the force of a *general precept*. This kind of prohibition really makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not.

So Paul is saying with the present imperative of prohibition: **“Do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk.”**

The passive voice of this verb in Ephesians 5:18 is significant in that it is a rare permissive passive, which implies consent, permission, or cause of the action of the verb on the part of the subject and it indicates that the Ephesian believers are told here not to “permit” or “allow” themselves get drunk.

Then we have a dative of material, which is the masculine singular form of the noun *oinos*, which is *oino*, **“with wine.”** The dative substantive denotes the material that is used to accomplish the action of the verb of *methuskomai* or quite simply wine is what will get the Ephesian believers drunk.

So the corrected translation of Ephesians 5:18 thus far, reads as follows: **“And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine.”**

Next, we have the preposition *en* plus the instrumental of cause, which is singular relative pronoun *ho*. We can translate the prepositional phrase *en ho*, **“because that.”**

The preposition *en* plus the instrumental of cause is used to indicate the basis for the Ephesian believers to obey the prohibition and not to get drunk. This prepositional phrase is followed by third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi*.

The word for **“dissipation”** is the nominative feminine singular noun *asotia*. The noun *asotia* refers to behavior, which shows lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action, thus it means senseless deeds.

In some languages *asotia* in Ephesian 5:18 may be rendered as “what one does without being able to think about it,” or “what one does when the mind is absent.” We would say that it is **“non-sensical behavior.”** Or we could simply say “a waste,” or “stupidity.”

This is a gnomic present. The present tense may be used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact. Drunkenness is being in a state of non-thinking or non-sensical behavior. It does not say that something is happening, but that something does happen. It expresses a general timeless fact! This is a stative active voice indicating that the subject exists in a state of non-sensical behavior or stupidity. This is a declarative indicative indicating a dogmatic statement of fact.

So, the first half of **Ephesians 5:18** reads as follows: **“And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is stupidity.”**

Command in Ephesians 5:18

Then we have the strong adversative conjunction *alla*, “**but rather**,” which is followed by the verb *pleroo*, which is found in the second person plural present passive imperative form.

In the Greek New Testament, *pleroo* can have the following meanings: (1) to fill, make full, fill up (2) to fill up a deficiency (3) to pervade (4) to pervade with an influence, to influence fully, possess fully (5) to complete, perfect (6) to bring to an end (7) to perform fully, discharge (8) to consummate (9) to realize, accomplish, fulfill (10) to set forth fully (11) passive of time, to be fulfilled, come to an end, be fully arrived (12) of prophecy, to receive fulfillment.

Here in Ephesians 5:18 the word means, “to be fully influenced” since the English word “influence” accurately, conveys the meaning of *pleroo* here in Ephesians 5:18. The word conveys the believer’s relationship to the Holy Spirit who is a person. The word “influence” conveys this more than the words “possessed, controlled,” or “filled.”

“Filled” would be used of liquids, which we don’t have here. “Possessed” denotes ownership, which is not the sense here. “Controlled” has the connotation of someone doing something against your will, which is not the meaning of *pleroo* here in Ephesians 5:18.

The verb *pleroo* in Ephesians 5:18 in the passive voice means, “to be influenced.”

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the word influence: (1) Capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (2) Action or process of producing effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (3) A person or thing that exerts influence.

If we were to paraphrase Webster’s definition of the word, we would say that Paul wants the Ephesian believers to permit the omnipotence (intangible means) of the Holy Spirit (Person) to produce Christ-like character (effects) in them.

The passive form of the verb is a permissive passive voice, which implies consent, permission, or cause of the action of the verb on the part of the subject. It indicates that the apostle Paul wants the Ephesians to “permit” themselves to be fully influenced by the Holy Spirit.

Now, we have the present imperative form of the verb *pleroo* here in Ephesians 5:18 where Paul is issuing a command. The present imperative form in commands has the following senses: (1) Ingressive-progressive: Begin and continue (2) Customary: Continue (3) Iterative: Repeated action, do it again and again.

We do not have an ingressive-progressive sense here since that would imply that the Ephesian believers were not permitting the Holy Spirit to influence them, but that is not true since they were already operating in the love of God, which is impossible without the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. This sense here is not iterative involving a repeated act, although Paul does want them to repeatedly permit themselves to be fully influenced by the Spirit, rather, the force here is customary. The force of the customary present imperative is simply *continue* and is a command for action to be continued, action

that may or may not have already been going on. It is often a character building command to the effect of “make this your habit,” “train yourself in this,” etc.

The command in Ephesians 5:18 is a character building command meaning that Paul wants to build the character of Christ in the Ephesians. He wants them to “make it their habit” to permit themselves to be fully influenced by the Spirit because that will build the character of Christ in them, which is the Father’s will.

Then we have the preposition *en* plus the neuter singular instrumental form of the noun *pneuma*.

The noun *pneuma* is a reference to the Holy Spirit. Now, if we look at the New American Standard translation it appears that Paul is talking about content rather than means as I have translated it. So how do we understand the word *pleroo* with regard to *pneuma*, “**Spirit.**”

Is the Holy Spirit the content with which one is filled, or the means by which one is filled? Some understand the Spirit as the content with which one is filled with water like a glass, but grammatically this is not the case. It is better to understand the Spirit as the means by which one is filled, not the content.

The Greek is an inflectional language that uses various cases that determine how a word is being used in a clause or sentence. And it is a rule of Greek grammar that a verb may be used with more than one case to distinguish certain ideas or to make ideas clear.

In the Greek text, “**with the Spirit**” represents the preposition *en* plus the noun *pneuma* in the instrumental dative case. If we were to interpret this construction as referring to the Spirit as the content with which one is filled would be grammatically suspect. Why? Normally a verb of filling takes a noun in the genitive case to express the idea of content and not the dative instrumental. We don’t have a genitive of content here but rather an instrumental case.

For example, the noun in the genitive case refers to material, the content of the filling, as when the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume when Mary anointed the feet of our Lord in John 12:3.

With the accusative case the noun in the accusative refers to the thing filled as when grief fills the heart in John 16:6. But when the noun is in the instrumental case it refers to the agent or instrument that causes the filling. The instrumental case indicates the means by which the action of the verb is accomplished.

Therefore, the prepositional phrase *en pneumatī* indicates that the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit is the means by which the church age believer is to continually allow himself to be fully influenced, possessed or controlled by the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author’s translation)

The apostle Paul is using a contrast in Ephesians 5:18. He is contrasting the mental state of someone who is under the influence of alcohol and drunk with that of one who is under the influence of the Spirit.

The issue crystal clear: to be drunk with wine means to be brought under the influence of wine. Visible characteristics begin to take place as a person comes under the influence of alcohol.

In contrast, to be filled with the Spirit is to be fully influenced by the Spirit so the Spirit-influenced believer does things that are unnatural for him under the influence of the Spirit even as the drunken individual does things that are unnatural for him under the influence of the spirits.

The comparison is a matter of influence or control. A drunken person is controlled by alcohol, which he has consumed. Because of this he thinks in ways normally unnatural to him. Or he conducts himself in ways that are opposite of his norms and standards. Likewise, the believer who is under the influence of the Spirit acts in ways that are unnatural to him. In other words, the believer under the influence of the Spirit is going to act in ways that are contrary to his old Adamic-life.

The issue is not getting the Spirit within you, but rather of allowing the indwelling Spirit to take charge and move into every area of your life. So, to be fully influenced by means of the Spirit means that the believer must voluntarily surrender his old Adamic-life in exchange for the new Christ-life. The believer must make a conscious decision to acknowledge any known sins to the Father and then immediately apply the Word of God to his thought process.

So, to be fully influenced by means of the Spirit means that the believer must voluntarily surrender his old Adamic-life in exchange for the new Christ-life. The believer must make a conscious decision to confess any known sins to the Father in order to be restored to fellowship (1 John 1:9). This fellowship is maintained by obeying the Word of God, which is inspired by the Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit is the mental state of the believer who does *not* have any unconfessed sins in their stream of consciousness and is *applying* the Word to his thought process.

The filling of the Spirit takes place in the soul of the believer when he allows God the Holy Spirit to influence his soul. It is a *dynamic* whereas the indwelling of the Spirit is *static* meaning it never changes and it is eternal. The filling of the Spirit is the operational power of God the Holy Spirit, which empowers the believer to execute the will of God the Father.

The filling of the Spirit enables the believer to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ meaning to become like Him experientially in His death and resurrection. It enables the believer to become like Jesus Christ in thought, word and action or in other words, it gives the believer the ability to acquire the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is called the “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-23). It is necessary for the believer to allow himself to be influenced by the Spirit in order that he may walk by the Spirit. Walking by the Spirit is actively choosing to conduct oneself by means of the Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit and walking by the Spirit are two sides of the same coin. You cannot walk by the Spirit unless you are filled or more accurately influenced by the Spirit. Being influenced by means of the Spirit is directly related to the believer’s *mental attitude* whereas walking by the Spirit is directly related to how the believer *conducts* himself. A person’s conduct is governed by their mental attitude (Mark 7:22-23).

The believer who is applying the Word of God is influenced by means of the Spirit, therefore, the filling of the Spirit is directly related to being a doer of the Word of God since the Spirit inspired the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:20-21).

The Spirit takes the doctrines of Christ, i.e., the Word of God and makes them understandable to the believer. The Spirit does not act independently of the mind of Christ, i.e., the Word of God (John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16).

The Spirit's job is to manifest Christ, to mediate the presence of Christ in the believer, to make the mind of Christ understandable to the believer. Therefore, the believer who is influenced by means of the Spirit is a doer of the Word since He is obeying the Spirit's voice who speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God, which is the mind of Christ.

The Spirit of God and the Word of God work in concert with one another on behalf of the believer who has no unconfessed sin in his stream of consciousness and is applying the Word of God to his thought process.

The filling of the Spirit is an *absolute* meaning that the believer is either permitting himself or herself to be fully influenced by the Spirit or they are being fully influenced by the old sin nature and Satan's cosmic system. It is the only means of having fellowship with God (John 4:23-24) and is the only means by which the Holy Spirit produces Christ-like character in the believer. The filling of the Spirit is the only means by which the believer can execute the plan of God. The believer who obeys the Father's will, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the communication of the Word of God will be influenced by means of the Spirit and will also permit the Holy Spirit to reproduce the life and character of Christ in their life and will therefore, have the capacity to walk as a child of the Light.

Romans 8:5-6 and the Filling of the Spirit

In Romans 8:5-6, the apostle Paul describes the mechanics of the filling of the Spirit and reveals that it is submitting to the Spirit and being occupied in one's mind with the things of the Spirit. Leading up to this passage, Paul taught in Romans 8:1 that there is never any condemnation, none whatsoever for them because of their union with Jesus Christ. Next, in Roman 8:2, he taught the Christians in Rome that the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of Christ Jesus, has set them free from the authoritative power of the sin nature as well as spiritual death.

Then, in Romans 8:3, Paul "explains how" or presents the "reason why" the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ Jesus has set them free from the sin nature's authoritative power as well as spiritual death. The Law was unable to deliver sinful humanity from the sin nature and real spiritual death. However, the Spirit was able to set the Christian free from the sin nature and real spiritual death because the Father executed the sin nature through Christ's physical death.

Romans 8:4 teaches that the Father's purpose for sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an "experiential" sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but are conducting their lives in submission to the Spirit. When approaching this passage, we must understand that Paul is speaking in the context of

the Christian's sanctification. Beginning in Romans 6:1 and ending in Romans 8:39, Paul is speaking of the Christian's sanctification in its three stages: (1) Positional (2) Experiential (3) Perfective.

So beginning in Romans 6:1 and concluding in Romans 8:39, Paul is teaching on the Christian's sanctification. Therefore, in Romans 8:4, he is continuing this discussion regarding the Christian's sanctification and in particular "experiential" sanctification.

In Romans 6:1-7:6, Paul taught on all three aspects of sanctification, "positional," "experiential" and "perfective." However, in Romans 7:7-25, he dealt exclusively with the Christian's problem in "experiencing" sanctification by using his own personal experience as a Christian. Then, in Romans 8:1-3, he reassures his readers that even though they fail at experiencing sanctification, they are still eternally secure.

Now, in Romans 8:4, he begins to teach how his readers can "experience" sanctification through the power of the Spirit and in particular occupying their minds with the desires of the Spirit rather than the desires of the sin nature.

So, in Romans 8:4, Paul teaches that in relation to "experiential" sanctification, the Father's purpose in sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an "experiential" sense in the Christian. Specifically, in those Christians who are not conducting their lives according to the desires of the sin nature but according to the desires of the Spirit.

Now, it has been held by many expositors that Paul is contrasting the unbeliever with the believer in Romans 8:5-8. They support this interpretation by citing Romans 8:9, which teaches that if anyone does not possess the Spirit of Christ, then he does not belong to Christ and only Christians possess the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, those who hold to this interpretation state that the expression *hoi kata sarka ontes*, "**those who are according to the flesh**" that appears in verse 5 and the expression *hoi en sarki ontes*, "**those who are in the flesh**" in verse 8 are describing the non-Christian.

However, this does violence to the context since Paul has been teaching on sanctification in Romans 6:1-8:3. He continues to do so in Romans 8:4-8.

We must remember that Paul just got through discussing the problems he has experiencing sanctification in Romans 7:14-25. Then, in Romans 8:1-3, he reassures his readers that even if they fail to experience sanctification like he did, they are still eternally secure.

Now, beginning in Romans 8:4-9, he teaches how they can solve this problem of experiencing sanctification by occupying their minds with the desires of the Spirit rather than the desires of the sin nature. Then, in Romans 8:9-11, he reassures his readers that the Spirit indwells their bodies and that Christ does as well, which both serve as the principle of victory over the sin nature. This would give Paul's readers assurance that they are eternally secure.

The Believer's Problem with the Sin Nature

The reason why many interpret Romans 8:5-8 as contrasting the unbeliever with the believer is that they do not understand that a believer can become involved in the things they attribute to the unbeliever.

For instance, in verse 5, Paul teaches that those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (NASB95)

A Christian can set his mind on the things of the flesh if he chooses to do so and thus prevent him from experiencing sanctification.

Also, in verse 6, he teaches that the mind on the flesh is death. This too a Christian is capable of.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. (NASB95)

If his mind is occupied with the desires of his sin nature, he will die spiritually, in the sense of losing fellowship with God. This too will prevent him from experiencing sanctification.

Then, in verse 7, Paul teaches that the mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God.

Romans 8:7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so. (NASB95)

In verse 8, he writes that those who are in flesh can never please God.

Romans 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (NASB95)

Each of these a Christian can become involved in and stop them from experiencing sanctification.

Those who contend that Paul is contrasting the believer with the unbeliever in verses 5-8 fail to see that a believer has the capacity to set his mind on the desires of the sin nature as indicated by the many prohibitions and commands in the New Testament that are designed to prevent this from happening. A case in point is Galatians 5:16-21.

Furthermore, in Romans 7:7-25, Paul clearly illustrates through his own personal experience as a Christian that a Christian can be governed by his sin nature if he attempts to obey the Word of God apart from the enabling power of the Spirit. Therefore, in Romans 8:3-4, Paul taught that the Father's purpose for sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an "experiential" sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but are conducting their lives in submission to the Spirit.

Submission to the Sin Nature

Now, in Romans 8:5-8, Paul describes or explains what it means to be in submission to the sin nature and in submission to the Spirit. He gives this description or explanation in order that his readers might experience sanctification.

Therefore, in Romans 8:5-8, Paul is not contrasting a non-Christian with a Christian but rather he is contrasting a Christian who is out of fellowship with God because he is living in submission to his sin nature with that of a Christian who is in fellowship with God because he is living in submission to the Spirit. In fact, in these verses he is attempting to explain how the Christian can experience sanctification through the Spirit.

Up to this point he has not done so. In Romans 7:7-25, Paul describes his failure to experience sanctification. Then, in Romans 8:1-4, he reassures his readers that even though fail to experience sanctification they are still eternally secure. Now, in verses 5-8, he explains how they can experience sanctification. There is a natural progression in Paul's argument. If we interpret that in these verses, Paul is presenting a contrast between the unsaved and the saved, there is never any explanation as to how to the reader is to experience sanctification. It also does not pay attention to the context.

In verse 5, the first description is that a person who is submitting to the sin nature is occupied with the desires of the sin nature whereas the person who is submitting to the Spirit is occupied with the desires of the Spirit.

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (NASB95)

In Romans 8:5-8, Paul describes or explains what it means to be in submission to the sin nature and in submission to the Spirit. The first of these explanations or descriptions appear in verse 5. In this passage, Paul teaches that a Christian who is submitting to the sin nature has his mind preoccupied with the desires of the sin nature whereas the person who is submitting to the Spirit has his mind preoccupied with the desires of the Spirit.

“**Those who are**” is the articular nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *eimi*, which means, “to exist in a particular state or condition.”

The word is employed with prepositional phrase *kata sarka*, which we saw at the end of verse 4 and means, “**in submission to the flesh.**” Therefore, in Romans 8:5, the verb *eimi* along with this prepositional phrase denotes a Christian “existing in the state of being” in submission to the flesh, i.e. his sin nature.

There are some expositors who contend that the verb *eimi* along with this prepositional phrase in Romans 8:4 is a reference to the unbeliever. However, Paul used the verb *eimi* in a similar fashion in Romans 7:14 to describe himself as a Christian!

In Romans 7:14, *eimi* also meant, “to exist in a particular state or condition” and functioned as a copula uniting the subject *ego*, “**I myself**” with the predicate nominative *sarkinos*, “**flesh.**” This indicated that Paul as a Christian “existed in the state of being” of the flesh or unspiritual because he still possessed a nature that is totally antithetical to the spiritual or divine nature of the Law. The verb *eimi* denotes that Paul as a Christian “exists in the state of being” of the flesh meaning that he is unspiritual

because he possesses a sin nature even though he has been declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior.

Also, as we noted earlier, in Romans 7:7-25, Paul made clear through his own personal experience as a Christian that a Christian can set his mind on the desires of the sin nature, which Paul teaches on in Romans 8:5-8.

Those who contend that Paul is contrasting the believer with the unbeliever in verses 5-8 fail to see that a believer has the capacity to set his mind on the desires of the sin nature as indicated by the many prohibitions and commands in the New Testament that are designed to prevent this from happening.

In Galatians 5:16-23, Paul commanded the Christians in Galatia to walk by the Spirit and they would not fulfill the desires of the sin nature. He goes on to describe the different manifestations of this taking place in their lives.

The fact that Paul commanded the Galatians to do this and his listing of the sins that manifest that his readers are being governed by their sin nature clearly imply that it is possible for a Christian to set his mind on the desires of the sin nature and give in to these sinful desires.

Furthermore, the many prohibitions in the New Testament that are designed to govern the Christian's conduct such as in Ephesians 4:17-32 and 5:1-9 as well as the list of sins that the Christian is to forsake clearly imply that a Christian can become involved in setting his mind on the desires of the sin nature.

Therefore, in Romans 8:5-8, Paul is teaching his readers how to avoid fulfilling the desires of the sin nature and how to fulfill the desires of the Spirit and thus experience sanctification. Evidence that a Christian's life is being governed by the old sin nature in an experiential sense is that he is out of fellowship with God. He is grieving, quenching or lying to the Spirit. The Christian occupied with the desires of his sin nature is not obeying the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God.

“According to the flesh” is composed of the preposition *kata*, **“according to”** and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, **“the flesh.”**

We saw this same exact prepositional phrase at the end of verse 4 and we translated it **“in submission to the flesh.”** It retains the same meaning here in verse 5. As was the case in verse 4, here in verse 5 the noun *sarx* refers to the sin nature from the perspective of its location in the Christian, which is how the word was used in Romans 6:19, 7:5, 18, 25 and 8:3.

The root meaning of *kata* is “down,” which in our present context suggests submission to authority. The preposition *kata* is employed with the accusative form of the noun *sarx*, **“flesh”** and denotes conformity to a particular authority. Therefore, those Christians who at any time exist in the state of being “in submission to” the sin nature will be occupied with the desires of the sin nature.

A Christian who is living in submission to the sin nature is giving into the desires of the sin nature and is not appropriating by faith through the power of the Spirit the teaching in Romans 6 that he has been crucified with Christ, died with Christ and has been raised with Christ. A Christian who is not

occupied with his position in Christ will be occupied with the desires of the sin nature. It is an absolute and when this happens, the Christian will sin while on the flip side if his mind is occupied with his position in Christ, he will not sin but accomplish the will of the Father, which is to grow to spiritual maturity into Christ-likeness.

“**Set their minds on**” is the third person present active indicative form of the verb *phroneo*, which means, “to be preoccupied with” with the desires of the sin nature in the sense of concentrating and having one’s thought patterns focused upon the desires of the sin nature to the exclusion of the will of God or what God desires. To be “preoccupied” means to be “completely engrossed in thought, absorbed.”

Moule defines the word in Romans 8:5, “the full preoccupation of thought and will with a chosen and engrossing object.”⁷²

In Romans 8:5, the verb *phroneo* is used in relation to both the sin nature and the Spirit. In relation to the sin nature, it means to be “preoccupied with” the desires of the sin nature to the exclusion of the will of God. This is how the Lord used this verb in Matthew 6:23 when dealing with Peter.

In Romans 8:5, when used in relation to the Spirit, *phroneo* means to be “preoccupied with” the desires of the Spirit. Paul used it in a similar fashion in Colossians 3:2 where he commanded the Colossian believers to be “preoccupied with” the things above and not on the things that are on the earth meaning be occupied with your position in Christ where you are seated at the right hand of God (cf. Colossians 3:1). Therefore, in Romans 8:5, the verb *phroneo* means, “to be preoccupied with” and is used in relation to both the desires of the sin nature and the desires of the Spirit.

“**The things**” is the accusative neuter plural form of the definite article *ho*, which is used as a substantive and refers to the “desires” or in other words, the various lust patterns of the flesh, i.e. the indwelling Adamic sin nature.

The “**things of the flesh**” denote the various lust patterns or sinful desires that originate from the sin nature. It refers not only to sexual lust but also power lust, approbation lust, social lust, monetary lust, materialism lust, inordinate ambition resulting in inordinate competition, revenge lust, criminal lust, chemical lust, crusader lust, and pleasure lust. At the heart of such lusts is the desire to live independently of the will of God.

Paul could have used the word *epithumia* as he did in Romans 1:24 and 6:12 to denote these various lust patterns or desires of the sin nature. Instead, he simply employs the substantive use of the definite article since he wants the reader to focus on the conflict that takes place in them between the sin nature and the Spirit rather these various lust patterns or desires.

“**Of the flesh**” is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, which refers to the sin nature from the perspective of its location in the Christian.

The noun *sarx* functions as a “genitive of production” meaning that it “produces” the substantive use of the article, “**the things**” to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *sarx* as a “genitive of

⁷² The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, page 141; University Press, 1981; Original from the University of Michigan; Digitized June 4, 2007

production” indicates that these “**things**,” i.e. “desires,” or “various lust patterns” are “produced” by the sin nature. So, Paul is saying in Romans 8:5 that those Christians who are submitting to the sin nature are preoccupied with the desires “produced by” the sin nature and which wage war against the Christian’s soul and new nature. The genitive of “production” is similar to a genitive of “source.” However, the former suggests not only source but also involvement on the part of the sin nature in the sense that it is active by waging war against the soul of the Christian with the sinful desires it produces (Romans 7:22-23; 1 Peter 2:11).

Submitting to the Spirit

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (NASB95)

“**But those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit**” is the “adversative” use of the conjunction *de*, which introduces a statement that presents a contrast with Paul’s statement that those Christians who are submitting to the sin nature are preoccupied with the desires produced by the sin nature. He doesn’t employ the conjunction *alla* since he does not want to convey a “strong” contrast. Rather, he uses *de* because he wants to convey a contrast but not a strong one since he wants to emphasize two alternatives or directions that the Christian can go in.

“**According to the Spirit**” is composed of the preposition *kata*, “**according to**” and the accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, “**the Spirit**.”

The noun *pneuma* refers to the Holy Spirit. Again, as we noted earlier, the root meaning of *kata* is “down,” which in our present context suggests submission to authority. The preposition *kata* is employed with the accusative form of the noun *pneuma*, “**the Spirit**” and denotes conformity to a particular authority. Therefore, those Christians who at any time exist in the state of being “in submission to” the Spirit will be preoccupied with the desires of the Spirit. Therefore, we will translate this prepositional phrase, “**in submission to the Spirit**.”

“**The things**” is the definite article *ho*, which refers to spiritual desires produced by the Spirit in the believer.

“**Of the Spirit**” is the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, which refers to the Holy Spirit.

The noun *pneuma* functions as a “genitive of production” meaning that it “produces” the substantive use of the article, “**the things**” to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *pneuma* as a “genitive of production” indicates that these “**things**,” i.e. “desires,” are “produced by” the Spirit. So, Paul is saying in Romans 8:5 that those Christians who are submitting to the Spirit are preoccupied with the desires “produced by” the Spirit.

As we noted earlier, the genitive of “production” is similar to a genitive of “source.” However, the former suggests not only source but also personal involvement on the part of the Holy Spirit. He not only is the source of these spiritual or godly desires in contrast to the sinful desires produced by the sin nature, but also the Spirit is actively involvement in producing these desires as well. In the same way that the sin nature produces sinful desires, which wage war against the soul of the Christian, the Holy

Spirit produces godly or spiritual desires that He communicates to the Christian through the communication of the Word of God and prayer.

The question then arises, “what desires does the Spirit produce in the believer?” The answer is that the Spirit desires that the Christian take part in ministering to the body of Christ, experience fellowship, learn and apply the Word of God, pray, worship God, witness and grow to spiritual maturity. He puts in the Christian the desire to become like Christ. The Holy Spirit “produces” these desires in the believer. Therefore, the genitive of production indicates that the Spirit “produces” in the believer the desire to minister to the body of Christ, to experience fellowship, to learn and apply the Word of God, to pray, to worship God, to witness and grow to spiritual maturity and become like Christ. Also, we need to remember that the Scriptures not only teach that the Spirit produces these desires in the believer but that He also gives the believer the capacity to fulfill these desires. Now, when the Christian does not permit the Spirit to fulfill these desires, he is “grieving” the Spirit and “hindering” Him as well.

Submission to the Sin Nature is Loss of Fellowship

Now, in Romans 8:6, Paul teaches that the mind-set produced by the sin nature is temporal spiritual death, i.e. loss of fellowship with God whereas the mind-set produced by the Spirit is life, i.e. experiencing eternal life and peace.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. (NASB95)

This statement advances upon Paul’s statement in Romans 8:5 and intensifies it. In the previous statement in Romans 8:5, Paul teaches that those Christians who are in submission to the sin nature, occupy their minds with the desires of the sin nature whereas those who are in submission to the Spirit occupied their minds with desires of the Spirit.

Now, in Romans 8:6, Paul’s statement advances upon his statement in verse 5 and intensifies what it means to be in submission to the sin nature and what it means to be in submission to the Spirit as a Christian.

In verse 5, he taught that the result of submitting to the sin nature is the occupation of one’s mind with the sinful desires produced by the sin nature whereas in contrast to this he teaches that the result of submitting to the Spirit is the occupation of one’s mind with the godly desires produced by the Spirit. Now, in verse 6, he is going to advance upon this statement in verse 5 and intensify it in the sense that he is going to present the ultimate result of submitting to the sin nature in contrast with that of submitting to the Spirit.

“**The mind**” is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *phronema*, which occurs only four times in the Greek New Testament, Romans 8:6 twice and Romans 8:7 and 8:27. In Romans 8:27, the noun is used with reference to the Holy Spirit’s personality in the sense of His thoughts, sovereign will, desires and wisdom. In Romans 8:6-7, the word is used with reference to the Christian since in context, Paul is teaching on the Christian’s sanctification and is contrasting the believer who is out of fellowship because he is submitting to his nature with that of the Christian who is in fellowship because he is submitting to the Spirit.

Phronema in these verses refers to the content of the Christian's thought process and his manner of thinking rather than the mind itself. It denotes the direction and orientation of human thought or a person's "state of mind" or "mind-set." Therefore, in Romans 8:6, the noun *phronema* refers to the Christian's "mind-set" or "state of mind" or "mental attitude" and is used in relation to both the sin nature and the Spirit. Thus, Paul is saying that the "mind-set" or "mental attitude" produced by the sin nature is temporal spiritual death, i.e. loss of fellowship with God whereas the "mind-set" or "mental attitude" produced by the Spirit is experiencing eternal life and peace and thus experiencing fellowship with God.

"**Set on**" does not translate a word in the Greek text of Romans 8:6 since the translators interpret that Paul is using the figure of ellipsis meaning that he deliberately omits the third person present active indicative form of the verb *phroneo*, though it is implied. However, the fact that the noun *sarx* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that this mind-set is "produced by" the sin nature indicates that there is not need for the verb *phroneo* since the thought in the Greek text is complete.

"**The flesh**" is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, which refers to the sin nature from the perspective of its location in the Christian.

The noun *sarx* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that it "produces" the noun *phronema*, "**the mind-set**," to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *sarx* as a "genitive of production" indicates that this "mind-set" or "state of mind" is "produced" by the sin nature. It is produced by the sin nature because Paul taught in Romans 8:5 that those Christians submitting to the sin nature are preoccupied in their thinking with the desires produced by the sin nature. Therefore, the mind-set "produced by" the sin nature is the direct result of the Christian being preoccupied with the desires produced by the sin nature, which culminates in a loss of fellowship with God.

"**Death**" is the nominative masculine singular form of the *thanatos*, which refers to "temporal spiritual death" or in other words, "loss of fellowship" with God.

Spiritual death for the unbeliever is called "real spiritual death." As we noted in detail, Paul is speaking in the context of the Christian's sanctification. Therefore, since "real spiritual death" is used exclusively for the unbeliever and "temporal spiritual death" is used exclusively of the Christian, the latter is being referred to here by Paul in Romans 8:6.

"Temporal spiritual death" or "loss of fellowship" with God takes place when the believer commits mental, verbal or overt acts of sin as a result of obeying the desires of the sin nature.

There is a distinction between the terms "relationship" and "fellowship." Since our relationship with God is eternal, it can never be lost. Meanwhile, our fellowship with God, in time, can be lost due to sin and is only restored through the confession of sin to the Father (1 John 1:9).

Fellowship is made possible because of our eternal relationship and is thus taking advantage of that eternal relationship. Fellowship with the Lord demands that the believer confess any known sin to the Father when necessary in order to be restored to fellowship.

The believer, therefore, must "confess" any known sins to the Father in order to be restored to fellowship.

1 John 1:9 If any of us does at any time confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing. (Author's translation)

Immediately upon confessing his sins to the Father, the Christian is automatically restored to fellowship with Him. He is restored to fellowship because of the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. Thus, the Father is faithful and just to forgive the believer his sins.

This fellowship is maintained by bringing one's thoughts into obedience to the teaching of Jesus Christ. This constitutes obeying the commands of Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by means of the Spirit and Colossians 3:16 to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul. Therefore, obedience to the Word of God will enable the believer to experience fellowship with God, which is synonymous with experiencing sanctification (1 John 2:3-6).

Paul spoke of "temporal spiritual death" i.e. "loss of fellowship with God in Romans 6:16, 7:9-10, 13 and 24. In this passage, he teaches that if the Roman Christians if they present themselves as slaves to the sin nature then this will result in temporal spiritual death.

In Romans 7:9-10, 13 and 24, Paul teaches that his inability as a Christian to render perfect obedience to the Law resulted in him losing fellowship with God or in other words, it led to his experiencing "temporal spiritual death."

Paul develops further the concept of "temporal spiritual death" for the believer in Romans 8:5-13.

Submission to the Spirit is Life and Peace

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. (NASB95)

"**But the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace**" presents a contrast with Paul's statement that the mind-set produced by the sin nature is as an eternal spiritual truth, temporal spiritual death. He wants to convey a contrast but not a strong one since both temporal spiritual death and experiencing eternal life and the peace of God can both take place in the Christian depending upon his mental attitude.

"**The mind**" is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *phronema*, which once again means, "mind set" but this time it is used in relation to the Spirit, which functions as a genitive of production indicating that this mind-set is "produced by" the Spirit.

"**On the Spirit**" is the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, which refers to the Holy Spirit.

The noun *pneuma* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that it "produces" the noun *phronema*, "**the mind-set**," to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *pneuma* as a "genitive of production" indicates that this "mind-set" or "state of mind" is "produced" by the Spirit. It is produced by the Spirit because Paul taught in Romans 8:5 that those Christians submitting to the Spirit are preoccupied in their thinking with the desires produced by the Spirit. Therefore, the mind-set "produced

by” the Spirit is the direct result of the Christian being preoccupied with the desires produced by Spirit, which results in experiencing eternal life and the peace of God.

“**Life**” is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *zoe*, which refers to experiencing the eternal life the believer received from the Holy Spirit in regeneration the moment the believer exercised faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and was regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

“**Peace**” is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *eirene*, which refers to peace with God in an objective sense.

In Romans 8:6, the noun *eirene* refers to experiencing the permanent and eternal peace treaty that God established between Himself and the justified sinner through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ and became their personal possession forever, the moment they were declared justified by Him through faith in Jesus Christ. The word refers to the reconciliation between the sinner and God through faith alone in Christ alone (Acts 10:36; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:14, 15, 17).

This reconciliation is presented in the gospel message that God has made a peace treaty with the entire human race and the terms of that peace treaty is accepting the Gospel message through faith alone in Christ alone.

True peace is having a relationship with God, which can only be acquired by an unregenerate human being through faith alone in Christ alone. After salvation, *eirene* for the believer is the tranquil or serene state or condition of the soul of the believer who obeys the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God.

The believer whose mind-set is produced by the Spirit as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the Spirit will experience this peace.

Like the church age believer’s salvation and sanctification, the peace of God is accomplished in the believer in three stages: (1) Positionally: The believer has peace with God because of his eternal union and identification with Jesus Christ, which received through faith alone in Christ alone. (2) Experientially: The believer can experience the peace of God by being obedient to the Word of God. (3) Ultimately: The believer is guaranteed that he will experience permanently the peace of God in a resurrection body.

By “positionally” I mean that God views the believer as being at peace with Him as a result of faith in Christ and his eternal union with His Son, which sets up the “potential” to experience this peace in time. It also sets up the “guarantee” or experiencing permanently this peace when the believer receives his resurrection body.

After salvation, experiencing the peace of God is only a “potential” since it demands obedience to God whereas the believer is “guaranteed” that he will experience the peace of God permanently in a resurrection body.

The believer is eternally united with the Lord Jesus Christ at the moment of conversion through the Baptism of the Spirit (Galatians 3:26-28) and has peace positionally at the moment of conversion.

This eternal union with Jesus Christ serves as the basis for the believer having the privilege and opportunity to have fellowship with God. After being delivered from sin, Satan, his cosmic system and eternal condemnation, in respect to his self, the believer can experience the peace of God in time by having fellowship with God, which is accomplished by obedience to God's Word. When the believer is obeying the Spirit's voice, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God, he enables the Holy Spirit to reproduce the peace of God in him. Therefore, reproducing the peace of God in the believer is one of the objectives of God the Holy Spirit in the process of experiential sanctification and is thus produced by Him (Galatians 5:22-23).

Therefore, in Romans 8:6, the noun *eirene* refers to the peace of God that the believer can experience by having a mind-set produced by the Spirit as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the Spirit. These desires would include fellowship, learning and applying the Word of God, executing the Father's will, unity, serving, and praying.

Therefore, we can see from Paul's statements here in Romans 8:5-6 and that experiencing fellowship with God and losing that fellowship is based upon the believer's mental attitude. The believer whose mental attitude is produced by the sin nature as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the sin nature will experience loss of fellowship with God. While on the other hand, the believer whose mental attitude is produced by the Spirit as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the Spirit will experience eternal life and peace and thus fellowship with God.

The Filling of the Spirit vs. the Indwelling of the Spirit

The believer must be aware of the fact that there is a distinction between the "indwelling" of the Spirit and the "filling" of the Spirit. The former is taught in John 14:16, Romans 8:9, 11, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:18-20, 2 Corinthians 6:16 and 1 John 2:20, 26-28.

The Holy Spirit indwells every believer in order to provide a temple for the indwelling of the Shekinah Glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, which serves as the principle of victory over the indwelling old sin nature. He provides the believer the spiritual capacity to understand the Word of God, since the Spirit serves as the believer's true teacher and mentor in place of the absent Christ.

The "indwelling" of the Spirit occurs at the moment of conversion and is *permanent* meaning it cannot be lost (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16). The Scriptures teach that the Spirit still indwells Christians when they sin indicating that the indwelling of the Spirit can never be lost due to sin, which is unlike the filling of the Spirit which can be lost due to sin but regained through the confession of sin (1 John 1:9) and maintained by obedience (1 John 2:3-6).

That the Spirit still indwells a believer when they sin is implied in that in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Paul commands the Corinthian believers, some of which were involved in gross sexual immorality, to flee immorality on the basis that the Spirit indwells their bodies.

The indwelling of the Spirit is "permanent" because the Lord Jesus taught that the Spirit will be with them forever, thus obedience is not a condition for the indwelling of the Spirit.

Only in the Old Testament could the indwelling of the Spirit be lost as was the case with King Saul. In fact, in Psalm 51:11, David prayed that God would not take away the Spirit from him. So, prior to the

day of Pentecost the indwelling of the Spirit was temporary whereas from that day on until the conclusion of the church age, it is permanent.

The indwelling presence of the Spirit in the Christian is evidence of the Christian's justification. It is also proof of the Christian's salvation and of his position in Christ and identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a sign that the Christian is a child of God. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serve as assurance for the Christian that he or she is eternally secure. It also serves as encouragement to the Christian when he or she endures underserved suffering. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves also as motivation for the Christian to grow to spiritual maturity. It is the basis for the Christian to give number one priority to his relationship with God rather giving it to people. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a reminder to the Christian that he has divine omnipotence available to him to grow to maturity and to endure undeserved suffering. It is also a guarantee that the Christian possesses eternal life and will live with God forever. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

The "indwelling" of the Spirit is the principle of victory over the old sin nature. The "filling" of the Spirit is the function of victory over the old sin nature. The word "principle" means that the "indwelling" is the reason or the basis for our victory over the old sin nature. The word "function" refers to how we are to operate to gain a moment-by-moment victory in our lives over the old sin nature.

The "filling" of the Spirit is "dynamic," whereas the "indwelling" is "static." The Christian is commanded to be "filled" with the Spirit whereas he is never commanded to be "indwelt" by the Spirit. When you are filled with the Spirit you are appropriating by faith the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

Confession of Sin and the Filling of the Spirit

The confession of sin after conversion is absolutely essential in order to be influenced by the Spirit and to experience fellowship with God. 1 John 1:9 teaches the importance of confession in relation to being restored to fellowship with God. We cannot experience fellowship with God unless we are influenced by means of the Spirit.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NASB95)

"If we confess our sins" is composed of the following: (1) conditional particle *ean* (ἐάν), **"if"** (2) first person plural present active subjunctive form of the verb *homologeō* (ὁμολογέω), **"we confess"** (3) articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία), **"sins"** (4) genitive first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), **"our."**

The apostle John employs the figure of asyndeton in 1 John 1:9 in order to emphasize the solemn nature of the fifth class conditional statement which is contained in this verse. He is being solemn because the content of the fifth class conditional statement contained in this verse will ensure the fact that the recipients of this epistle will continue to experience fellowship with God. The purpose of this figure is to ultimately persuade the Christian community reading this letter to make personal application of this fifth class conditional statement which will ensure that they will continue to experience fellowship with the Trinity.

In 1 John 1:9, the apostle John employs once again the conditional particle *ean*. However, this time he is using it with the subjunctive mood of the verb *homologeō*, “**we confess**” in order to introduce the protasis of a third class condition which offers a condition, the fulfillment of which is realized in the present time which is also called a fifth class condition. The idea with this first class condition is to persuade the reader of the importance of confessing their sins when necessary in order to protect their fellowship with the Trinity.

The protasis contains the conditional particle *ean* (ἐάν), “**if**” with the subjunctive mood of the verb *eipon* (εἶπον), “**we say**.” The apodosis contains the present indicative form of the verb *pseudomai* (ψεύδομαι), “**we lie**.”

The protasis is “**If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness**” and the apodosis is “**we lie and do not practice the truth**.”

John is offering no indication about the likelihood of the protasis being fulfilled and there is no hint of uncertainty about this event not occurring nor some eventuality being presented. Rather, the fifth class condition is expressing an eternal spiritual principle or spiritual axiom with regards to fellowship with God.

The subjunctive mood is employed because the subject is undefined and not because the time is future. It is undefined because this spiritual principle who is applicable for each and every believer including himself. Thus, he is not speaking of any one individual in particular. This is because John and all his readers, as well as all believers have an indwelling sin nature (cf. 1 Jn. 1:8; Rm. 6:6; Rm. 7:24).

Thus, an unidentified hypothetical individual in the Christian community is being referred to in the protasis since John is not speaking of a specific individual but rather he is communicating an eternal spiritual principle with regards to fellowship with God.

The relationship between the protasis and the apodosis is “cause-effect.” The cause: “**If we confess our sins**.” The effect: “**He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**.”

Now, in 1 John 1:9, John employs the word *homologeō* for the believer’s “confession” of their sins to the Father. The English word “confess” is more accurate a translation of this word than “admit,” or “acknowledge” because “confess” means stating somewhat formally an admission of wrongdoing, crime or shortcoming whereas “acknowledge” implies making a statement reluctantly often about something previously denied and “admit” implies acknowledging something under pressure.

In 1 John 1:9, the present tense of the verb *homologeō* is a gnomic present used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact. It does not say that something is happening, but that something does happen. The action or state continues without time limits. The verb is used in proverbial statements or general maxims about what occurs at all times.

The gnomic present is distinct from the customary present in that the customary present refers to a regularly recurring action while the gnomic present refers to a general, timeless fact. It is distinct from the stative present (a subcategory of the customary) in that the stative present involves a temporal restriction while the gnomic present is generally atemporal.

There are two predominant semantic situations in which the gnomic present occurs. The first includes instances that depict deity or nature as the subject of the action. Statements such as “the wind blows” or “God loves” fit this category. Such gnomic presents are true all the time.

There is a second kind of gnomic, slightly different in definition: the use of the present in generic statements to describe something that is true any time (rather than a universal statement that is true all the time). This kind of gnomic present is more common, thus, pragmatically, it is helpful to note a particular grammatical intrusion: A gnomic verb typically takes a generic subject or object. Most generics will be subjects. The present tense here is used in generic statements to describe a universal statement that is true all the time.

The gnomic present of the verb *homologeō* in 1 John 1:9 expresses the spiritual principle that the believer who “does” at “any” time confess their sins to the Father, then the Father is faithful and just to forgive the believer of these sins and thus He restores the believer to fellowship with Himself.

This is not an iterative present for repeated action or a customary present for habitual action because the fifth class conditional statement is communicating an eternal spiritual principle with regards to fellowship with God. Therefore, John’s point is not how often a believer confesses their sins to the Father that they are restored to fellowship with God but rather that they do confess their sins.

The active voice of this verb is a simple active voice where the believer is to produce the action of the verb *homologeō*, “to confess” and expresses volitional responsibility of the believer to confess their sins to the Father.

The subjunctive mood of the verb *homologeō* is employed with the conditional particle *ean* in order to form a fifth class conditional statement which is expressing a spiritual principle with regards to the fellowship with the Trinity.

The noun *hamartia* is used with reference to mental, verbal and overt acts of sin from the perspective that these mental, verbal and overt acts of sin miss the mark of the absolute perfection of God’s character, i.e. His holiness. It is used of the sins of the Christian. This word speaks of any thought, word or action on the part of the Christian which is in disobedience to God’s laws.

This noun functions as an accusative direct object meaning it receives the action of the verb *homologeō* indicating that the believer’s personal sins are receiving the action of being confessed by the believer.

The article preceding this noun is also employed with the genitive first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* to denote possession. This personal pronoun refers of course to the Christian community as a corporate unit. It also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

God is Faithful and Just

“**He is faithful and righteous**” is composed of the following: (1) nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *pistos* (πιστός), “**faithful**” (2) third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* (εἶμι), “**is**” (3) conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” (4) nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *dikaios* (δίκαιος), “**righteous.**”

The verb *eimi* means “to possess certain characteristics,” which are identified by the adjectives *pistos*, “**faithful**” and *dikaios*, “**righteous**.” This indicates that God possesses the characteristic of being faithful and righteous to forgive the believer their sins when they confess them to Him.

The present tense of the verb *eimi* is a gnomic present referring to a general, timeless fact indicating that God is “as an eternal spiritual truth” faithful and righteous to forgive the believer when they at any time do confess any of their sins to Him. Thus, it denotes that God is “characterized by” faithfulness and righteousness.

The present tense of the verb is customary or stative present indicating that God “exists in the state of being” faithful and righteous to forgive the believer when they at any time do confess any of their sins to Him.

The active voice of the verb is also stative indicating the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. This would mean that God exists in the state of being faithful and just to forgive the believer when they at any time do confess any of their sins to Him.

The indicative mood is declarative presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

The verb *eimi* is employed here in 1 John 1:9 as a substantive verb and functions as the subject. It is used of persons and specifically here of God the Father. The copula is used to equate the subject (God the Father) who is implied and the predicate nominative, which is the adjectives *pistos*, “**faithful**” and *dikaios*, “**righteous**.”

This is a convertible proposition meaning that both nouns have an identical referent. God is faithful and righteous and faithful and righteous is God are identical statements.

The adjective *pistos* in 1 John 1:9 is used by John to describe God the Father and means “faithful.” This adjective describes the Father as firmly adhering to His promises to forgive sin when the believer confesses any sin to Him.

The adjective *pistos*, “faithful” functions grammatically here in 1 John 1:9 as a predicate nominative and is making an assertion about the Father’s character. This is a convertible proposition where the subject (“He”-God the Father) is interchangeable with the predicate nominative *pistos*, “faithful.” This means that both words have an identical referent meaning we could say not only that “God is faithful,” but also that “faithful is God.” There is a complete interchange between the pronoun “He” and the predicate nominative “faithful.”

The adjective *pistos* is in the anarthrous first predicate position to the subject “He,” (God the Father) who is implied in the copula *eimi*. As we noted we have an equative clause where the subject, “He,” which is implied in the copula *eimi*, is interchangeable with the anarthrous adjective *pistos*, “faithful.”

An equative clause makes an assertion about the subject, thus its main verb whether expressed or implied is the copula. In equative clauses the general rule is that an anarthrous adjective related to an anarthrous noun is normally predicate and this is especially true when the order is noun-adjective.

Here in 1 John 1:9 the anarthrous adjective *pistos* is predicate and is making an assertion about the anarthrous subject, namely, God the Father who is implied in the verb *eimi*.

The conjunction *kai* is adjunctive meaning it is introducing a word which presents an additional description of the Father which characterizes His relationship to the believer when they confess their sins to Him. This word is expressing the correlation between the Father's attribute of faithfulness and His attribute of righteousness. It expresses the perfect agreement between God the Father's being faithful to forgive the believer their sins when they confess them to Him and His being just to forgive them their sins when they confess these sins to Him.

In 1 John 1:9, John describes the Father's as *dikaios* means "just" because the Father executes the judgments of His government that are in perfect agreement with His perfect character and nature and that are also based upon the merits of the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. Therefore, He is *dikaios*, "just" to execute the law of the forgiveness of sins that is based upon the merits of the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. It also denotes the agreement between the Father's nature and His acts.

The adjective *dikaios*, "just" functions grammatically here in 1 John 1:9 as a predicate nominative and is making an assertion about the Father's character. This too is a convertible proposition where the subject ("He"-God the Father) is interchangeable with the predicate nominative *dikaios*, "just." This means that both words have an identical referent meaning we could say not only that "God is just," but also that "just is God." There is a complete interchange between the pronoun "He" and the predicate nominative "just."

The adjective *dikaios*, "just" is in the anarthrous first predicate position to the subject "He," (God the Father) who is implied in the copula *eimi*. As we noted we have an equative clause where the subject, "He," which is implied in the copula *eimi*, is interchangeable with the anarthrous adjective *dikaios*, "just."

An equative clause makes an assertion about the subject, thus its main verb whether expressed or implied is the copula. In equative clauses the general rule is that an anarthrous adjective related to an anarthrous noun is normally predicate and this is especially true when the order is noun-adjective.

Here in 1 John 1:9 the anarthrous adjective *dikaios*, "just" is predicate and is making an assertion about the anarthrous subject, namely, God the Father who is implied in the verb *eimi*.

The Forgiveness of Sins

"**To forgive us our sins**" is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), "**to**" (2) third person singular aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *aphiēmi* (ἀφίημι), "**forgive**" (3) dative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), "**us**" (4) articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *hamartia* (ἁμαρτία), "**sins**."

The conjunction *hina* is employed with the subjunctive form of the verbs *aphiēmi*, "**forgive**" and *katharizō*, "**to cleanse**." It is interpreted by some as a expegetical meaning it is clarifying or explaining the two adjectives *pistos*, "**faithful**" and *dikaios*, "**just**." The idea would be that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, "namely" or "specifically" to forgive these sins for our benefit, in other words, to

purify each one of us from each and every unrighteous thought, word, or action. It would be introducing a clause which identifies or explains specifically what John means when he describes God as faithful and just. It would identify specifically how God is faithful and just when the believer confesses their sins to Him.

The conjunction *hina* could also be interpreted as a marker of result. This use of the conjunction expresses the result of the action of the main verb, which in our context would be the first person plural present active subjunctive form of the verb *homologeō*, “**we confess**.” It indicates a consequence of the verbal action that is not intended. Therefore, if this interpretation is correct then this would indicate that this word and the subjunctive form of the verb *homologeō* express the result of the believer confessing their sins to the Father. It would mean that the Father will forgive the believer their sins and purify them from all unrighteousness as a result of confessing these sins to Him.

The conjunction *hina* can also be interpreted as a marker of purpose. This use of the conjunction emphasizes the intention of the action of the main verb, whether this action is accomplished or not. We must not assume that this use of the subjunctive with this conjunction necessarily implies any doubt about the fulfillment of the verbal action on the part of the speaker. This may or may not be so. Therefore, if this interpretation is correct, then this would indicate that subjunctive form of the verb *homologeō* and the subjunctive form of the verbs *aphiēmi* and *katharizō* express the purpose of the believer confessing their sins to the Father. It would indicate that God forgiving them their sins and purifying them from all unrighteousness is the purpose for which the believer is to confess their sins to Him.

The conjunction *hina* could also be interpreted as being employed with the subjunctive mood of the verbs *aphiēmi* and *katharizō* in order to form a purpose-result clause that indicates both the intention and accomplishment of the action of the verb *homologeō*. This indicates that the conjunction is introducing a clause which presents both the purpose and the result for the believer confessing their sins to the Father. A purpose clause emphasizes the “intention” of the action of the main verb whereas a result clause emphasizes the consequence of the verbal action that is “not intended.” Now sometimes the conjunction *hina* can introduce a clause that indicates both purpose and result meaning that it indicates both the intention and its sure accomplishment. Therefore, if this interpretation is correct, then the Father forgiving the believer their sins and purifying them from all unrighteousness is both the result and the purpose of the believer confessing their sins to the Father. It would emphasize that the purpose of the believer confessing their sins to the Father is accomplished which is that He forgives them these sins and purifies them from all unrighteousness. In other words, the Father forgiving the believer their sins, i.e. purifying them from all unrighteousness is not only the direct result of the believer confessing these sins to Him but also His purpose for having the believer confess their sins to Him.

It is the view of this author that the best interpretation of the conjunction *hina* and the subjunctive moods of the verb *aphiēmi* and *katharizō* is that they form a purpose-result clause. This is indicated by the fact that the purpose-result clause is not only communicating God’s purpose for the believer confessing their sins but also the action He takes as a result of the believer confessing their sins. Therefore, John not only wants the Christian to know God’s desire to forgive them their sins and purify them from all unrighteousness when they confess these sins to Him but he also wants them to know the Father will forgive them and purify them from all unrighteousness as the direct result of confessing their sins to Him. In other words, John wants his readers to know there is a definite purpose for wanting them to confess their sins to the Father. He also wants to reassure them that God will in fact forgive and purify

them from all their sins when they confess their sins to Him. Thus, the purpose-result clause expresses John's desire to instruct or remind his readers of the purpose of confessing their sins and his desire to reassure them that when they do, they are forgiven and purified from each of these sins. Therefore, this is not a result, purpose or epexegetical *hina* clause.

The verb *aphiēmi* means, "to grant a full pardon from crimes committed" against a holy God. It is attested since Homer and is derived from the preposition *apo*, "from," and the verb *hiemi*, "to put in motion, send." Thus, the word literally means, "to send off, to send away, to send forth," but is used with the sense of "to hurl, to let go, release." The word meant a "voluntary release of a person or thing over which one has legal or actual control."

The verb *aphiēmi* in 1 John 1:9 is used with God the Father as the subject and the believer's sins as the object. Therefore, this verb expresses the idea that the Father forgives the believer their sins as a result of the believer confessing these sins to Him.

The word pertains to removing the guilt resulting from wrongdoing. It speaks of the Father removing the guilt from the believer as a result of the believer sinning against Him. It expresses the idea that the Father lets go of the obligation that the believer owes Him as a result of sinning against Him.

This verb *aphiēmi* means to release someone from the guilt or penalty of sin as one would a financial debt. To forgive means to give someone a release from the wrong that he has done to you. It means to give up any right of retaliation.

The aorist tense of the verb *aphiēmi* is a culminative or consummative aorist, which emphasizes the cessation of an act or state. So here it emphasizes the completion of the act of the Father forgiving the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him.

The active voice is a simple active voice indicating that God the Father as the subject is producing the act of forgiving the believer their sins when the believer confesses these sins to Him.

Once again, we have the noun *hamartia* which is used again with reference to mental, verbal and overt acts of sin from the perspective that these mental, verbal and overt acts of sin miss the mark of the absolute perfection of God's character, i.e. His holiness. This word speaks of any thought, word or action on the part of the Christian which is in disobedience to God's laws.

This noun functions as an accusative direct object meaning it receives the action of the verb *aphiēmi* indicating that the believer's personal sins are receiving the action of being forgiven by the Father when they confess these sins to Him.

The articular construction of this noun is anaphoric meaning that it is indicating that this word is found in the previous context, namely in the protasis of this fifth class conditional statement and is retaining the same meaning and referent here in the apodosis of 1 John 1:9.

The plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* refers of course to the Christian community as a corporate unit. It also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The word is in the dative case and functions as a dative of advantage indicating that the believer benefits from the Father forgiving them their sins when they confess these sins to Him.

Purified from All Unrighteousness

“**And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**” is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” (2) third person singular aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *katharizō* (καθαρίζω), “**to cleanse**” (3) accusative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), “**us**” (4) genitive feminine singular form of the noun *adikia* (ἀδικία), “**unrighteousness.**”

The conjunction *kai* is epexegetical meaning it is introducing a statement which identifies in a different way or perspective the act of the Father forgiving the believer’s their sins when they confess these sins to Him. This word introduces a statement which asserts that the Father purifies the believer from all unrighteousness. Therefore, this statement *kai* expresses the idea that the Father forgives the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him can also be described as purifying them from all unrighteousness. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that all sin is unrighteousness. It can also be supported by the fact that when the Father forgives the believer their sins, He is in effect purifying them from the guilt of sin which is described by John as “unrighteousness.”

In 1 John 1:7, we saw that the verb *katharizō* means “to purify” from sin and the sin nature so that one is acceptable to God who is holy. Here in 1 John 1:9, the word again means “to purify” but this time sin is identified as unrighteousness. Therefore, this word in 1 John 1:9 denotes that the Father “purifies” the believer from all unrighteousness when they confess their sins to Him.

The verb *katharizō* in 1 John 1:9 should not translated “cleanse” since the English word “cleanse” has the connotation of being clean in the sense of certain parts of the body, whereas “purify” has the connotation of the body being clean all over. Of course, John is referring to the soul, which is not “cleansed” from personal sin but “purified” meaning totally and completely.

The aorist tense of the verb *katharizō* is a culminative or consummative aorist, which emphasizes the cessation of an act or state. So here it emphasizes the completion of the act of the Father purifying the believer from all unrighteousness, i.e. sin, when they confess these sins to Him.

The active voice is a simple active voice indicating that God the Father as the subject is producing the act of purifying the believer from all unrighteousness, i.e. sin, when the believer confesses these sins to Him.

The plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* refers of course to the Christian community as a corporate unit. It also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The word is in the accusative case and functions as a accusative direct object meaning that the word is receiving the action of the verb *katharizō* indicating that the believer receives the action of the Father purifying them from all unrighteousness, i.e. all sin when they confess their sins to Him.

In 1 John 1:9, the noun *adikia* means “unrighteousness” and is used to describe the sins of the believer. The word is antithetical in meaning to the noun *dikaiosune*, “righteousness,” which is a general term for “virtue” and “integrity” of character, thus, *adikia* is the state of possessing no virtue or integrity.

Therefore, the noun *adikia* describes the believer's sins as thoughts, words or actions that do not adhere to the will of God, and that are not upright, honest, perfectly whole, thus leaving them in an unsound, impaired and in a bad condition. It describes these thoughts, words and actions as having no virtue in the sense that they have no moral excellence, goodness, and do not conform to the will of God.

This word is modified by the adjective *pas* which expresses an attributive relation to *adikia* and is in the first attributive position. This adjective is used here without the article modifying the noun *adikia* and is used in the distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. The believer is purified from "each and every" unrighteous thought, word or action that they commit when they confess these sins, i.e. unrighteousness to the Father.

The noun *adikia* is the object of the preposition *apo* which is a marker of separation or disassociation indicating that the Father purifies the believer "from" each and every unrighteous thought, word or action when they confess these sins to Him.

Therefore, this prepositional phrase indicates that the Father "separates" the believer from each of their sins and the guilt associated with these sins when they confess them to the Father.

Exposition of 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:9 If any of us does, at any time confess our sins, He is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as being faithful as well as just to forgive these sins for the benefit of each one of us, in other words, to purify each one of us from each and every unrighteous thought, word or action. (Author's translation)

1 John 1:9 contains a fifth class conditional statement which communicates a spiritual principle pertaining to experiencing fellowship with the Father which is in addition to the fifth class conditional statements presented in 1 John 1:6-8.

Verse 9 is the fourth in a series of six fifth class conditional statements which pertain to experiencing fellowship with God (1 John 1:8, 9, 10; 2:1). Each of these fifth class conditional clauses consist of three pairs that can be divided into two: (1) Negative statement in the apodosis (1 Jn. 1:6, 8, 10). (2) Positive statement in the apodosis (1 Jn. 1:7, 9; 2:1). The negative statements 1 John 1:6, 8 and 10 reflect the claims of the false teachers located in geographical region of the recipients of this epistle whereas the positive statements in 1 John 1:7, 9 and 2:1 reflect the apostolic teaching with regards to fellowship with God.

As we have noted in our previous studies of 1 John 1:6-8, the recipients of this epistle were located in the Roman province of Asia. The occasion of the epistle itself and the context of the entire book clearly indicates that they were already believers in Jesus Christ who were experiencing fellowship with God and each other. However, they were now being exposed to Docetic and Cerinthian Gnostic teaching that denied the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. John emphatically refutes this teaching in the prologue of the epistle. If they believed this false teaching, it would prevent them from continuing to have fellowship with God since fellowship with God is based upon the Person, Work and Life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This false teaching the apostle John was seeking to protect the recipients of this epistle from, were propagating an “incipient” form of Gnosticism since it was not a full blown threat to orthodox Christianity in the mid to late part of the first century as it did become in the middle of the second century.

John’s teaching in the prologue and throughout the book concerning the person of Christ is designed to protect his readers from these heretical teachings and to ensure that their fellowship with God and other believers might continue or be maintained. That John’s readers were already experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Son and that this letter is a protection from the false teaching concerning the person of Jesus Christ is indicated in 1 John 2:13-15, 21, 26-29, 3:7-9, 4:1-3, 5:9-11, 13. Therefore, John’s teaching in 1 John 1:6-2:2 is designed to protect the Christian community from these false teachers.

1 John 1:6-2:2 are also connected to 1 John 1:5 which asserts that God is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in the state of being light. Then, John states in emphatic terms that there is absolutely no darkness in His nature, none whatsoever.

1 John 1:6-2:2 presents the implications of these assertions in verse 5. These verses are an inference from verse 5 and communicate spiritual principles with regards to fellowship with God. Specifically, they present spiritual principles which the recipients of this epistle can employ for themselves in order to determine if they are in fact experiencing fellowship with God or not. These principles are designed to protect the recipients of this epistle from the false teaching which was being propagated where they lived.

Therefore, in 1 John 1:9, the apostle John solemnly issues another fifth class conditional statement. Its purpose is to persuade the Christian community reading this letter to continue making personal application of this fifth class conditional statement. Doing so would ensure that they will continue to experience fellowship with the Trinity. It is a reminder to them of something they were already doing. It is designed to encourage them to continue practicing this principle presented in verse 9.

This fifth class conditional statement contains a protasis and an apodosis as well as a result clause. The relationship between the protasis and apodosis is “cause-effect.” The cause: **“If any of us does, at any time confess our sins.”** The effect: **“He is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as being faithful as well as just to forgive these sins for the benefit of each one of us, in other words, to purify each one of us from each and every unrighteous thought, word or action.”**

This fifth class conditional in 1 John 1:9 asserts that if any believer does, at any time confess their sins, He (God the Father) is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as being faithful as well as just to forgive these sins for the benefit of the believer. He then describes this forgiveness as purifying the believer from each and every unrighteous thought, word or action.

Thus, 1 John 1:9 stands in contrast to 1 John 1:8 in that confessing one’s sins to the Father is the complete opposite of a believer entering into the claim that they have never experienced the guilt of sin. It is the very opposite of deceiving oneself into thinking that you have not committed a sin.

This confession of sin to the Father is to be in the privacy of their royal priesthood and does not refer to the public confession or acknowledgement of sin. This is indicated by the fact that John is clearly

informing his readers that they must confess their sins to the Father which would be a matter between the believer and the Father and no one else.

The believer is adjusted to the holiness of God when they apply the principle stated in 1 John 1:9. It is absolutely essential to apply this principle and confess their sins to the Father in order to experience fellowship with the Father since He is holy and does not tolerate sin or evil.

The Lord Jesus Christ's substitutionary death on the cross is the basis for the forgiveness of the believer's sins both in the positional, experiential and perfective sense.

It is extremely important for the believer to understand that this verb *homologeō* in 1 John 1:9 has no emotional connotation attached to it and was used in classical Greek for confessing one's guilt in court. The Bible does not teach that the believer is to feel sorry for their sins but rather they are to confess their sins to the Father. God is not concerned with the believer emoting, but rather God is interested in what His Son did at that cross of Calvary 2000 years ago when every sin in human history, past, present and future was imputed to His Son and was judged by His justice. This is why the Scriptures state in Hebrews 8:11 that God remembers the believer's sins no more. His Son paid the penalty for those sins, which was His death.

However, we must keep in mind that as the believer grows up spiritually committing sin will become more and more repulsive. Eventually, God wants the believer to adopt His view of sin and not take joy in committing sin.

In 1 John 1:9, the apostle John asserts that the Father is characterized as being faithful and just. By "faithful," he means that the Father firmly adheres to His promises to forgive sin when the believer confesses any sin to Him.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the adjective "faithful," "strict or thorough in the performance of duty; true to one's word, promises, vows; steady in allegiance or affection; loyal; reliable, trusted, or believed; adhering or true to fact or an original." They also state, "faithful implies long-continued and steadfast fidelity to whatever one is bound to by a pledge, duty or obligation.

If we paraphrase these definitions, we could say that the Father forgives the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him because: (1) He is true to His promise in His Word to forgive the sins of those who express faith in His Son. (2) He is steady in allegiance to His promise of the forgiveness of sins.

The Father is *pistos*, "**faithful**" to forgive the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him because the Father always fulfills His promise and His agreement in the New Covenant with Israel to forgive sins based upon the merits of the death of His Jesus Christ on the cross. Those Jews who have expressed faith alone in Christ alone enter into that New Covenant promise and agreement that provides the forgiveness of sins (cf. Jer. 31:34). Those Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior are engrafted into regenerate Jews according to Romans 11:17. Consequently, these regenerate Gentiles benefit from the New Covenant promise stipulating the forgiveness of sins to those who trust in the Messiah.

The believer's confession of sins to the Father points the Father's attention to His New covenant agreement and promise to forgive sin. The believer's confession of their personal sins to the Father obligates the Father to execute His promise of the forgiveness of sins because the believer has met the requirements of this agreement at the moment of justification when they expressed faith alone in Christ alone.

Faithfulness is one of the attributes of God as related to moral beings (Deut. 7:9; 32:4; Lam. 3:23; Isa. 49:7; Hos. 11:12; Ps. 25:10; 33:4; 89:1-8; 91:4; 96:13; 98:3; 100:5; 119:75; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 3:3; 1 2 Tim. 2:13; Jn. 1:9; Heb. 10:23; 1 Pet. 4:19; Rev. 19:11). It is one of the relative attributes of God meaning that it is related to God's relationship to men. Faithfulness characterizes God's loyalty to His covenant people Israel and the Church.

Faithfulness is one of the relative attributes of God. There are two kinds of attributes: (1) Absolute or intrinsic: those attributes that God possesses of Himself such as life and love. (2) Relative: those attributes related to His creation and especially men and angels.

For example, by nature God is truth but when God relates that truth to man, God's truth becomes faithfulness. Love is one of God's intrinsic or absolute attributes but when His love is directed towards sinners, it becomes grace and mercy and compassion.

God is faithful to His promises found in the Old Testament, which speak of the forgiveness of sins. The promise of the forgiveness of sins is of course rooted in the Old Testament (Is. 43:25; 53:11; Ps. 103:12-13; Ezek. 36:24-26; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 7:18-20). In Christ, all the promises of the Old Testament prophets are fulfilled including the forgiveness of sins. The Lord is faithful to His promises in the Old Testament and specifically the New covenant to forgive sins. This is what Paul is referring to here in 1 John 1:9.

The voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ on the cross paid the penalty for every sin in human history-past, present and future and is the basis for the forgiveness of sins (1 John 2:12). The Lord in the institution of the Lord's Table speaks of this promise of the forgiveness of sins, which is based upon His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, which is denoted by the phrase "My blood." (Matt. 26:28)

Therefore, the promise of the forgiveness of sins is related to this substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 John 1:7). The Father remains faithful to the unfaithful Christian with regards to His promise to forgive sin, and which forgiveness of sins was based upon His death on the cross.

The apostles proclaimed that this promise of the forgiveness of sins is appropriated through faith in the Lord Jesus because in Him is the fulfillment of all the promises that were made through the Old Testament prophets (Acts 2:14-41; 10:33-44; 13:16-39; 26:1-18; 2 Cor. 1:18-20). It is through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone that an individual receives the forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness of sins is based entirely upon the merits of the Lord Jesus and His finished work on the cross and for Christ's sake the Christian's sins forgiven (Rom. 4:1-17; 11:6; Gal. 2:16; 3:5-9; Eph. 2:1-9; Titus 3:5-7).

The believer is no longer under judgment because of their faith in Jesus Christ which took place at their conversion which resulted in their being declared justified by the Father (John 3:18; 5:24). The

believer is no longer under condemnation because of his union with Christ through the baptism of the Spirit (Rom. 8:1; Col. 2:13-14). God remembers the believer's sins no more because of the merits of His Son Jesus Christ's death on the cross (Ps. 51:1-9; Heb. 8:12; 10:17).

The New Covenant to Israel is mentioned by our Lord in instituting the communion service in Luke 22:20 and by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:25. Although the church is not Israel, she still benefits from the promise of forgiveness of sins which is offered in the New Covenant. As we noted, those Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior are engrafted into regenerate Jews according to Romans 11:17. Consequently, these regenerate Gentiles benefit from the New Covenant promise stipulating the forgiveness of sins to those who trust in the Messiah. A Gentile benefits from the promise of the forgiveness of sins in the New Covenant when they exercise faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Paul's teaching in Romans makes clear that both Jew and Gentile sinners can receive the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of righteousness when they exercise faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is of the Jews not only in the sense that the Savior Jesus Christ is a Jew but also the promise of salvation and the forgiveness of sins is rooted in the New Covenant promises to Israel.

The church age believer is restored to fellowship with God when they confess their sins to the Father because He is faithful to His covenant and His promise to provide for the forgiveness of sins, which is based upon His Son's death on the cross.

After conversion, the believer experiences, that which is true of themselves positionally when they confess their sins to the Father. God is faithful to His covenant and promise to forgive the believer's sins because He was propitiated meaning He is totally and completely satisfied with His Son's death on the cross as the payment for every sin in human history-past, present and future (1 John 2:1-2).

Therefore, the believer who confesses their sins to the Father is in a sense reminding the Father of His covenant promise to forgive sins (1 John 1:9). This is of course is from the human perspective since God does not need to be reminded. The Father is true to His promise to forgive the sins of those who express faith in His Son. His steadfast fidelity to His promise in His Word to forgive sins obligates the Father to forgive the believer their sins when they confess them since the believer has met the requirements of the agreement at the moment of justification when they expressed faith alone in Christ alone.

As we noted, John asserts in 1 John 1:9 that God is "just" in the sense that the execution of His judgments of His government are in perfect agreement with His perfect character and nature and are also based upon the merits of the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. Therefore, He is "just" to execute the law of the forgiveness of sins that is based upon the merits of the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. It also denotes the agreement between the Father's nature and His acts.

The adjective *dikaios* here in 1 John 1:9 should be translated "just," rather than "righteous" since the former more accurately expresses the meaning of the word in the Greek.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the adjective "righteous," "characterized by uprightness or morality; morally right or justifiable; acting in an upright, moral way; virtuous." They define the adjective "just," "guided by truth, reason, justice and fairness; done or made according to principle; equitable; proper; based on right; rightful, lawful; agreeable to truth or fact; true; correct;

given or awarded rightly; deserved; as a sentence, punishment, reward; in accordance with standards or requirements; proper or right; especially in Biblical use, righteous.”

If we paraphrase the definition of “just” we could say that the Father is *dikaios*, “just” to forgive the believer their personal sins when they confess them to Him because: (1) He is guided by His attribute of truth, which proclaims the forgiveness of sins to those who have believed in His Son. (2) He is guided by His attribute of justice, which executes the judgment of the forgiveness of sins because the righteous demands of the Father have been propitiated by the merits of His Son Jesus Christ’s death on the cross. (3) He always operates according to His perfect principles. (4) He is equitable because His righteous demands have been propitiated by the merits of His Son Jesus Christ’s death on the cross. (5) He always does everything based upon what is right, rightful and lawful and it is right, rightful and lawful to forgive the believer’s his sins when he confesses them because the Father’s righteous demands that the believer’s sins be judged has been propitiated by the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. (6) He always does what is agreeable to His attribute of truth, which proclaims the forgiveness of sins to those who have expressed faith alone in Christ alone. (7) He rightly rewards the believer with the forgiveness of their sins experientially when they confess them to the Father because the Father’s righteous demands that the believer’s sins be judged has been propitiated by the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. (8) He always operates according to His perfect standards and principles because of perfect holy character and nature.

The Father is “**just**” to forgive the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him because the Father always fulfills His promise and His agreement in the New Covenant with Israel to forgive sins based upon the merits of the death of His Jesus Christ on the cross. Those Jews who have expressed faith alone in Christ alone enter into that New Covenant promise and agreement that provides the forgiveness of sins (cf. Jer. 31:34). As we noted earlier, those Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior are engrafted into regenerate Jews according to Romans 11:17. Consequently, these regenerate Gentiles benefit from the New Covenant promise stipulating the forgiveness of sins to those who trust in the Messiah. The believer’s confession of sins to the Father points the Father’s attention to His New covenant agreement and promise to forgive sin. The believer’s confession of their personal sins to the Father obligates the Father to execute His promise of the forgiveness of sins because the believer has met the requirements of this agreement at the moment of justification when they expressed faith alone in Christ alone.

The verb *aphiemi*, “forgive” in 1 John 1:9 pertains to removing the guilt resulting from wrongdoing. It speaks of the Father removing the guilt from the believer as a result of the believer sinning against Him. It expresses the idea that the Father lets go of the obligation that the believer owes Him as a result of sinning against Him. It means to release someone from the guilt or penalty of sin as one would a financial debt. To forgive means to give someone a release from the wrong that he has done to you. It means to give up any right of retaliation.

Again, the basis for releasing the believer from this obligation is Jesus Christ’s death on the cross which satisfied the demands of the Father’s holiness that required that sin be judged and bear the full brunt of His righteous indignation.

1 John 1:9 ends with John asserting that the Father purifies the believer from all unrighteousness or each and every unrighteous thought, word and action. This is an explanatory statement which expresses

the idea that the Father forgiving the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him can also be described as purifying them from all unrighteousness.

This interpretation is indicated by the fact that all sin is unrighteousness. It can also be supported by the fact that when the Father forgives the believer their sins, He is in effect purifying them “experientially” from the guilt of sin which is described by John as “unrighteousness.” They are purified “positionally” and in a “perfective” sense as we have noted earlier.

Jesus Christ’s substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths is the basis for the Father purifying the believer when they confess their sins to Him. In other words, the Father purifies them when they confess their sins to Him because His Son Jesus Christ’s substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross was the payment for their sins. They propitiated the Father whose holiness demanded that they be judged for committing these sins against Him.

In 1 John 1:9, the noun *adikia* means “unrighteousness” and is used to describe the sins of the believer. The word is antithetical in meaning to the noun *dikaosune*, “righteousness,” which is a general term for “virtue” and “integrity” of character, thus, *adikia* is the state of possessing no virtue or integrity.

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines “integrity”: (1) Soundness of and adherence to moral principle and character; uprightness; honesty (2) The state of being whole, entire, or undiminished (3) A sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition. Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines “virtue”: (1) Moral excellence; goodness; righteousness (2) Conformity of one’s life and conduct to moral and ethical principles; uprightness, rectitude.

Therefore, the noun *adikia* describes the believer’s sins as thoughts, words or actions that do not adhere to the will of God, and that are not upright, honest, perfectly whole, thus leaving them in an unsound, impaired and in a bad condition. It describes these thoughts, words and actions as having no virtue in the sense that they have no moral excellence, goodness, and do not conform to the will of God.

Forgiveness of Sins - Positional, Experiential and Perfective

At the moment of justification, when a person makes the non-meritorious decision to believe in Christ for salvation, they appropriate the forgiveness of their sins-past, present and future in a positional sense, experiential and perfective sense.

By “positional,” I mean that God views the believer as being forgiven by Him the moment He declared them justified through faith in His Son Jesus Christ as Savior. It means that all their sins-past, present and future have been forgiven by Him. It means that God the Father has accepted them forever and that there is no sin during their lifetime which will keep them from spending all of eternity with Him.

God forgiving the believer in a “positional” sense means: (1) This is what God has done for the church age believer as a result of their faith in His Son Jesus Christ. (2) This is God’s viewpoint of the church age believer. (3) It sets up the potential to experience the forgiveness of these sins in time. (4) It provides the believer with the guarantee of experiencing the forgiveness of their sins for all of eternity.

By “experiential,” I mean that the believer can experience the forgiveness sins after their justification by confessing their sins to the Father. They will not experience the forgiveness of their sins if they refuse to confess their sins to the Father. So this stage is only a potential.

By “perfective,” I mean that the believer will experience the forgiveness of sins throughout all of eternity in a resurrection body. Every believer is *guaranteed* this and will be experienced by every believer regardless of their response in time to what God has done for them through the union and identification with His Son Jesus Christ.

The unbeliever does not appropriate the forgiveness of sins because they have not placed their trust in Christ for salvation. The unbeliever’s sins will never be brought up at the Great White Throne Judgment of unbelievers since Christ paid the penalty for their sins with His death on the cross. They will be judged according to their relative human self-righteous deeds, which do not measure up to the absolute perfect righteousness of Christ (Rev. 20:11-15).

In the same way that the unbeliever’s sins are not brought up at the Great White Throne so the believer’s sins will never be brought up at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church since the believer’s personal sins were also paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ’s death on the cross.

The believer’s confession of their sins after justification demonstrates that they “agree” with God about their sin. When their thoughts, words and actions are not agreement with the will of the Father, they are confessing that these thoughts, words or actions are sin. This confession demonstrates that the believer is in “agreement” with God in that they are thinking, speaking or acting in accordance with the will of the Father and thus His holy standards, which rejects all sin.

Fellowship with God is a moment-by-moment experience, thus the moment the believer commits any mental, verbal or overt act of sin, they have lost their fellowship with God, who is holy, i.e. perfect in character and integrity. However, the moment they confess these sins, they are at that moment restored to fellowship with God because of the merits of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. This purifies the believer’s conscience, which is defiled by committing personal sin against God (cf. Heb. 9:13-14; James 4:8).

To maintain this fellowship once it has been restored through the confession of sin demands that the believer obey the Holy Spirit who speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God. When they are doing this, they are obeying the commands of Ephesians 5:18 and Colossians 3:16. Therefore, once the confession of sin has taken place the believer needs to maintain and sustain their fellowship with God by obeying the Father’s will, which the Holy Spirit reveals to the believer through the communication of the Word of God. Obeying the Word of Truth, which is inspired by the Spirit and reveals the Father’s will, is the means by which the believer maintains and sustains their fellowship with God.

Is Confession of Sin (1 John 1:9) Related to the Filling of the Spirit?

Some believers today argue that the confession of sin is not related to the filling of the Spirit. As we have noted, 1 John 1:9 teaches the Christian to confess their sins to the Father in order to be restored to fellowship with God.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (ESV)

1 John 1:9 But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. (NET)

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NASB95)

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV84)

If you notice, there is no explicit mention of the filling of the Spirit in this verse. There is only the mention that if the Christian confesses their sins to the Father. Since 1 John 1:9 is a part of a discussion found in 1 John 1:5-2:2 concerning sin in relation to fellowship, John is teaching that if the Christian confesses their sins to the Father, they will be restored to fellowship with God. Therefore, this has caused some to argue that the confession of sin does not restore the filling of the Spirit since there is no explicit reference to the Spirit in 1 John 1:9 or anywhere in that context.

However, this is an argument from silence and very dangerous since there are many truths in the Bible which are revealed through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture, but are not revealed in one particular verse explicitly. Take for example the doctrines of the Trinity and the Rapture. No orthodox or evangelic Christian today would deny the doctrine of the “Trinity” even though the term appears nowhere in the Bible. They also would not deny the rapture of the church even though the word “rapture” is not in the Bible.

So, we can say that even though there is no explicit reference to the term “Trinity” in the Bible, this does not mean that the doctrine of the Trinity is false since if we can compare Scripture with Scripture it is clear that this term accurately describes the teaching of Scripture. In the same way, even though the word “rapture” does not appear in Scripture, it is clearly one of the great truths in the Bible when we compare Scripture with Scripture.

Just as the doctrines of the rapture and the Trinity are known through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture and not through one particular verse of Scripture so the doctrine of the confession of sin to restore the filling of the Spirit is not found in one particular verse of Scripture but is revealed through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture.

So the question arises, “Does the confession of sins to God the Father by the Christian restore the filling of the Spirit?” To answer this, we need to answer the question, “Is the filling of the Spirit related to fellowship with God?” The answer to that question is, it must, since to have fellowship with God the Father and the Son one would also be experiencing fellowship with the Holy Spirit. If one is experiencing fellowship with the Father, one is also experiencing it with the Son and the Spirit.

Furthermore, Paul taught in 2 Timothy 3:16 that “all Scripture is God-breathed!” Peter taught in 2 Peter 1:20-21 that the Holy Spirit inspired the Bible. Thus, obviously 1 John 1:9 was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Now, if the believer applies 1 John 1:9 and confesses their sin to the Father, they have just obeyed the Holy Spirit since He is the member of the Trinity teaching the Christian to apply this verse. So, if the Christian does what 1 John 1:9 says to do and confesses their sin, they are filled with Spirit

since they are in effect, being influenced by the Holy Spirit since He is the one speaking through John in 1 John 1:9.

This leads us to another question, “What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?” Well, first, it is directly related to the Word of God. To obey the Word of God is to obey the Holy Spirit since He inspired the Word of God and He speaks actively to the believer through the Bible regarding the Father’s will for their lives.

The commands to be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul in Colossians 3:16 are synonymous since each bears the same results: fellowship with the Father. This makes sense because we already established that the Spirit inspired the Word of God and thus speaks to the Christian through the Word.

The commands, “be filled with the Spirit” and “let the Word of Christ richly dwell within you,” are synonymous because the Holy Spirit speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God regarding the Father’s character and nature.

The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures, (2 Ti 3:16) makes them understandable to the believer, (John 16:13-16) guides the believer in the correct application of the Word of God, and reproduces the character of Christ in the believer who obeys the Word of God (Gal 5:22-23). Therefore, by obeying the Word of God, you are obeying the voice of the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. (NASB95)

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

Now if one looks carefully at the results of obeying both of these commands, one can see that they are synonymous since they both produce psalms and hymns, spiritual songs, singing and thanksgiving to God.

Therefore, if the believer obeys the teaching of the Holy Spirit in 1 John 1:9 and confesses their sins to the Father, they will be filled with the Spirit since obedience to the Word of God is equivalent to obeying the Spirit. The latter inspired the former. In other words, if the believer obeys the teaching of the Holy Spirit in 1 John 1:9 and confesses their sins to the Father, they will be obeying the commands to be filled with the Spirit and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul since both commands are synonymous.

This leads to another question, “Why did Paul in Colossians 3:16 not mention the Holy Spirit in that verse but does so in Ephesians 5:18?” The answer is simply that Paul wanted to emphasize the Holy Spirit’s relationship to fellowship in Ephesians 5:18 whereas in Colossians 3:16 he wanted to emphasize the importance of the Word of God in relation to fellowship. So, if you look at both passages, Paul is

emphasizing that the Bible is a living book in that the Spirit inspired it and is speaking actively to us in it.

One must realize that experiencing fellowship with God is in effect experiencing one's eternal relationship with the Triune God and one's union and identification with Jesus Christ. One must not blur the distinction between our eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God though both are obviously related. One also must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience.

When I say one must not blur the distinction between one's eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God I mean that though they are related, they are different. They are related because fellowship with God is experiencing one's eternal relationship with God. They are different in that sin does not cause one to lose one's eternal relationship with God but it does cause one to lose fellowship with God.

Let me use an analogy. I entered the Wenstrom family at physical birth. When I disobeyed my parents, I lost fellowship with them. I was sent to my room. They didn't disown me but they refused to have fellowship with me until I did two things. One I confessed I was wrong to them. Then, I had to do what I was told. The same is true in God's family, if we sin, God will not have fellowship with us. He doesn't disown us when we sin. He disciplines us because He loves us (Hebrews 12:4-11; Revelation 3:19). We are still in His family. When we confess our sins to our heavenly Father we are restored to fellowship with Him and when we obey Him we maintain that fellowship with Him.

When I say, we must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience, mean that committing sin (mental, verbal, or overt) prevents us from experiencing our position in Christ as well as sanctification and yet it does not cause us to lose our position in Christ. In fact, to experience fellowship with God is to experience one's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Now, lastly, there are many metaphors in Scripture which speak of experiencing fellowship with God from different perspectives. For instance, experiencing sanctification speaks of fellowship with God from the perspective that it is experiencing being set apart to serve God exclusively. Fellowship with God speaks of experiencing one's relationship with God from the perspective that we are communing with God.

John uses the term "abide" in his writings (1 John 2:6, 10) which is a reference to the Lord's Vine and the Branches Metaphor. Our Lord taught His disciples that He is the Vine and they are the Branches and that like a branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine so they cannot produce fruit apart from Him (John 15:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10). This term "abide" is a reference to fellowship with God.

John also uses the term "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7) which speaks of fellowship with God from the perspective that it is living according to God's holy standards. In 1 John 1:5 he says that "God is light" which is a reference to the fact that as to His character and nature, God is holy. So, the believer is living according to God's holy standards when they are in fellowship with God. God's holy standards are found in the Word of God.

So, the filling of the Spirit and fellowship with God are not mutually exclusive. They are inextricably related. In fact, experiencing one's sanctification, and walking in the light and abiding in Christ or His Word are also inextricably tied to each other. They all speak of experiencing fellowship with God from different perspectives. Thus, when a believer confesses their sins, they are not only restored to fellowship with God but they are filled with the Spirit since to be in fellowship with God demands obedience to God's Word and the Holy Spirit inspired God's Word and speaks actively to the believer through the Word. They are also experiencing sanctification and are walking in the light, i.e. living according to God's holy standards.

Sins by the Believer against the Holy Spirit

There are two types of sin committed by the unbeliever against God the Holy Spirit: (1) **"Blasphemy"** against the Spirit (Matthew 12:14-32) (2) **"Resistance"** of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51).

There are three sins by the believer against the Holy Spirit: (1) **"Lying"** to God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3) (2) **"Grieving"** the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) (3) **"Quenching"** the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

Grieving the Spirit

"Grieving" the Holy Spirit is a sin that is directed towards His Person and takes place in the life of the believer when his thoughts, words and actions are influenced and governed by the cosmic system of Satan and the old sin nature. It prevents the Christian from being filled with the Spirit and from walking according to the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (NASB95)

It is clear from the context that the lust patterns of the old sin nature are offensive to the Holy Spirit. The fact that Paul employs the adjective *hagios*, **"Holy,"** clearly indicates that sin grieves the Spirit since His holiness or integrity is offended by sin.

Sin offends the perfect integrity of the Spirit who is our true teacher and mentor. In both the preceding and following contexts, the apostle Paul is encouraging believers in Ephesus to put off the old sinful patterns and to replace them with patterns of righteousness. He wants them to put off the old pre-salvation Adamic nature and put on the new post-salvation Christ-nature. The new Christ-nature received at the moment of conversion produces the righteousness of God whereas the old Adamic-nature can only produce human self-righteousness and sin. So it is clear that living in our old Adamic-natures offends the perfect integrity of the Spirit.

The phrase **"do not grieve"** is composed of two words in the original language: (1) Negative particle *me* (2) second person plural present active imperative form of the verb *lupeo*. The verb *lupeo* in classical and Septuagint (LXX) usage was a general term for "sorrow," encompassing various expressions of grief.

Lupeo means, “to cause pain, sorrow, grief, distress” to someone. It may refer to outward mourning or simply to sad feelings. It is commonly used to designate heaviness of heart. In the papyri its use ranges from grief over the loss of a loved one to sadness over the loss of a cloak.

The verb *lupeo* appears 26 times in the Greek New Testament. In the New Testament, it is used for all its variations. It denotes deep sorrow such as in the case of our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:37). It was used for the disciples’ reaction to our Lord’s death in Matthew 17:23 and John 16:20. Here it denotes sorrow over sin by the Holy Spirit.

We must note that you cannot literally grieve the Holy Spirit. This is what we call in theology an “anthropopathism.” The negative mandate here in Ephesians 4:30 and the one issued in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 to not quench the Spirit’s power are “anthropopathisms.” An “anthropopathism” is language of accommodation through which infinite God reveals Himself to the finite man.

The term “anthropopathism” is derived from the Greek: (1) *Anthropos*, “man.” (2) *Pathos*, “an inner function of the soul with overt manifestations.” Anthropopathisms ascribe to God human characteristics, which He does not have, in order to explain God’s policy or viewpoint to us in terms of human attitudes. The Bible ascribes the following human emotions to God that He does not possess in order to convey His attitude towards man in terms that man can understand.

The following is a brief list of Anthropopathisms found in the Word of God. Examples of Anthropopathisms: (1) God hates (Romans 9:13). (2) Harbors jealousy (Exodus 20:5a; 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24; 6:15a). (3) Changes His mind (Genesis 6:6). (4) Vents violent anger (Jeremiah 4:8; 12:13; 25:37; 51:45; Ezek. 5:15). These qualities are incompatible with God’s essence, but such statements are descriptive and gain the attention of the reader.

In Ephesians 4:30 the apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit employs an anthropopathism, ascribing the human emotion of grieving to the Holy Spirit, which He does not possess in order to communicate the Spirit’s attitude towards us when we live in our old sin natures. He is using language of accommodation to communicate the Spirit’s attitude toward us when we sin.

So here in Ephesians 4:30 Paul is issuing a prohibition to not grieve the Holy Spirit. This prohibition is expressed by the negative particle *me*, and the present imperative form of the verb *lupeo*, which together means “**do not grieve.**” The particle *me* negates the verb *lupeo*, thus making this a prohibition. So, Paul employs the negative *me* here with the imperative mood of the verb *lupeo* in order to prohibit or forbid the Ephesian believers from grieving the Holy Spirit.

Here the context clearly indicates that the prohibition makes no comment as to whether the Ephesian believers were grieving the Holy Spirit or not but rather Paul is simply expressing his desire that they do not get into the habit of grieving the Holy Spirit, which is a result of conducting oneself according to the lust patterns of the old sin nature. There is no indication in the entire Ephesian epistle that the Ephesians were living in their old sin nature or committing this particular act of sin. There is no implication whatsoever.

By issuing this prohibition, Paul is performing preventative maintenance. He is warning them ahead of time not to conduct themselves according to their old sin nature, which results in grieving the Holy Spirit. Paul is not telling the Ephesian believers to cease from this act that they were in already in the

process of committing, but rather it is a prohibition designed to let the Holy Spirit perform His function of forming Christ-like character in the Ephesian believers.

He is not implying that they were already involved in this sin of grieving the Holy Spirit but rather he is expressing a general precept. This is a customary present tense used to express habitual action. The customary present tense of this prohibition expresses the idea Paul does not want the Ephesian believers to get into the habit of grieving the Holy Spirit. It denotes a general precept in order that the Spirit can continue building Christ-like character building in the Ephesian believers.

Ephesians 4:30 Do not make it a habit to grieve the Holy Spirit by means of whom all of you have been sealed for the day of redemption. (Author's translation)

Please note that I say that Paul does not want the Ephesian believers to get into the habit of sinning. No believer can stop sinning altogether. As long as we have an old sin nature and live in the devil's world we will be tempted to sin and we will sin. The Bible states that we are deceiving ourselves if we say we can stop sinning altogether while we still have an old sin nature and live in the devil's world.

"Grieving" the Holy Spirit deals with the issue of known sin. All sin is rebellion but the issue here in Ephesian 4:30 is known sin. Or sin that we harbor in our hearts and are aware of, but don't confess. We cannot confess to the Father a sin we are not cognizant of or aware of. Known sin in the life of a believer in an anthropopathic sense grieves, pains, or offends the heart of the Holy Spirit or it offends His holiness or integrity. The Spirit is holy and thus abhors sin.

You must understand that the Holy Spirit desires to guide and empower us to do the Father's will. He longs to transform us into the character of Christ. When He cannot, He is grieved because He is offended by sin, particularly by the sins of self-reliance and rebellion, which hinder His purpose in indwelling us. We grieve the Holy Spirit when we are not applying the Word of God to our thought process. We grieve the Holy Spirit when our conduct...our words and actions are contrary to the Word of God. Grieving the Spirit is when the believer does not think, speak or act in accordance with the mandates found in the Word of God, which is the mind of Christ.

There are several things that cause the believer to grieve the Holy Spirit. The first of which is legalism, which is man operating in the energy of his own resources, namely, his soul and his flesh. Legalism is seeking to do good deeds or religious works and then thinking this somehow merits God's favor or gains His approbation. In legalism, man's faith is in his own abilities. The second thing that grieves the Spirit is license, which is the believer's abuse of his freedom in Christ for self-centered reasons in the pursuit of their liberty. Galatians 5:1-15, Romans 14-14 and 1 Corinthians 8 all call attention to this licentious lifestyle.

There are also three powers which are vying to control our souls: (1) Cosmic system (Romans 12:2). (2) Flesh (Galatians 5:16-17). (3) Devil (Ephesians 6:10-18).

There are also four problems which hinder the Spirit's work in producing Christ-like character in the believer: (1) Ignorance of God's Word (Romans 6:1f). (2) Bias: preconceived ideas from one's background that blocks out the truth of Scripture (Mk. 7:6-13). (3) Unbelief or an attitude of self-dependence (Jeremiah 17:5; cf. Galatians 3:3, 5; with 5:1-5). (4) Rationalization: rationalizing our sins rather than confessing them (Psalm 32:3-5; 51; 6, 10, 16).

The lust for position, approbation, possessions, wealth, power, and pleasure are all lust patterns, which grieve the Spirit. They are products of Satan's cosmic system and the old sin nature. They are all lies that people believe. We cannot find true happiness, significance and security in life by seeking pleasure, power, praise, position and wealth. These things became an idol in our souls and hinder the Spirit's work in our lives, which is to produce the character of Christ in our lives. There is a hole in each of our hearts that only God can fill.

There are a number of negative results that take place when we grieve the Holy Spirit. First of all, it results in the loss of fellowship with God. When the Spirit is grieved our prayer life is hindered (Psalm 66:18). So also, is our witnessing (Acts 1:8) and our Bible study (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; Ephesians 3:16f). So, in other words all the Spirit's dynamic ministries are hindered when we grieve the Spirit. We waste our spiritual, mental and physical resources when we grieve the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

Grieving the Spirit on a habitual basis affects our health, integrity, human relationships and society as a whole. A lifestyle of always grieving the Spirit will result in divine discipline and eventually dying discipline if we fail to confess any known sin to the Father (1 John 1:9). It will result in the loss of testimony, which dishonors the Lord (cf. 1 Peter 3:15-17; 4:15-16). A lifestyle of grieving the Spirit also results in the loss of rewards (1 John 2:28-3:3; cf. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

Quenching the Spirit

"Quenching" the Spirit is another sin committed by the believer that prevents him from being filled with the Spirit and walking according to the Spirit. In the context of 1 Thessalonians 5:19, the prohibition to not "**quench**" the Spirit is a part of a series of exhortations which concludes Paul's message to the Thessalonians. In 1 Thessalonians 1:2-9 Paul praises the Thessalonians for their spiritual walk and witness. But he also challenges them throughout the rest of the epistle to continue to live obediently, orderly and in harmony with one another and with those in leadership. These praises and challenges are given in light of the rapture, which is the resurrection of the church, which is imminent and alluded to in every chapter of 1 Thessalonians.

Paul does not employ the adjective *hagios*, "**Holy**" in the prohibition of 1 Thessalonians 5:19 because he is not emphasizing the effect that sin has upon the Person of the Spirit and thus our fellowship with Him, but rather it emphasizes the negative impact that sin has upon His various post-salvation functions that He performs on behalf of the believer.

Grieving the Spirit emphasizes the negative impact sin has on our relationship with the Person of the Holy Spirit, namely, our fellowship with Him while quenching the Spirit emphasizes the negative impact it has upon the Spirit's work in our lives, which is to manifest the character of Christ in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. (NASB95)

The phrase "**do not quench**" is composed of two words in the Greek: (1) Negative particle *me*. (2) Second person plural present active imperative form of the verb *sbennumi*.

The verb *sbennumi* has the following meanings in classical literature and the Septuagint (LXX): (1) Of fire: "to quench, to be extinguished, to go out." (2) Of fluids: "to suck dry, to dry up." (3) Of men, plants, and cities: "to die, perish." (4) Of foods in cooking: "to steam." (5) "To still, to damp down, to

restrain, to rest, to lie down, to abate.” (6) Of emotions and moods: “to still, to calm.” (7) “To suppress, to restrain, to fade, to die out, to disappear” of the influence of personality.

The verb appears 8 times in the Greek New Testament where it is always used in relation to fire, either in a literal or metaphoric sense. Here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we have the metaphorical usage of the verb. The English translations use the word “quench” to translate the word. This is a poor choice. The English word “quench” has the connotation in our day and age that is related to thirst. We are not talking about quenching the Spirit’s thirst here.

The term *sbennumi* in the Greek New Testament is always used of extinguishing a light or fire. In using the word here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Paul pictured the Spirit of God as fire. One of the figures that is used for the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures is fire. John the Baptist is reported as having explicitly linked the coming of the Spirit with fire.

The “**tongues of fire**” that rested over the heads of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost was sign of the Spirit’s presence in the church. The Baptism of the Spirit thus was linked with fire.

In the Old Testament, fire was a symbol of the Lord’s presence and the instrument of His power, either in the way of approval or judgment. The Lord pre-incarnate Christ appeared in the burning bush to Moses in Exodus 3:2-5, which we call in theology, a theophany.

Fire was also equated with the Lord’s judgment. God is compared to fire not only because of His perfect integrity but also on account of His anger towards sin.

Hebrews 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire. (NASB95)

What does fire produce? Light of course. Light enables us to see where we are going. In the same way that the pillar of fire provided light and guided the Exodus generation through the darkness of the desert so the Spirit provides light for the church age believer’s soul in order to guide him through the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan. When we sin, we are extinguishing the light that the Spirit provides in our soul when we are in fellowship.

Not only are we depriving ourselves the guidance and direction of the Spirit when we sin but we are also hindering the Spirit’s work of manifesting the light of Christ in our physical bodies while we live in the midst of the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan. The light of Christ is the Person of Christ or more accurately, the character of Christ. When we are out of fellowship, the light of Christ, which refers to the character of the Person of Christ, cannot be manifested in our physical bodies.

Remember what the Lord Jesus Christ said in **John 8:12** “**Therefore, Jesus addressed them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. The one who keeps on obeying me (as a lifestyle) shall no never walk in the darkness, but will possess the light of life.’**” (Author’s translation)

The Spirit’s job during the church age is always to manifest the light of Christ through the body of Christ. The responsibility of us as members of the body of Christ is to manifest the Person of Christ. The Spirit enables us to, but this is hindered and brought to a complete stop when we sin and are out of fellowship. Paul exhorts the Roman believers to put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:12 The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. (NASB95)

When we are filled or more accurately influenced by the Spirit, we can discern the lies from the cosmic system of Satan.

Ephesians 5:13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. (NASB95)

So the church's function as the body of Christ is to manifest the Person of Christ or in other words, the Light of Christ. This is why Paul desired that Christ would be manifested in his physical body in Philippians 1:21.

We know it is impossible for mortal man to extinguish the Holy Spirit of God so there must be a figure being employed here by the apostle Paul. The verb *sbennumi* is used in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 in a figurative or metaphorical sense of "hindering" the Spirit's work in our lives.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary lists the following definitions for the verb hinder: (1) To cause delay, interruption, or difficulty in; check, retard, hamper (2) To prevent from doing, acting, or happening (3) To be an obstacle or impediment.

The verb "hinder" emphasizes causing harmful or annoying delay or interference with progress. When we sin and get out of fellowship, we are hindering the activity of the Spirit in our lives.

What is that activity? Well we know one of His activities is to provide light for our souls meaning guidance and direction in doing the will of God as we live in the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan. The other activity that the Spirit is performing in our lives after salvation as we noted in Paul's use of the figure of fire and light is that He produces Christ-like character in us. When we sin and get out of fellowship we are in effect hindering the Spirit's work of manifesting the Light or the virtuous character of Christ in our physical bodies!

Remember what Paul said in **Galatians 4:19 My children, with whom I am again in labor until the character of Christ is formed in all of you. (NASB95)**

The fruit of the Spirit is the production of Christ-like character (Ephesians 5:9; Hebrews 12:11; James 3:18).

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (NASB95)

The Father is glorified when we develop more of the character of Christ in our lives.

John 15:8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and {so} prove to be My disciples." (NASB95)

When we sin and get of fellowship, this activity of the Spirit of fruit bearing is hindered or prevented from continuing."

If we paraphrase Webster's definitions of the verb "hinder" and relate them to the Spirit's work in our lives, we could say the following: (1) Sin causes a delay or an interruption of the Spirit's work in producing Christ-like character in the believer. (2) Sin hampers the Spirit's work of producing Christ-like character in the believer. (3) Sin prevents the Spirit from producing Christ-like character in the believer. (4) Sin is an obstacle or an impediment to the Spirit's work of producing Christ-like character in the believer. (5) Sin causes harmful and annoying delay or interference to the Spirit's work in producing Christ-like character in the believer. (6) Sin interferes with the progress of the Spirit's work of producing Christ-like character in the believer.

The negative particle *me* negates the verb *sbennumi* and is used to here to express a prohibition. Now the present imperative can express two different concepts: (1) Cessation of Activity in Progress: cessation of an act already in progress. (2) General Precept: Makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not.

There is no indication throughout the entire epistle that the Thessalonians were already living in their old sin nature or committing this particular act of sin. There is no implication whatsoever.

As in Ephesians 4:30, Paul is performing preventative maintenance by issuing this prohibition. He is warning them ahead of time not to hinder the Spirit's work in their lives. He is not implying that they were already involved in this sin of hindering the Holy Spirit but rather he is expressing a general precept. This is a customary present tense used to express habitual action. Paul does not want the Thessalonians to get into the habit of hindering the Spirit's work in their lives.

We are hindering the Spirit's efforts to bring us to Christ-likeness when we sin and get out of fellowship. In hindering the Spirit the stress is upon rendering inoperative the various post-salvation functions of the Spirit.

Post-salvation ministries of the Holy Spirit: (1) enabling power (Acts 1:8; Romans 15:13, 19; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 3:16). (2) Mentorship or Guidance (John 14:26, 15:26; 16:13-15; Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16). (3) Fellowship (2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:1). All of these post-salvation ministries are essential in developing Christ-like character in our lives as believers.

Quenching or more accurately hindering the Spirit looks at the effect of sin upon the Spirit but from the standpoint of His work that He is sent to perform in our lives.

When we are quenching the Spirit, we are denying ourselves the Spirit's omnipotence, which is essential in developing Christ-like character in us, which is the Father's, will for our lives. This enabling power of the Spirit provides the believer with divine omnipotence necessary to do the Father's will. Remember, a perfect plan designed by a perfect God demands perfect power. When we are disobedient to the Word of God and thus sin, we render inoperative the power of the Spirit in our lives, which power is designed to enable us to do the Father's will. What is the Father's will? That we bear fruit which as we noted is developing the character of Christ in our lives.

Quenching the Spirit not only deals with the rendering inoperative the omnipotence of the Spirit in our lives but also it refers to depriving ourselves of the mentorship of the Spirit.

The mentorship of the Spirit deals with the post-salvation ministry of the Spirit where He guides and instructs the believer into doing the will of God. The Spirit teaches and guides the believer in doing the will of God through the communication of the Word of God. Quenching the Spirit also involves loss of fellowship with God.

The Holy Spirit provides us the opportunity to have fellowship with both the Father and the Son as well as Himself. He provides access to this fellowship. When we sin we are denying ourselves fellowship with the Trinity. When we are hindering the Spirit, we are conducting ourselves contrary to the will of the Father. Quenching the Spirit means that our thoughts, words and actions are contrary to the will of God. It means that we are obstructing the Spirit's influence or work in our lives. We are not walking in agreement with the Spirit. We are working independently from Him. In the same way that grieving the Spirit prevents Him from influencing us so quenching or more accurately, hindering the Spirit does not permit the Spirit to influence our thoughts, words and actions. The Spirit is trying to conform our thoughts, words and actions to the image of His Son.

The Spirit is able to produce Christ-like character in the believer when he is filled with the Spirit. The Greek word for “**fruit**” is the word *karpos*, which is in the singular. The “**fruit**” of the Spirit is nine-fold. There are nine different manifestations of the “**fruit**” of the Spirit and *not* nine “**fruits**” of the Spirit. God the Holy Spirit produces fruit in the believer. It is *not* the fruit of the believer, but the fruit produced by the Spirit.

Lying to the Spirit

Another sin that prevents the believer from being filled with the Spirit or more accurately being influenced by the Spirit is that of “lying” to the Spirit. The only place where lying against the Holy Spirit is mentioned, is in the book of Acts.

A married couple committed it during the early first century church, during the pre-canon period of the church age. The account of their sin against the Holy Spirit is noted in Acts 5:1-11. The book of Acts documents the transition period from the dispensation of the Mosaic Law to the mystery dispensation called the church age. Believers in the Old Testament dispensations were governed by the Law but during the church age, believers are governed by the Holy Spirit. This is never more evident as in this passage in Acts regarding the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. (NASB95)

This passage refers to the fact that the apostles were evangelizing their fellow Jewish countrymen in Israel. The church had just multiplied overnight to 3,000 persons on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:41 and more were being added by the day according to Acts 2:47, thus many needs were arising that needed to be met. Their fellow Jewish countryman and the synagogues would not aid those who were identifying themselves with Jesus Christ who was just recently crucified just a few months before on the fourteenth day of Nisan, which is the Passover.

So, the church had to rely upon each other to meet each other's needs. Their giving here is the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. This is not communism that we see here in this passage where believers are selling their property to aid others. Communism is not only involuntary but tyranny itself. The

selling of property here by the disciples was voluntary and motivated properly by their love for the Lord and a product of the Holy Spirit's ministry. This extraordinary generosity that is expressed here by the early church was a result of the fruit of the Spirit and not performed by human power.

Furthermore, the early church was continually devoted to the apostle's teaching and to fellowship according to Acts 2:42. One of the doctrines the Lord taught the apostles was giving. This the apostles passed onto to the rest of the church.

We must note that the Greek in Acts 4:34 does not mean that everyone sold his property at once. Rather, from time to time, as need would arise, someone would sell a piece of property...not all their property at once...please note that...They would sell off a piece of property off as needs would arise. So, this was not a mass selling of all one's property.

There are two words in the Greek that clearly indicate this: (1) Nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *poleo*, "to sell." (2) third person plural imperfect active indicative form of the verb *phero*, "to bring."

The historical present of the participle *poleo* is used to describe a past event in narrative literature, which we have here, since Luke is narrating this event that took place early in the church's history. The reason for the use of the historical present is normally to portray an event vividly, as though the reader were in the midst of the scene as it unfolds.

The key is the imperfect tense of the verb *phero*. It is what we call an iterative imperfect tense. The imperfect is frequently used for repeated action in past time. It describes an action that occurred at different time intervals in the past.

There are two types of iterative imperfect: (1) Iterative proper, in which the imperfect indicates repeated action by the same agent (2) Distributive, in which the imperfect is used for individual acts of multiple agents. Here we have a distributive iterative imperfect tense used for individual acts of multiple agents.

The distributive iterative imperfect tense of the verb *phero* indicates that at different time intervals in the early 1st century church individual acts of giving were performed by multiple individuals in the church. So this was done from time to time as needs would arise. This was not a mass selling of all one's property as some suggest. This was not communism! What the disciples were doing was not imposed by law, rule, regulation or requirement, as is the case with communism but rather the beautiful outcome of a Spirit-filled life.

Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. Barnabas is a central figure in the early church before Paul came on the scene. He was an associate of Paul. In fact, it was Barnabas who sponsored Paul.

The early church was suspicious of Paul because of his previous persecutions of the church. Everyone was frightened of him. But Barnabas demonstrating his leadership qualities, namely, his compassion, removed the disciples distrust in Paul. He secured the admission of the former persecutor to their fellowship. He was called Barnabas as a testimony to his eloquence.

The literal meaning of his name is “son of prophecy.” He was a Levite meaning he was descended from the priestly tribe of Levi. He was from the island of Cyprus and a cousin of the evangelist Mark. This account here in the book of Acts is the first time that we encounter him on the pages of Scripture.

We now come to the central characters of our study, namely Ananias and his wife Sapphira. Here we also have Satan infiltrating the church and influencing these two believers to lie to the Holy Spirit.

Remember what Peter said: **1 Peter 5:8 Be of sober {spirit} be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (NASB95)**

Well, Satan is about to devour this married couple. They were not alert meaning that they were not of sober spirit or in other word, under the influence of the Spirit’s mentorship. Remember, that the early church had multiplied in the face of opposition from without. It never has been harmed or hindered from without but it has been perpetually harmed and its work hindered by perils from within. Satan could not destroy the church with opposition from without so he did what he has always done to churches, he seeks to divide from within.

Satan knows the following principle and knows it well: **Mark 3:25 “If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.” (NASB95)**

He seeks to cause church members to live in their old sin nature to live for self. Satan causes personality conflicts, which in turn divide a church from within. He brings individuals into a local assembly who are legalistic and self-righteous in the hopes of dividing it.

Galatians 2:4 But {it was} because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. (NASB95)

So here in Acts 5 we have Satan influencing two members of the early first century church and getting them involved in the sin of hypocrisy in the attempts to divide it. The Scriptures state that the church was unified.

Acts 4:32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one {of them} claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. (NASB95)

So here we have Satan looking to divide his enemy the church. The name “**Ananias**” means “God is gracious.” Ananias was certainly not gracious in fact he was grieving the Holy Spirit by not allowing the Spirit to produce the fruit of the Spirit in his life, which will result in generosity.

The name “**Sapphira**” means “beautiful.” Sapphira did not live up to her name for she was ugly in her soul.

The phrase “**kept back**” is the third person singular aorist middle indicative form of the verb *nosphizomai*, “to misappropriate funds for one’s own benefit.” This is an intensive middle emphasizing the part taking here by Ananias meaning that he kept back some of the money for himself. Ananias with his wife’s full knowledge misappropriated the money from the land they sold for their own benefit. They

only brought a portion of the money they received from the sale of the land. They wanted to enjoy the acclaim of the church, as Barnabas did, without making a genuine sacrifice.

Now you might say what is wrong with them keeping some of the money back for themselves? There is nothing wrong with it. There was no regulation in the church that men should give, or that they should give at all. This was not a requirement for fellowship or for service. So, what was their great sin? One must discover the nature of the sin by what Peter said both to Ananias and Sapphira.

The problem with these two individuals is that they were involved in hypocrisy. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was the sin of pretending that part of what they gave was all. It was the sin of attempting to appear what they really were not, of endeavoring to make it appear that they had done what they really had not. They were lying.

Ananias and Sapphira could have retained the proceeds from the sale of the property, of course, but in collusion with each other they had lied, saying they had given all the money when actually they had given only a portion of the money. They deliberately attempted to deceive the apostles and the rest of the church into thinking that they were giving all the money. You see, they were wanted the approbation of the entire church since as we read in Acts 4:36-37 that Barnabas had sold some of his property and gave all the money to the aid of the church. These two did not do that since they only gave a portion of the money while all the time deceiving everyone into thinking that they gave it all. The terrible nature of the sin is not that of refusing to give, not that of only giving part, but that of attempting to make men believe that they had given it all, when they had only given part, and so that of lying to God.

The word for “**hypocrite**” in the Greek New Testament is the noun *hupokrites*. Our English word “hypocrite” is a transliteration from the Greek word. It is a compound word based on the verb *krino*, “to judge.”

Hupokrites primarily denotes “one who answers”; then, “a stage-actor.” It was a custom for Greek and Roman actors to speak in large masks with mechanical devices for augmenting the force of the voice. Hence the word became used metaphorically of “a hypocrite.”

The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was the sin of acting the part of gracious givers when in fact they were not. So, the sin of Ananias and Sapphira was lying to the Holy Spirit and this sin was manifested in their hypocrisy before the congregation. One thing is for sure, they did not deceive God the Holy Spirit.

Luke is making a parallel between Ananias and Sapphira’s sin and Achan’s sin, which appears in Joshua 7. Luke’s use of the verb *nosphizomai* here in Acts 5:2, which in the Septuagint (Greek translation of Hebrew bible) heads the account in Joshua 7:1-26 of Achan’s misappropriation of part of what had been dedicated to God. His use of the verb here implies that Luke meant to draw a parallel between the sin of Achan as the Israelites began their conquest of Canaan and the sin of Ananias and Sapphira as the church began its mission. Both incidents came under the immediate and drastic judgment of God and teaching a sobering lesson and this is very likely how the early church saw it as well.

Acts 5:2 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back {some} of the price of the land?” (NASB95)

The word for “**filled**” is the third person singular aorist active indicative form of the verb *pleroo*. The same verb that we noted in Ephesians 5:18. Here in Acts 5:3 we have the same *pleroo* being employed by the writer Luke, but this time we have Satan influencing Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Spirit as a result of their hypocrisy. The Holy Spirit was not influencing, guiding or empowering these two to give to the church but rather Satan was influencing and the motivator behind this sin. They were not under the influence of the Spirit but under the influence of Satan. Throughout history Satan has been influencing believers to act against God. He motivated David to take a census of the nation of Israel independently from God (1 Chronicles 21:1). He also is influencing Peter to stop the Lord from doing the Father’s will and going to the Cross (Matthew 16:23).

The phrase “**to lie**” is the aorist middle infinitive form of the verb *pseudomai*. It means, “to communicate what is false, with the evident purpose of misleading.”

The middle voice is important because it effects the translation and therefore, the understanding of what went on this particular situation with Ananias and Sapphira. This is what we call a causative direct middle voice. The subject has something done for or to himself or herself. The cause here is volitional meaning that Ananias of his own volition committing the act of lying to the Holy Spirit, but the causative direct middle suggests that the prompting lay elsewhere and only that consent or permission or toleration was wrung from the subject.

So what the causative direct middle indicates is that Ananias of his own volitional lied to the Holy Spirit but that he was prompted or influence by Satan to do so! Instead of resisting Satan and submitting to the Holy Spirit, Ananias and Sapphira gave in to Satan and lied to the Holy Spirit.

Notice how Peter says that Ananias lied to God here in verse 4 and in verse 3 Peter says he lied to the Holy Spirit, thus affirming the Personality of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is a Person as this passages clearly demonstrates and not a force. You cannot lie to a force but you can lie to a Person. This sin proceeds from the heart that is not under the influence of the Spirit but under the influence of Satan and the cosmic system and the old sin nature.

Ananias and Sapphira committed this act of sin because they received this thought from Satan and acted upon it. This is very important because it brings out the principle that the Satan and the kingdom of darkness are involved in thought projection. Paul calls thought projections from the kingdom of darkness “**flaming missiles**.”

Ephesians 6:16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil {one}. (NASB95)

Satan was projecting thoughts at Ananias and Sapphira. He was feeding their arrogance and they acted, thus they were still responsible for their actions. They chose to listen to Satan. If you are not under the influence of the Spirit, it will bear out in your actions. The Lord noted the principle concerning the heart that is not under the Spirit’s guidance and direction (Matthew 15:18-20; Genesis 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9).

Acts 5:5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it. (NASB95)

The young men got up and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him. What has taken place is dying discipline. As Peter wrote later in his life, judgment begins “with the royal family of God.”

1 Peter 4:17a For {it is} time for judgment to begin with the household of God. (NASB95)

Here we also have a classic case of the sin unto death mentioned by the apostle John.

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not {leading} to death, he shall ask and {God} will for him give life to those who commit sin not {leading} to death. There is a sin {leading} to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. (NASB95)

This discipline was severe because it was an example to the church, just as Achan was an example for the nation of Israel during the dispensation of the Law.

There elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

Acts 5:7 Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter responded to her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?” And she said, “Yes, that was the price.” Then Peter {said} to her, “Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out {as well}.”(NASB95)

The word for “**test**” here is the verb *peirazo*. In early Greek literature *peirazo* meant, “to attempt, to try.” At times, it could mean, “to test or try the quality or character of someone or something.” In contexts of “testing” God or Christ, *peirazo* denotes the human efforts to “prove” God, which are actually signs of unbelief. God is not to be doubted because of His perfect integrity and veracity.

Unbelief doubts His perfect integrity. Ananias and Sapphira tested the Spirit to see how much they could get away with before He judges. The word here means that they were presuming on God the Holy Spirit. They were presuming on Him to see if He will perform His Word, or to stretch Him to the limits.

Acts 5:10 And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things. (NASB95)

The word for “**fear**” here is the noun *phobos*. This word appears in verse 5 and here in verse 11 in order to emphasis the impact that their deaths made on the early church.

Phobos was used often in classical literature for “sudden and violent fear, fright, panic.” Throughout the classical period the word was used not only for “terror” and “headlong flight” but “fear” or “apprehension,” whatever the cause. It was commonly used for fear of death. The word was sometimes used in the positive sense of “respect, awe,” or “reverence,” especially toward human authority or the gods.

In the Septuagint (LXX) *phobos* usually translates the Hebrew root *yir`ah*, “to fear, to be afraid.” In the LXX the word means “terror” when it relates to the enemies of Yahweh. It means “reverence, respect” when used in relation to the believer’s relationship to the Lord.

Phobos occurs 47 times in the Greek New Testament. It is used in a subjective sense meaning “fear, dread, terror.” It is also used in an objective sense meaning, that which strikes terror. *Phobos* is used of fears, apprehensions, and feelings of anxiety. It also means reverence, respect when directed toward God. This same usage is employed when directed toward legitimate authority, the rank of a person or his dignity. Here in our passage in Acts 5 we have the church demonstrating reverence and respect for the Lord as a result of the death of both Ananias and Sapphira.

Now, you might have asked the question that I have asked, which is Ananias and Sapphira were not the only Christians to have lied to the Holy Spirit, why did God put these two to death? Quite simply, the church was in her infancy and as we have noted there was a great transition-taking place from the dispensation of the Mosaic Law to the mystery dispensation, we call the church.

The Holy Spirit was instrumental in this transition. In fact, He was orchestrating it. The fact that these two individuals were put to death for their lying to the Holy Spirit was to demonstrate that God was at work in this group called the church! They didn’t commit a sin that was any more grievous than what believers commit today. Believers in our day and age give with improper motivation and have approbation lust just like these two did, but the Holy Spirit was placing His mark upon the church. The fact that these two were disciplined manifested before all Jerusalem both unbelievers and believers, that God was indeed working in this new group, which we know as the church and that indeed a new dispensation was underway.

So, by disciplining this couple, the Spirit revealed His displeasure with sin and it marked off the church as distinct from Israel for such discipline was not a work in Israel. Remember, God disciplines His children and not those who are not His. This principle is taught in Hebrews 12.

The fact that Ananias and Sapphira, two believers in the Lord Jesus Christ received dying discipline was a clear indication that God was working actively in the church as He was during the dispensation of Israel and in particular the Exodus generation where two million born-again believers received dying discipline from the Lord.

The Lord judges sin severely at the beginning of a new dispensation. At the beginning of the dispensation of the Law, the Lord severely disciplined believers in the 1st Client Nation to God, Israel. Just after the tabernacle was erected, God killed Nadab and Abihu for not following the proper protocol in worshipping Him in the Tabernacle. This is found in Leviticus 10. The Lord also killed Achan for disobeying orders after Israel had entered the Promised Land (Josh. 7). While God was certainly not responsible for their sins, He did use these judgments as warnings to His people, and even to us (1 Corinthians 10:11-12). So, by severely disciplining Ananias and Sapphira the Lord by means of the Holy Spirit was actively governing this new group in Jerusalem called the church.

The Results of the Filling of the Spirit

The results of being filled by means of the Spirit are many. First of all, the believer can now produce divine good of intrinsic value (Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:1-8; 1 Corinthians 3:11-14). The divine good

produced by the Holy Spirit in the obedient believer will result in rewards for the believer at the Bema Seat Evaluation (1 Corinthians 3:11-14). Christ is magnified in the inner life of the believer (2 Corinthians 3:3; Philippians 1:20-21). Christ is “**glorified**” in the believer’s human body (John 7:39 cf. 16:14; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The believer is able to imitate God (Ephesians 5:1-2). Christ “**formed**” in you, which is a reference to the character of Christ (Galatians 4:19). Christ “**dwelling in the heart**” of the believer which is a reference to the Word of Christ dominating one’s thinking (Ephesians 3:16-17). Christ being “**exalted**” in the body of the believer, which is a reference to the character of Christ being manifested through the believer’s physical body (Philippians 2:1-2). This manifestation of the character of Christ in the life of the believer is called the “**fruit of the Spirit**” (Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:1-8).

Another result of the filling of the Spirit or more accurately being influenced by the Spirit is that God the Holy Spirit controls the believer’s soul and is governing the believer’s decision making process and decisions (Galatians 5:16). The believer’s new nature becomes operational (Romans 13:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17a; Galatians 3:27; 6:15; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10; 2 Peter 1:4) and divine power is as well (Ephesians 3:16, 20; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 1:11). The believer who is influenced by means of the Spirit is experiencing his union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session. He is experiencing his sanctification and salvation or in other words, his deliverance from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system.

The believer now has the capacity to execute the plan of God the Father for his or her life, which is to become like Christ. Also, the believer can now truly worship God (John 4:24). The believer who is filled with the Spirit or influenced by means of the Spirit is truly spiritual and is experiencing fellowship with God (1 Corinthians 2:11-14). The soul of the believer who is being influenced by the means of the Spirit is protected from Satanic influence and false doctrine and the influence of the sin nature. It is also protected against legalism as well as arrogance, self-righteousness, self-deception, and self-absorption.

Underserved Suffering

A believer who experiences fellowship with God will eventually experience underserved suffering since the Father employs this type of suffering to conform the believer into the image of His Son Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that God uses undeserved suffering to advance His children to greater spiritual growth. The believer must experience undeserved suffering since it is through undeserved suffering that the believer is conformed to the image of Christ.

Underserved suffering is designed to get us to exchange our old pre-salvation Adamic life for the new post-salvation Christ life. It is designed to draw us closer to the Lord by leading us to appropriate by faith our union and identification with Christ in His death, resurrection and session. It is designed to get us to rest in our position in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:17-4:18).

There are three agencies that God employs to bring about suffering: (1) Old sin nature (2) Cosmic system (3) Satan.

Now there are different categories of suffering: (1) Self-induced misery (2) Divine discipline (3) Underserved Suffering for Blessing.

The power of God in our lives is never more noticeable or conspicuous as when we are suffering, going through adversities and even going through the process of dying. When self has been crucified then the life of Jesus can be manifested in the believer.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 illustrates this Biblical principle that divine power is manifested in human weakness. This passage deals with the apostle Paul's thorn in the flesh.

2 Corinthians 12:1 Boasting is necessary, though it is not profitable; but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago -- whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- such a man was caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I know how such a man -- whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows -- 4 was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak. 5 On behalf of such a man I will boast; but on my own behalf I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses. 6 For if I do wish to boast I will not be foolish, for I will be speaking the truth; but I refrain from this, so that no one will credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me. 7 Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me -- to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. 9 And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (NASB95)

The Lord gave Paul this thorn in the flesh in order to prevent him from getting too puffed up and arrogant because of his trip to the third heaven. His trip to heaven took place when he was stoned in Lystra. The account of this is found in Acts 14. The principle of God's grace being sufficient to handle the storms of life is mentioned in several passages.

Jeremiah 1:6 Then I said, "Alas, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, because I am a youth." 7 But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' because everywhere I send you, you shall go, and all that I command you, you shall speak. 8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you," declares the LORD. 9 Then the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth." (NASB95)

Matthew 10:19 "But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. 20 For it is not you who speak, but {it is} the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you." (NASB95)

Luke 21:15 "for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute." (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as {coming} from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 who also made us adequate {as} servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (NASB95)

Colossians 1:28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. 29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 1:14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are {found} in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

Tribulation and undeserved suffering will be the lot of God's people while living in enemy territory. The problems, difficulties and adversities which take place in a believer's life were already decreed by God the Father in eternity past to occur and are now controlled in time by the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the believer should have confidence and comfort in the midst of these things.

Romans 8:35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (NASB95)

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (NASB95)

1 Thessalonians 1:6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. (NASB95)

God's will, purpose and plan will be accomplished regardless of a believer's difficult circumstances or seemingly insurmountable problems because God ordained them to take place in eternity past under the divine decree. Therefore, He has already provided a solution for every problem, difficulty and adversity in life through the appropriation by faith of the promises in the Word of God.

The decree of God is His eternal, holy, wise and sovereign purpose, comprehending at once all things that ever were or will be in their causes, courses, conditions, successions, and relations and determining their certain futurity (i.e., that they will certainly take place). When I say comprehending I mean that the omniscience of God is the source of the divine decrees. When I say determining I mean that the sovereignty of God choosing before anything has existed which things would actually become historical events.

The decree of God is His eternal and immutable will, regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence. The decree of God is the chosen and adopted plan of all God's works. The decree of God is His eternal purpose according to the counsels of His own will, whereby for His own glory He has foreordained whatever comes to pass.

The decree of God is the sovereign choice of the divine will (His attribute of sovereignty) and mentality (His omniscience) by which all things are brought into being and controlled, made subject to His pleasure, and producing His glorification (Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:9).

"The will of God" refers here to His sovereign decision as to what would come into existence; in other words, the divine decrees. This will and purpose of God originated within Himself long before any creature of any kind existed. His will is always consistent with His perfect essence.

The will and purpose of God-that is, the divine decree-was objectively designed for His own glory, pleasure, and satisfaction. The decree of God is His eternal purpose, according to the counsels of His own will, whereby for His own glory He has foreordained whatever comes to pass.

The decree of God is the sovereign choice of the divine will (His attribute of sovereignty) and mentality (His omniscience) by which all things are brought into being and controlled, made subject to His pleasure, and producing His glorification (Proverbs 8:15-16; Job 23:13-14).

God the Father in eternity past decreed every circumstance and adversity and prosperity in the believer's life.

Ecclesiastes 7:14 In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity consider -- God has made the one as well as the other so that man will not discover anything that will be after him. (NASB95)

The believer's awareness of the Lord Jesus Christ controlling human history will provide the believer with confidence and will anchor his soul (cf. Hebrews 6:17-19; Isaiah 40). Therefore, no matter how adverse the circumstances, a believer can accomplish the Father's will. In fact, the worse the circumstances, the more God can be glorified. This principle that no matter how adverse the circumstances, a person can accomplish the Father's will was realized at the Cross when our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ suffered as an innocent Man, undeservedly and unjustly as a common criminal.

The worst and most terrible adversity ever suffered by a human being was when our Lord was crucified and voluntarily died a substitutionary spiritual and physical death for all mankind in order to accomplish the Father's will that mankind be reconciled to Himself. Other men in history have suffered nobly and undeservedly such as in time of war but their suffering cannot compare to the suffering of our Lord since our Lord was "impeccable" and all mankind are sinners (Rm. 3:10). Therefore, our Lord's underserved suffering was superior to the undeserved suffering of any person in history by virtue of the fact that our Lord was "sinless."

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit. (NASB95)

Thus, our Lord was the only human being in history whose undeserved suffering had merit with the Father.

In eternity past, the Father ordained the undeserved suffering of our Lord, and which undeserved suffering was to accomplish the Father's will of reconciling the entire human race to Himself (Acts 2:22-24). Therefore, there is no circumstance or adversity or situation or person or angel that can stop God from accomplishing His purpose in the world and in history (Isaiah 46:3-11).

Not only is there no circumstance or adversity or situation or person or angel that can stop God from accomplishing His purpose in the world and in history but also there is there no circumstance or adversity or situation or person or angel that can separate the believer from the love of God (Romans 8:28-39).

Every instance of suffering has a reason and an explanation. Christian suffering can be understood most clearly in relation to the individual believer's spiritual growth.

The believer who is executing the plan of God and learning Bible doctrine will go through suffering which is undeserved (1 Thess. 3:4). It is called undeserved because they did not bring this suffering upon themselves (1 Pet. 2:19-20; 2 Cor. 1:6). It is a privilege to suffer undeservedly for Christ's sake.

Philippians 1:29 It has been graciously granted (the privilege) because of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also, to suffer (hardship) because of Him. (Author's translation)

God never permits us to undergo any testing that we don't have the capacity for.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (NASB95)

Just as the Father's plan for the Lord Jesus Christ involved undeserved suffering so the plan of God for our lives involves undeserved suffering.

In 2 Corinthians 3:17-4:18, Paul writes to the Corinthians regarding his experience with undeserved suffering and his attitude regarding it.

The believer's sole ambition in life must be to become like Christ in His death in order to grow to spiritual maturity. Paul's sole ambition in life was to become like Christ by experiencing identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Philippians 3:10 that I come to know Him experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death. (Author's translation)

The order of thought in Philippians 3:10: (1) The believer must come to know Christ experientially in order to attain Christ-like character and as a result to be identified with Christ as expressed by *tou gnonai auton*, "that I come to know Christ experientially." (2) To come to know Christ experientially, the believer must come to know experientially the power made available to him from Christ's

resurrection and session as expressed by the phrase *ten dunamin tes anastaseos autou*, “**the power from His resurrection.**” (3) Then the believer must experience underserved suffering in order to experience the power made available to him from Christ’s resurrection, as expressed by the phrase *koinonian pathematon autou*, “**the participation in His sufferings.**” (4) The manner that must be adopted by the believer in order for him to know Christ experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings is by becoming like Christ with reference to His death and appropriating what Christ accomplished on the cross as expressed by the phrase *summorphizomenos to thanato autou*, “**by my becoming like Him with respect to His death.**”

Philippians 3:11 If somehow (by becoming like Him with respect to His death), I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones. (Author’s translation)

“**That I come to know Him experientially**” refers to experiencing fellowship with Christ after conversion by being obedient to the Lord’s command to self-sacrificially love his fellow believer as Christ self-sacrificially loved the believer. The believer who experiences fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is enabling God the Holy Spirit to reproduce in him the life and character of Christ (Galatians. 5:22-23).

“**The power from His resurrection**” refers to experiencing divine omnipotence by appropriating by faith the Spirit’s revelation in the Word of God of the believer’s identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, which results in experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection.

“**The participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death**” refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His death by means of underserved suffering.

The enclitic particle of indefinite manner *pos*, “somehow” indicates Paul’s uncertainty of what manner of undeserved suffering that the Lord will employ in his life to identify him with Christ experientially in His death in order that he may be identified with Christ experientially in His resurrection. It indicates an unspecified form of undeserved suffering that will identify Paul with Christ experientially in His death in order that he may attain the exit-resurrection life of Christ, or in other words, maximum identification with Christ experientially in His resurrection.

Undeserved suffering is the means that the Lord employs in the believer’s life in order to identify the believer with Christ experientially in His death.

“**I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones**” refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection, which is accomplished by applying the Word of life, which enables the Spirit of life to reproduce the character and life of Christ in the believer.

Identification with Christ in His resurrection experientially is appropriating and experiencing the eternal life that was imputed to the believer at the moment of justification through regeneration. Resurrection life is eternal life or the life of God.

The phrase “**namely, the one out from the dead ones**” refers to 2 categories of spiritual death: (1) Real spiritual death: unregenerate people (2) Temporal spiritual death: regenerate people who are consistently out of fellowship with God.

It was the death of Christ, which saved us from sin in the past; it is the life of Christ, which delivers us from sin in the present and future. The teaching of the New Testament is that the Christian life is one in which Jesus Christ lives His life out in us. The believer cannot experience identification with Christ in His resurrection until he first denies himself the function of his old Adamic nature, which is experiential identification with Christ in His death.

The believer cannot appropriate and experience eternal life in time prior to his death or the rapture until he denies himself the function of his old Adamic nature. Thus, the believer cannot appropriate and experience eternal life in time prior to his death or the rapture until he first experiences identification with Christ in His death. The believer must die to self before Christ can live out His life through the believer. Identification with Christ experientially in His resurrection is appropriating and experiencing eternal life in time, prior to death or the rapture. Experiential sanctification, knowing Christ experientially, identification with Christ experientially and gaining Christ-likeness are all synonymous terms for the process that God puts the believer through who is positive towards His Word.

The process of experiential sanctification, identification with Christ experientially, knowing Christ experientially or gaining Christ-likeness is 2-fold: (1) Identification with Christ in His death experientially (2) Identification with Christ in His resurrection experientially.

Ultimate or perfective sanctification is the perfection of the church age believer's spiritual life at the Rapture, i.e. resurrection of the church, which is the completion of the plan of God for the church age believer (1 Cor. 15:53-54; Galatians. 6:8; 1 Pet. 5:10; John 6:40).

Undeserved suffering gives the believer an opportunity to appropriate by faith his union and identification with Christ where all the believer's spiritual blessings and infinite wealth reside and which wealth is superior to "temporal" wealth and riches. It is also the means by which God employs so that the believer might gain rewards that will be given to the believer at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church, which will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ subsequent to the Rapture of the church (2 Corinthians 4:5-18).

Advancement, promotion, spiritual growth and prosperity in the spiritual life can only be achieved through undeserved suffering, which is experiencing identification with Christ in His death (1 Pet. 4:12-13).

Adversity is the means that God employs to enable the believer to experience his union and identification with Christ and all the spiritual assets and provisions and privileges that are the result of this union and identification with Christ. The believer who appropriates by faith his union and identification with Christ in His death, resurrection and session will enable the Holy Spirit to develop more of the character of Christ in his life. The apostle Paul prayed for the spiritual growth of his disciples.

Philippians 1:9 Now, this I make it a habit to pray that your divine-love might continue to flourish yet more and more by means of a total discerning experiential knowledge. (Author's translation)

In Philippians 1:9, "**experiential knowledge**" is the noun *epignosis* and refers to an "experiential knowledge" of God's love in Christ in the sense of personally encountering through the process of

fellowship, the love of God in Christ as it is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture and prayer and being affected by this encounter with the love of God in Christ resulting in the gaining of practical spiritual wisdom and more of the character of Christ.

Philippians 1:10 so that all of you might continue to choose the essentials in order that all of you might be sincere and without offense for the day of Christ 11 by all of you being filled with the fruit produced by righteousness, which is by means of the nature of Jesus who is the Christ for the ultimate purpose of glorifying and praising God. (Author's translation)

The believer can only interpret his cross by our Lord's cross since the believer's spiritual life is an extension of His and finds its source in His spiritual life (Philippians 2:5-8). The cross is the chief mark of the Christian since the Holy Spirit states in the Word of God that the believer has been crucified, died and buried with Christ (Romans 6:4-8). The believer applies the Word of the Cross by appropriating by faith the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God that he has been crucified, died and buried with Christ (Galatians 2:20). It is only when the believer appropriates by faith the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God that he has been crucified, died and buried with Christ that he can live in the life of Christ and experience the power of God in his life. Applying the Word of the Cross refers to becoming His disciple and imitating the Lord Jesus Christ and carrying one's own cross (Matthew 10:24-39).

Taking up one's cross means acquiring God's viewpoint of ourselves, namely that the following has been crucified with Christ at the Cross: (1) Self (Ga. 2:20). (2) Flesh (Rm. 6:6, 11; Ga. 5:24). (3) World (Ga. 6:14). (4) Rudiments of the world (Col. 2:20). Taking up one's cross is being willing to experience identification with Christ in His death on a daily basis.

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?" (NASB95)

The believer must deny self in order to imitate the Lord Jesus Christ and carry his own cross.

Luke 14:25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." (NASB95)

Self-denial is the root from which self-sacrifice springs. In self-denial, self-sacrifice is tested. It will cost us something to be the Lord's disciple (Luke 14:28-35). Self-denial and carrying one's own cross means that the believer must surrender his will for the will of God (Luke 22:39-43).

The experience of the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union in the Garden of Gethsemane teaches us that prayer is not necessarily unanswered when it is not answered exactly as we would wish, which is clearly stated in Hebrews 5:7 that our Lord's prayers were answered.

Hebrews 5:7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence. (NASB95)

In our experience, as in our Lord's, sometimes it is only through tears and heartbreak that we reach the place where we can say with all our hearts, "Not my will Father, but Yours be done." The Father is attempting to conform us into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ so that we might adopt our Lord's attitude towards the Father's will no matter how uncomfortable that might be for us.

The Lord Jesus Christ became a human being to bring us back to the happiness and joy of doing God's will. The great purpose of redemption was to make us and our wills free from the power of sin and to lead us again to live and do the will of God. In His life on earth, He demonstrated to us what it is to live only for the will of God. In His death and resurrection, He won for us the power to live and do the will of God as He had done. In Gethsemane, the Lord Jesus' sacrifice of His own will reached its height but what took place there was only the perfect expression of what had rendered His entire life acceptable to the Father. That man has a will other than God's is not sin. It is when man clings to His own will when it is seen to be contrary to the will of the Creator that sin occurs.

As a human being, the Lord Jesus had a human will, the natural, though not sinful, desires that belong to human nature. As a man, He did not always know beforehand what the will of God was. He had to wait, be taught of God, and learn from time to time what that will was. But when the will of His Father was known to Him, then He was always ready to give up His own human will and do the will of the Father. It was this obedience that constituted the perfection and the value of His self-sacrifice. He had once and for all surrendered Himself as a man, to live only in and for the will of God. He was always ready, even to the sacrifice of Gethsemane and Calvary, to do that will alone.

We must give up our lives in order to win others to God and it is a death in which all thought of saving self is lost in that of saving others. It is only when we die to self meaning we surrender our will in order to do the will of God, that we produce fruit in our lives for God.

Bearing fruit is the production of Christ-like character by the Holy Spirit in the believer who is obedient to the Word of God (John 12:20-26). Undeserved suffering acts as a bridge to experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection or in other words, it gives the believer an opportunity to apply the Word of the Cross, which in turn enables the believer to experience identification with Christ in His resurrection.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being delivered it is the power of God. (NASB95)

If our Master, the Lord suffered undeservedly, so we, His servants will as well.

John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also." (NASB95)

Those who desire to love spiritually will be persecuted.

2 Timothy 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live spiritually in fellowship with Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (Author's translation)

Suffering challenges the believer to rely upon the invisible assets that God has provided rather than our human resources and it confronts us with our total dependence on the grace of God. Suffering impresses upon us our need to conform to His plan.

Chapter Nine: Spiritual Gifts

The Scriptures teach that at the moment of conversion, each and every church age believer has been given a spiritual gift for the purpose of serving other members of the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12:7). The distribution of spiritual gifts was authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of His strategic victory over Satan at the cross during the dispensation of the hypostatic union (Ephesians 4:7-10). However, the actual appointment of the believer's spiritual gift is made by God the Holy Spirit as per 1 Corinthians 12:11.

Spiritual gifts are stewardships for which the believer will have to give an account to the Lord. They are also assignments of position within the body of Christ. Identification of one's spiritual gift and production from this gift is a direct result of spiritual growth which can only be achieved through the consistent and persistent learning and applying of the Word of God which in turn enables the Holy Spirit to identify for you, your spiritual gift.

Just as a car operates on gas so the believer's spiritual gift operates on God's love. This is indicated in that in Romans 12 after Paul discusses spiritual gifts in verses 6-8, he then discusses loving one's fellow believer in verses 9-16. Also, after discussing spiritual gifts extensively in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul then discusses the importance of the believer operating in the love of God in 1 Corinthians 13 and even teaches that loving one's fellow Christian is more important than spiritual gifts since they run on love. The believer discovers for himself or herself and manifests to others their spiritual gift by loving God and their fellow believer.

The nature of spiritual gifts is important for the believer to understand. First of all, they are never merited or earned. Gifts are a special grace-given ability (nature or essence). They are given by the Holy Spirit to each believer in Christ. Spiritual gifts are for service to the body of Christ that it may grow quantitatively (evangelism), qualitatively (edification), and organically (developed ministries and offices in the church). Ultimately, they are for the glory of God. Spiritual gifts are God's special gifts given to believers to enable them for special service to the body of Christ and in the world. When related to the gift of ministry or service or helps, it may include natural talents received at birth.

A spiritual gift is not an office in the local church like pastor or deacon. Certain gifts are needed to function effectively in those offices, but an office and a gift are not the same thing. It is not a particular geographical area or a place of service. It is the ability to serve, not the place where one serves. A spiritual gift is not a particular specialty or method of ministry. The gift of teaching may be used through radio or through writing or through the classroom, etc. It is not a certain personality type (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 with 2 Corinthians 10:10).

Ephesians 4:8

There are two categories of spiritual gifts: (1) Temporary: Functioned only during the pre-canon period of the Church Age (1 Corinthians 13:8, 10). (2) Permanent: Function during the pre and post-canon period of the church age.

The following gifts were temporary and had disappeared by 96 A.D.: (1) Apostleship (2) Prophecy (3) Miracles (4) Tongues (5) Interpretation of Tongues (6) Knowledge and Wisdom (7) Discerning spirits (8) Temporary gift of faith (9) Healing.

The gift of apostleship no longer exists since there are only twelve apostles and the last one went home to be with the Lord in 96 A.D. The gifts of prophecy, knowledge, wisdom, faith and the discerning of spirits no longer exist since they were to fill the void until the canon of Scripture was completed. The gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues no longer exist today since they were given to evangelize Jewish unbelievers who were dispersed throughout the Roman Empire and spoke foreign languages. The gifts of healing and miracles were to establish the authority of the apostles and authenticate that the Lord Jesus Christ sent them.

The following gifts are permanent: (1) Pastor-teacher (2) Evangelist (3) Administrations (4) Helps (5) Administrations.

In Ephesians 4:8, Paul paraphrases Psalm 68:18 in order to teach the qualifications of Christ and His authority to authorize the distribution of spiritual gifts to individuals who have trusted in Him as their Savior.

Ephesians 4:8 Therefore it says, “WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.” (NASB95)

“When He ascended on high” refers to the ascension of the impeccable human nature of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father as a result of His death on the cross, which was in obedience to the Father’s will.

“He gave gifts to men” refers to the fact that when Christ ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, ten days later on the day of Pentecost, He first authorized the Holy Spirit to distribute to each individual who trusts in Him as their Savior, a spiritual gift, which is designed to glorify Him.

For years, the body of Christ, the church, has been hampered by a clergy mentality that makes a strong distinction between the professional clergy and the lay person. This clergy or minister mentality fails to see and function under the New Testament truth that every believer is in full-time Christian service since every believer is a ministering priest who is to be ministering for the common good of the body of Christ according to the gifts God has given him.

Most people view the pastor as a paid professional to preach, teach, counsel, visit, and keep the administrative wheels running smoothly. Believers individually and the church as a whole exist to be good stewards of the truth of God in evangelism and discipleship through the exercise of the gifted members of the body of Christ. We exist for the mission of propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world and building up other believers in the Christian faith so that they become healthy ministering saints. And while other factors hurt this mission, certainly one very large contributing factor is the “clergy/layman, retailer/consumer” mentality that is so prevalent in our society.

The idea of becoming a mission-oriented church with every believer a minister scares people. They are much more comfortable with the concept of paying others to do the work of ministry for them. But the New Testament teaches us that church leaders are to be like coaches who should be training others for the work of ministry according to the spiritual gifts of each believer (Ephesians 4:11-16). This clergy/layman mentality has produced a crisis in the church today that is having serious consequences on the spiritual health of the body of Christ.

Romans 12:6a - There Is a Diversity of Spiritual Gifts in The Body of Christ According to God's Grace

The apostle Paul in Romans 12:6a teaches that there is a diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ according to God's grace.

Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. 3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. 4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith. 7 If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

In Romans 12:6, not translated is the “sequential” use of the conjunction *de*, which introduces a statement that follows logically the previous statement.

In the apodosis of the comparative clause in Romans 12:5, Paul teaches because all Christians are one body in union with Christ, “thus logically” speaking they are members individually belonging to one another.

Romans 12:4 Because in fact, just as in one body, we, as a physiological fact, possess many members however all the members, as a physiological fact, by no means possess the same function 5 so in the same way, we, the many, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist as one body in union with Christ, thus logically are, as an eternal spiritual truth, members individually belonging to one another. (Author's translation)

Now here in Romans 12:6, Paul continues to advance upon his statements from the previous comparative clause in Romans 12:4-5. In this verse, he teaches that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another thus logically speaking they possess spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy.

Some contend that the conjunction *de* in Romans 12:6 introduces a statement that transitions from a discussion that emphasizes the importance of the Christian maintaining a humble attitude with regards to self and other members of the Christian community to a discussion regarding spiritual gifts and their function. Interpreting *de* as transitional would support the interpretation of the participle form of the verb *echo*, “**we have**” as functioning as an indicative. However, the participle functioning as an indicative is quite rare.

Furthermore, it is more likely that Paul in Romans 12:6 is continuing a progression of thought from Romans 12:1-5. In Romans 12:1, the apostle Paul appealed to his Christian readers in Rome on the basis

of the merciful acts of the Father on their behalf to offer their bodies as a sacrifice-alive, holy, extremely pleasing to the Father, which their reasonable service to the Father.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I appeal to each and every one of you spiritual brothers and sisters on the basis of the merciful acts produced by God the Father to offer your bodies as a sacrifice-alive, holy, extremely pleasing and beneficial to God the Father, which is your reasonable service. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 12:2, Paul prohibited his Christian readers in Rome from being conformed to the standards of the cosmic system of Satan.

Romans 12:2a Consequently, do not conform your behavior in accordance with the standards of this age. (Author's translation)

He then issued a command on the heels of this prohibition to be transformed in their character into the image of Christ by the renewing of their minds. He teaches that this transformation of the believer's character into the image of Christ by renovating their mind accomplishes what the Father intended in that it provides the believer the capacity to discern what the will of God is with regards to any situation.

Romans 12:2b On the contrary, permit yourselves to be transformed by renovating your mind in order that each and every one of you may discern what is, as an eternal spiritual truth, God the Father's will, that which is good as well as extremely pleasing and in addition perfect. (Author's translation)

In Romans 12:3, Paul forbid his readers from thinking more highly of themselves than they were obligated to think.

Romans 12:3a In fact, by means of the spiritual gift, which was assigned to me for the benefit of myself and others I say for the benefit of each and every person, namely those who are at this particular time living among all of you not to think more highly of oneself than what one is, as an eternal spiritual truth, obligated to think. (Author's translation)

In contrast to this he commanded that they think properly about themselves, which is accomplished by obeying the command in Romans 12:2 to renovate one's mind. Thinking properly about themselves would be consistent with the objective standard that the Father distributed to each believer by which they can accurately and objectively form an opinion of themselves, namely justifying faith.

Romans 12:3b On the contrary, make it a habit to think so that you think properly about yourselves consistent with the objective standard God the Father distributed to each and every person without exception for their benefit, namely justifying faith. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 12:4-5, Paul teaches that the reason why it is essential that the believer maintain a humble attitude toward self is that like the human body has many members with differing functions so they are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.

There two verses form a comparative clause, which compares the different parts of the human body that have various functions that benefit the body as a whole with the individuals who compose the Christian community that also have various functions that benefit the community as a whole.

Romans 12:4 Because in fact, just as in one body, we, as a physiological fact, possess many members however all the members, as a physiological fact, by no means possess the same function 5 so in the same way, we, the many, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist as one body in union with Christ, thus logically are, as an eternal spiritual truth, members individually belonging to one another. (Author's translation)

The comparative clause in Romans 12:4-5 teaches that the Roman believers should obey his command in Romans 12:3 because just as the human body has many members with diverse functions so the Christian community is one body in union and identified with Christ and thus individually members of one another.

The implication is that Paul's reader need to maintain a humble attitude about themselves and avoid being arrogant because they need each other to function effectively as a group since they have different functions which benefits the entire group just as the human body has different parts with different functions. Therefore, the implication of this is that maintaining a humble attitude is essential in order to serve the body of Christ.

Now, in Romans 12:6, he advances upon the idea by teaching that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another, thus logically speaking they possess spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy. It is logical because just as the human body has different members with different functions that contribute to the proper function of the body as a whole so the Christian community has different members with different functions or spiritual gifts that contribute to the proper function of the Christian community as a whole.

Therefore, Romans 12:6a is a continuation of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5 rather than a new sentence and a transition of thought as many commentators interpret this verse and many English translations do as well. Then, in Romans 12:6b-8, Paul goes a step further in the progression and identifies the various spiritual gifts and their function.

Romans 12:6a Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly. (NASB95)

“**We have**” is the first person plural nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *echo*, which means, “to experience one what one possesses” which is identified as spiritual gifts as indicated by the accusative neuter plural form of the noun *charisma*, “**gifts**.”

Romans 12:6-8 is notorious as being a difficult passage to interpret and translate. One of the difficulties with this passage is tied to a misunderstanding of the proper contextual meaning of the verb *echo* and how its participle form functions.

Nearly, all expositors and English translations consider Romans 12:6-8 elliptical and thus supply imperative verbs (NASB; RSV) or a series of them (KJV; NIV; TEV; REB; NJB). Ellipsis is not

uncommon in the Greek New Testament, especially in the Pauline corpus. In fact, we have seen many elliptical constructions in Romans.

As we also noted earlier, the statement “**each of us is to exercise them accordingly**” in Romans 12:6 does not appear in the original text since the translators interpret Paul as using the figure of ellipsis meaning that this statement is implied. They believe that the qualifications for each gift listed in Romans 12:6b-8 reflect an underlying hortatory sense meaning that Paul is exhorting his readers to exercise these gifts.

Also, the majority interpret *echo* as denoting simply possession. However, the verb can often contain the idea of experiencing something (See A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition, page 421; (See Dunn, James D.G., Word Biblical Commentary, volume 38b, Romans 9-16; page 726; Thomas Nelson, 1988).

That *echo* means ‘to experience what one possesses’ is indicated when Paul speaks of the seven spiritual gifts he lists in Romans 12:6b-8, he is emphasizing their function within the body of Christ and not merely that the Roman believers possess these gifts. You cannot experience the benefits of spiritual gifts without their function.

If *echo* means “experience what one possesses” as we contend, then this does away with the idea that the passage is elliptical since this meaning fits nicely with the first prepositional phrase in Romans 12:6, *kata ten analogian tes pisteos*, “**according to the proportion of faith.**” Thus, the verb *echo* denotes that the Christian community possesses and experiences spiritual gifts: if the function of prophecy, according to the absolute standard, which is the Christian faith.

It also goes nicely with the remaining six prepositional phrases that have an instrumental force: *en te diakonia*, “**in his serving**” (verse 7), *en te didaskalia*, “**in his teaching**” (verse 7), *en te paraklese*, “**in his exhortation**” (verse 8), *en haploteti*, “**with liberality**” (verse 8), *en spoude*, “**with diligence**” (verse 8) and *en hilaroteti*, “**with cheerfulness.**”

This indicates that the Christian community possesses and experiences these spiritual gifts: if service, by means of service, or if a teacher, by means of teaching, or if exhortation, by means of exhorting, if giving or sharing, with simplicity, if leadership, with diligence, if one who gives grace, with cheerfulness.

Therefore, the verb *echo* does have some idea of possession but it also contains the idea of experiencing something as well. Thus, it means “to experience what one possesses” indicating that the Christian community experiences spiritual gifts because they possess them. Thus, spiritual gifts are not merely possessions but are to be exercised and are manifested through activities that benefit the entire community.

The participle form of the verb *echo* is a “result” participle, which is used to indicate the actual outcome or result of the action of the main verb. The main verb appears in Romans 12:5 and is the first person plural present active indicative form of the verb *eimi*, which was deliberately omitted by Paul due to his use of the figure of ellipsis and which we will translate “**we are, as an eternal spiritual truth.**”

Romans 12:4 Because in fact, just as in one body, we, as a physiological fact, possess many members however all the members, as a physiological fact, by no means possess the same function 5 so in the same way, we, the many, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist as one body in union with Christ, thus logically are, as an eternal spiritual truth, members individually belonging to one another. (Author's translation)

The participle of result will “follow” in word order the main verb, which is the case here. Therefore, as a participle of “result,” *echo* indicates that Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome are a corporate unit, analogous to the members of the human body individually belonging to one another “with the result” that they all possess and experience spiritual gifts.

Some interpret this participle as functioning as an indicative and thus standing alone in a declarative sense in the sentence. However, this use of the participle is quite rare as we noted before as well. Also, the conjunction *de* in Romans 12:6 is continuing the discussion of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5. In Romans 12:6, Paul advances upon the idea by teaching that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another, “thus logically” speaking they experience spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God’s grace policy. It is logical because just as the human body has different members with different functions that contribute to the proper function of the body as a whole so the Christian community has different members with different functions or spiritual gifts that contribute to the proper function of the Christian community as a whole. Therefore, the participle is not indicative since Romans 12:6 is a continuation of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5.

The first person plural form of the verb refers Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome who are all sinners who have been declared justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ.

The word functions a “nominative subject” meaning that the subject produces the action of the verb. The subject in our passage is embedded in the verb and refers to Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome as a corporate unit. They produce the action of the verb of possessing and experiencing spiritual gifts.

The present tense is a “gnomic present,” which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth. It does not say that something “is” happening but rather that something “does” happen. This indicates that every church age believer “does” possess and experience a spiritual gift.

The active voice of the verb is “stative” emphasizes that Paul and his fellow Christians throughout the world “exist in the state of” possessing and experiencing spiritual gifts.

“**Gifts**” is the accusative neuter plural form of the noun *charisma*, which refers to the various spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit distributed to each believer the moment they were declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone.

In Ephesians 4:7-10, the apostle Paul teaches the Ephesians that spiritual gifts are the direct result of Christ’s ascension.

Grace refers to the fact that at the moment of conversion the Lord Jesus Christ authorized the Holy Spirit to assign each individual believer a position and function in His body by distributing to each believer one spiritual gift.

As we mentioned earlier, spiritual gifts are assignments of position in the body of Christ just like a football team has different positions and just as the successful function of each position on the team produces unity and victory so the successful function of each spiritual gift in the body of Christ will produce unity and victory.

Spiritual gifts were given to us so that we can serve our fellow believer. Just as the physical body is composed of different members with each member having a different function from the other members so the body of Christ is composed of different members with each member having a different function from the other members. Just as the proper function of the physical body needs each individual member to perform its specific function so the proper function of the body of Christ needs each individual member to perform its specific function by operating in their spiritual gift. Just as a car operates on gas so the believer's spiritual gift operates on God's love. The believer discovers for himself and manifests to others his spiritual gift by loving God and his fellow believer.

Therefore, in Romans 12:6, the noun *charisma* is used of the various spiritual gifts that the Lord Jesus Christ authorizes the Holy Spirit to distribute to each church age believer for the purpose of serving the body of Christ and bringing glory to the Father.

Romans 12:6a Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly. (NASB95)

“**That differ**” is the accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *diaphoros*, which is modifying the noun *charisma*, “**gifts**” and describes the spiritual gifts that each believer receives at the moment of being declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone as being “diverse.”

“**According to grace**” is composed of the preposition *kata*, “**according to**” and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *charis*, “**grace**.”

The noun *charis* refers to God's grace policy towards the justified sinner from which they receive their spiritual gift. This word denotes the sum total of unmerited benefits, both temporal and spiritual, imparted to the justified sinner through the function of the sum total of divine attributes of each member of the Trinity as a result of the sinner making the non-meritorious decision to trust in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior.

The preposition *kata* with the accusative noun *charis*, “**grace**” denotes conformity to a particular standard or policy. Therefore, *kata* specifies that the Christian community possesses and experiences a diversity of spiritual gifts in accordance with God's grace policy. We will translate *kata*, “**according to the grace**.”

“**Given to us**” is composed of the articular accusative feminine singular aorist passive participle form of the verb *didomi*, “**given**” and the dative first person plural form of the *hemeis*, “**to us**.”

The verb means “to give, bestow” referring to the justified sinner receiving unmerited blessings on the basis of the object of his faith, Jesus Christ.

The aorist tense of the verb *didomi* is a “constative” aorist describing in summary fashion the justified sinner receiving grace, i.e. unmerited blessings from God the moment they were declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone. The passive voice means that the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as their Savior as the subject receives the action of being given grace.

The dative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *hemeis* refers to those sinners including the apostle Paul who have been declared justified by God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and have received the grace of God in the form of unmerited blessings, which includes a spiritual gift. The word is used in a distributive sense meaning “each and every one of us” emphasizing that there are no exceptions. The word functions as a “dative of advantage” meaning that the gift of the Holy Spirit is “for the benefit of” those sinners who have been declared justified by God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:6b - The Temporary Spiritual Gift of Prophecy Was to Function According to The Absolute Standard, Which Is the Christian Faith

Romans 12:6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith. 7 If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

The apostle Paul in Romans 12:6b-8 lists seven different spiritual gifts that are within the body of Christ. He places them into two groups with one group containing four and the second three. The first three gifts are introduced by the conjunction *eite*, “if...if.” However, the last three have no introductory particle.

“If...if” is the conjunction *eite*, which appears four times in Romans 12:6b-8, once in Romans 12:6, twice in Romans 12:7 and once in Romans 12:8 and is used in a copulative sense to present a list of seven spiritual gifts. This construction can be translated “if...if” or “whether...or.” We will choose the latter.

“**Prophecy**” is the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *propheteia*, which refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet. This gift is no longer existent since it existed during the pre-canon period of the church age to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed.

The word is used for this spiritual gift in 1 Corinthians 12:10, 13:2 and 14:22. The gift of prophecy is referred to by the word *prophetes*, “prophet” in Ephesians 2:20, 3:5 and 4:11.

In Romans 12:6, the noun *propheteia* refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet.

“**According to the proportion of his faith**” is composed of the preposition *kata*, “**according to**” and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *analogia*, “**the proportion**” and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *pistis*, “**of his faith.**”

The noun *analogia* means “standard” and functions much like the noun *metron* in Romans 12:3, which we translated “**objective standard.**” It means “standard” and is used with the noun *pistis*, “**faith,**” which refers to the Christian faith or in other words that body of doctrine held by the Christian church. This would also include the gospel since the gospel refers not only in Scripture to the good news proclamation to the unsaved but also to the good news that the Christian has died and been raised with Christ.

The noun *analogia* means that the spiritual gift of prophecy in the first century apostolic church was to function according to the “standard” of the Christian faith or that body of doctrine that Christians held universally. Therefore, the spiritual gift of prophesy was to be exercised according to the standard of the Christian faith, i.e. the Word of God or the body of Christian doctrine.

The articular construction of the word is monadic indicating that this standard is unique in that it is that body of doctrine universally received from the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles.

In Romans 12:6, the noun *pistis* is used in a passive sense referring to the body of Christian doctrine or the Christian faith. Therefore, Paul is teaching that the spiritual gift of prophesy was to function in agreement with that body of Christian doctrine or Christian faith. The articular construction indicates that this body of doctrine is unique to Christianity or the Christian community. The word also functions as an exegetical genitive or genitive of definition meaning that it is defining or explaining the noun *analogia*, “**the standard**” that it stands in apposition to.

The preposition *kata* with the accusative noun *pistis*, “**faith**” denotes conformity to a particular standard or policy. Therefore, *kata* specifies that the spiritual gift of prophesy was to function in the Christian community “according to” the standard, which is the Christian faith, i.e. Christian doctrine or in other words, the Word of God.

This prepositional phrase indicates that the content of what the Christian with the spiritual gift of prophesy communicated to the Christian community was to be in agreement with Christian faith, i.e. the Word of God. In other words it could never contradict the Word of God or the revelation already universally received by the Christian church in the first century through the apostles. Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 14:29-33 that the church was to pass judgment on the message of the prophet. Of course, they were to do so by comparing the prophetic message with their Old Testament Scriptures and the revelation already received universally by the Christian church. This would determine if the prophet’s message was from God. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit inside the Corinthian believers would bear witness to the prophet’s message if it was from God or not.

In the Old Testament, an inspired prophet could be identified using the tests for prophets in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:14-22.

In the first century, apostolic church an inspired prophet could be identified by those who had the gift of distinguishing of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:10).

The apostle John warned his readers about false prophets. In 1 John 4:1-6, he teaches that the believer can discern the false teachers from Satan's cosmic system by their viewpoint or attitude towards the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you recall, the comparative clause in Romans 12:4-5 teaches that the Roman believers should obey his command in Romans 12:3 because just as the human body has many members with diverse functions so the Christian community is one body in union and identified with Christ and thus individually members of one another. The implication is that Paul's reader need to maintain a humble attitude about themselves and avoid being arrogant because they need each other to function effectively as a group since they have different functions which benefits the entire group just as the human body has different parts with different functions. Therefore, the implication of this is that maintaining a humble attitude is essential in order to serve the body of Christ.

Now, in Romans 12:6, he advances upon the idea by teaching that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another, thus logically speaking they possess spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy. It is logical because just as the human body has different members with different functions that contribute to the proper function of the body as a whole so the Christian community has different members with different functions or spiritual gifts that contribute to the proper function of the Christian community as a whole. Therefore, Romans 12:6a is a continuation of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5 rather than a new sentence and a transition of thought as many commentators interpret this verse and many English translations do as well. Then, in Romans 12:6b-8, Paul goes a step further in the progression and identifies the various spiritual gifts and their function.

In Romans 12:6, Paul teaches that the Christian community possesses and experiences diverse spiritual gifts that were given for the benefit of the body of Christ in accordance with God's grace policy. He also teaches that these spiritual gifts were given for the benefit of each and every member of the body of Christ indicating that not only were they a benefit for those who possessed these gifts but also for those who benefited from their function. Then, he presents the first of seven spiritual gifts by noting the temporary spiritual gift of prophecy, which was to function according to the absolute standard, which is the Christian faith or that body of doctrine held universally held by the Christian community.

Romans 12:7 - The Function of The Spiritual Gifts of Service and Teacher

Romans 12:7 If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching. (NASB95)

“**Service**” is the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *diakonia*, which refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of service and is synonymous with “**helps**” in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and “**whoever serves**” in 1 Peter 4:11.

The gift of service or helps expresses itself in a variety of ways that aid the church and its members. Often individuals who hold the office of deacon have this gift. This word does not refer to a deacon since being a deacon is not a spiritual gift since it was not a gift from the Holy Spirit. Rather, the office of deacon was established by the apostles to meet a need in the first century apostolic church in Jerusalem and they were elected by the Jerusalem congregation according to Acts 6:1-6. Thus, *diakonia*

in Romans 12:7 cannot possibly refer to being a deacon as a spiritual gift since spiritual gifts are assigned by the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The gift of service or helps is manifested in a multitude of ways in the sense that it can be manifested through cleaning the church building or the homes of those who are in need or are incapacitated. It is manifested by those who maintain the upkeep of the church building by performing carpentry work, electrical work or mowing the lawn of the church building or those who are in need and are incapacitated. Construction work can manifest this gift by the construction of a church building.

This gift can manifest itself in cooking by providing meals for the body of Christ at funerals, weddings or pot-lucks or food for families who have lost loved ones. It can manifest itself in the publications department of a ministry whether editing the pastor's books or producing them.

The gift can involve maintaining the website of your church or taking care of the computers of the pastor and the church. This gift manifests itself through financial or accounting work by keeping the books of the church and overseeing its finances. The gift of service or helps is manifested through helping out in the prep-school by teaching the children.

The Bible does not teach that women have the gift of teaching but only men as we will see when we study the verb *didasko*. However, women do manifest the gift of helps or service by serving in the prep-school and teaching children or immature Christian women with regards to how to love their husbands and children the way the Bible prescribes (See Titus 2:3). Therefore, we can see that this gift is absolutely essential for the body of Christ since its function encompasses a wide range of activities unlike the gift of pastor-teacher, which functions through studying and teaching or the evangelist, communicating the gospel to the unsaved.

“In his serving” is composed of the preposition *en*, **“in”** and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *diakonia*, **“his serving.”**

The preposition *en* functions as a marker of means and the noun *diakonia* as a dative instrumental of means indicating the means by which the action of the verb *echo*, **“as a result we, as an eternal spiritual truth, do possess and experience”** is accomplished. This indicates that the function of the spiritual gift of service, i.e. helps is experienced by the body of Christ (those who are its beneficiaries and by those who have the gift) “by means of” serving.

“He who teaches” is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *didasko*, which means, “to teach, to educate, to train, to impart information in a public assembly.”

In Romans 12:7, the verb *didasko* refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of teaching or communicating the Word of God to the congregation. This involves the responsibility of being devoted to studying and teaching the Word of God (1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2; 2 Timothy 2:15, 24; Ezra 7:10). It also involves being devoted to prayer (Acts 6:1-6) and to exemplify the Christian way of life (1 Timothy 4:11-12; Hebrews 13:7). The noun *didaskalos*, **“teachers”** is used to signify this gift of teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and in Ephesians 4:11.

In Romans 12:7, the noun *didaskalia* refers to the activity or function of the spiritual gift of teaching the Word of God. The preposition *en* functions as a marker of means and the noun *didaskalia* as a dative instrumental of means indicating the means by which the action of the verb *didasko*, “**the one whose function it is to teach**” is accomplished. This indicates that the function of the spiritual gift of teacher is manifested “by means of” teaching the Word of God.

Romans 12:8 - The Permanent Spiritual Gifts of Encouragement, Giving, Leadership and Compassion

Romans 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

“**He who exhorts**” is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *parakaleo*, which means “to encourage” and refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of encouraging members of the body of Christ to live in a manner worthy of their calling, to grow up to become like Christ.

This gift manifests itself in the person who gives advice to other members of the body of Christ that is consistent with Scripture and under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. It manifests itself by encouraging other believers to live according to the Word of God and can involve not only encouraging but also warning other believers in a humble and loving way when they are going astray from doing the will of God.

This spiritual gift can involve comforting those members of the body of Christ who have lost love ones or are experiencing suffering whether emotionally or physically. It can manifest itself through helping and giving support to a weaker, or immature believer when they are having problems with a certain temptation or difficult trial that they are facing.

This spiritual gift can involve helping those members of the body of Christ deal with a particular burden that is too heavy to bear alone. It can manifest itself by simply being available to another believer when they need someone to talk to so as to encourage them when they are depressed, frustrated or grieving.

The spiritual gift of encouraging can also manifest itself by helping other members of the body of Christ understand and apply that which is taught by the pastor-teacher.

Though all believers are commanded to encourage one another according to 1 Thessalonians 4:18 and 5:11, the spiritual gift of encouraging functions or manifests itself in a manner that goes beyond what is normally exercised by Christians who obey the command to encourage one another.

To encourage another believer demands that one knows the Word of God and how to apply God’s will in any given situation.

“**In his exhortation**” is composed of the preposition *en*, “**in**” and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *paraklesis*, “**his exhortation.**”

The noun *paraklesis* refers to the activity or function of the spiritual gift of encouraging other members of the body of Christ. The preposition *en* functions as a marker of means and the noun *paraklesis* as a dative instrumental of means indicating the means by which the action of the verb *parakaleo*, “**the one whose function it is to encourage**” is accomplished. This indicates that the function of the spiritual gift of encouragement is manifested “by means of” encouraging members of the body of Christ.

“**He who gives**” is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *metadidomi*, which refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of giving, which involves distributing one’s own money to others and is to be done with simplicity, i.e., with no thought of return or gain for self in any way.

Though all believers are commanded to give to one another (Matthew 5:42; 10:8) the spiritual gift of giving functions or manifests itself in a manner that goes beyond what is normally exercised by Christians who obey the command to give to one another.

This gift is not given to wealthy believers only but rather it is given to believers regardless of their social or economic status. The believer who exercises this gift properly will enjoy giving of himself and his possessions and will do so without a desire for thanks or recognition. The one who exercises this gift properly will not give because of a sense of duty or obligation or for approbation but simply because they enjoy giving, it brings them great joy and happiness to give either material or financial aid to members of the body of Christ.

All believers as we noted are commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ to give (Matthew 5:42; 10:8; Luke 6:30, 38). The apostle taught that the church age believer is to contribute to the needs of the royal family of God (Romans 12:13).

“**With liberality**” is composed of the preposition *en*, “**with**” and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *haplotes*, “**liberality**.”

The noun *haplotes* does not denote “simplicity” here but rather “sincerity.” The word deals with the issue of “pure motives” since Paul is not concerned so much with how much is given through the function of this gift but rather the manner in which this gift functions. The person who possesses this gift is to exercise it with pure motives or in other words with sincerity.

In Romans 12:8, the preposition *en* functions as a marker of manner and the noun *haplotes* as a dative instrumental of manner indicating the manner by which the action of the verb *metadidomi*, “**the one whose function it is to give**” is accomplished. This indicates that the spiritual gift of giving is to function “with sincerity” or purity of motives. This is not an instrumental of means since the word *haplotes* is an abstract noun whereas as an instrumental of means employs a concrete noun as we saw with the gifts of serving, teaching and encouraging.

Also, this prepositional phrase *en haploteti* can be translated adverbially as “sincerely,” which is a further indication that this prepositional phrase signifies the manner in which the spiritual gift of giving is to function rather than the means by which it is to function.

“**He who leads**” is the articular nominative masculine singular present middle participle form of the verb *proistemi*, which in the middle voice means “to devote oneself to the exercise or function of leadership” and refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of leadership. It is permanent in that it was not discontinued with the completion of the canon of Scripture as was the case with the gift of prophecy.

This gift is identified by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:28 as “**administrations**” which translates the noun *kubernesis*.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. (NASB95)

The noun *kubernesis* is related to the verb *kubernao*, which means “to steer a ship.” It is used figuratively in classical Greek of statesmen meaning “the government of states” and of deity meaning “divine governance.” It is used three times in the Septuagint of wise counsel or direction and appears only once in the Greek New Testament and means “administration.”

In 1 Corinthians 12:28, this word refers to the spiritual gift of leadership and those men who help the pastor-teacher lead and administrate the affairs of the church.

Those individuals who possess this gift of leadership, along with the pastor-teachers, help compose the leadership of the local church. These individuals often hold the office of deacon, which remember is not a spiritual gift since it was established by the apostles and those who were deacons were elected by the Jerusalem congregation according to Acts 6:1-6.

The spiritual gift of leadership does not signify an ecclesiastical office but rather is a gift that manifests itself in leading the local assembly in various ways. Those individuals with this gift are often found in the board of directors of local churches.

Like the gift of teaching, only men have been given the gift of leadership by the Holy Spirit since Paul teaches in 1 Timothy 2:12-14 that a woman is prohibited from exercising authority over men because of the divine order and because Eve was deceived and Adam was not.

Now, like the pastor-teacher, those believers with the gift of leadership are to adhere to the principles of leadership taught by the Lord Jesus Christ, namely, humility.

“**With diligence**” is composed of the preposition *en*, “**with**” and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *spoude*, “**diligence**.”

The noun *spoude* means “diligence,” which denotes constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken. Therefore, the man with the spiritual gift of leadership is to exercise his gift with diligence in the sense that he is to be constantly and earnestly devoted to working hard on behalf of the body of Christ to lead them. The word denotes that the man with the gift of leadership is to be zealous in going about the task of leading the body of Christ.

The preposition *en* functions as a marker of manner and the noun *spoude* as a dative instrumental of manner indicating the manner by which the action of the verb *proistemi*, “**the one who devotes himself to exercising leadership**” is accomplished. This indicates that the man with the spiritual gift of leadership is to exercise this gift “with diligence.”

This is not an instrumental of means since the word *spoude* is an abstract noun whereas as an instrumental of means employs a concrete noun as we saw with the gifts of serving, teaching and encouraging. Also, this prepositional phrase *en spoude* can be translated adverbially as “diligently,” which is a further indication that this prepositional phrase signifies the manner in which the spiritual gift of leadership is to function rather than the means by which it is to function.

“**He who shows mercy**” is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *eleeo*, which refers to the permanent gift of compassion. It should be called the gift of compassion rather than mercy because the latter has the connotation of withholding judgment whereas the former connotes the intense desire to act to alleviate the pain and suffering of another or remove its cause (1 John 3:16-17). This gift has been given to both men and women in the body of Christ and is a permanent gift in that unlike the gift of prophecy it was not discontinued with the completion of the canon of Scripture.

Though all believers are commanded to be compassionate towards one another according to Ephesians 4:32 and 1 John 3:16-17, the spiritual gift of compassion functions or manifests itself in a manner that goes beyond what is normally exercised by Christians who obey the command to encourage one another.

Like all spiritual gifts, the exercise of the gift of compassion is for the benefit of the body of Christ. Specifically, it is directed towards those in the body of Christ who are suffering, whether physically, emotionally or spiritually. It can involve feeding the hungry in the body of Christ and caring for those who are sick in the body of Christ as well as caring for the elderly and the disabled.

Like the function of all spiritual gifts, the gift of compassion is an expression of God’s love that is manifested in the body of Christ. As is the case with the gifts of service (aka helps), encouraging, giving, leadership, those with the gift of compassion are often those who hold the office of deacon. This gift does not appear in the list in 1 Corinthians 12.

“**With cheerfulness**” is composed of the preposition *en*, “**with**” and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *hilarotes*, “**cheerfulness**.”

This is the only place in the Greek New Testament where the noun *hilarotes* appears. It refers to a cheerful attitude when exercising the gift of compassion as opposed to an attitude of considering it a great burden to exercise compassion to those in need in the body of Christ.

The preposition *en* functions as a marker of manner and the noun *hilarotes* as a dative instrumental of manner indicating the manner by which the action of the verb *eleeo*, “**the one whose function it is to demonstrate compassion**” is accomplished. This indicates that the man or woman with the spiritual gift of compassion is to exercise this gift “with cheerfulness.”

This is not an instrumental of means since the word *hilarotes* is an abstract noun whereas as an instrumental of means employs a concrete noun as we saw with the gifts of serving, teaching and encouraging. Also, this prepositional phrase *en hilaroteti* can be translated adverbially as “cheerfully,” which is a further indication that this prepositional phrase signifies the manner in which the spiritual gift of compassion is to function rather than the means by which it is to function.

1 Corinthians 12

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. **2** You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. **3** Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. **4** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. **5** And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. **6** There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. **7** But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (NASB95)

Bob Deffinbaugh writes “We will be greatly helped in understanding Paul’s teaching on spiritual gifts if we pause to reflect on the Corinthians’ problems in this area. We know the Corinthians are proud and arrogant (1 Corinthians 1:18-31; 4:7-13, 18-21; 5:2; 8:1; 2 Corinthians 10). From what Paul has to say in chapters 12-14 (see 12:21), we can be quite certain some of the Corinthians’ pride lay in the possession of certain gifts or the following of some with those esteemed gifts. We do know the Corinthians prize certain gifts and disdain others. This resulted in many seeking to obtain gifts God had not given them and those possessing certain ‘lowly’ gifts feeling they had no contribution to make at all. Those possessing the visible, verbal gifts seem intent upon showing these gifts off in the church meeting (see 14:26ff.). Those with the ‘best’ gifts feel independently self-sufficient and do not sense their dependence on less visible members of the body (12:21). Paul has some well-chosen words for these carnal Corinthians about the relationship between spirituality and spiritual gifts, words which knock the props out from under their pride and self-sufficiency.”⁷³

In 1 Corinthians 12:7, “**manifestation**” refers to the fact that every believer receives *one* spiritual gift since the word is in the singular (See 1 Peter 4:10). This verse is teaching that each individual member of the body of Christ has a single “**manifestation**” of the Spirit in order to benefit the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; **9** to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, **10** and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. **11** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. (NASB95)

The various gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 and 28 are also mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 and Romans 12:6-8.

⁷³ True Spirituality: A Study in 1 Corinthians; page 268; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1999.

“Word of wisdom” is a temporary gift that was needed during the pre-canon period of the church and proclaims that Jesus Christ crucified is the wisdom of God, which is superior to the wisdom of men (See 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; Colossians 2:3).

“Word of knowledge” is a temporary gift that was needed during the pre-canon period of the church and proclaims specific revelation from God and reveals great knowledge or insight regarding the person of Christ and the plan of God (See Colossians 2:3).

“Faith” is the ability to have trust in the Lord in a great crisis beyond that exercised by most Christians in a crisis (See Matthew 17:20; 1 Corinthians 13:2).

“Healings” was also a temporary spiritual gift given to the apostles to establish their authority as being from God (Acts 3:7; 5:16; 9:34; 14:10; 16:18; 19:12; 28:8).

“Miracles” was a temporary “sign” gift that was given to the apostles to establish their authority as coming from God and was an instrument used to draw the unsaved to hear the message of the gospel.

“Distinguishing of spirits” is the ability to distinguish between true and false sources of supernatural revelation when it was being given in oral form and was essential before the canon of Scripture was completed for there were those who claimed to bring revelation from God who were not true prophets.

“Tongues” was a temporary spiritual “sign” gift designed to evangelize the Jews in Gentile languages during the pre-canon period of the church age (See Isaiah 28:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:21-22; 1 Corinthians 1:22).

“Interpretation of tongues” was also a temporary gift that was used to interpret the message that was communicated in a foreign language to the unsaved.

1 Corinthians 12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. **13** For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. **14** For the body is not one member, but many. **15** If the foot says, “Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear says, “Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? **17** If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? **18** But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. **19** If they were all one member, where would the body be? **20** But now there are many members, but one body. **21** And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” **22** On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body, which seem to be weaker are necessary; **23** and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, **24** whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, **25** so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. **26**

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. (NASB95)

“**The less presentable members**” and those “**we deem less honorable**” refers to those parts of the body which are clothed or not seen by the naked eye because of being inside the human body.

A.F. Johnson writes “These verses can be obscure unless we realize Paul is referring to the bodily parts that have to do with procreation (male organ and female vagina) and nurture (female breasts). These parts, though treated with modesty and covered, are in reality *indispensable*, while the more dispensable parts of the body (such as limbs and hands) we often display openly.”⁷⁴

Bob Deffinbaugh writes “Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 12:22-24 surely come as a slap in the face to the status-seeking saints at Corinth. He turns their value system upside-down. The body illustrates what he is teaching. Those members of the body which are of the least importance are those to which we devote the most attention and effort. We paint our toenails, put rings on our ears (men, too!) and noses! We put rings and jewelry on our fingers. But the truth is we can live without ears (or hearing), eyes (or seeing), fingers, hands, legs, toes. The least needed members of our body are the ones which are most visible and to which the most ‘glory’ is given. And yet, they are the lesser gifts. Those gifts which are most visible, most vocal, most glorified in the Corinthian church are, in reality, the least important gifts. These Corinthians have been storing up sand in their safety deposit boxes and using gold for stepping stones. As the body illustrates, just the reverse is also true. The most important gifts, like the most important organs, are those which are not visible or spectacular, those of which we are the least conscious. You cannot see my spleen, my kidneys, my liver, or my heart, but I cannot live without them. They do not get a lot of attention. I have never seen ‘pancreas powder’ or ‘heart highlighter.’ I do not have to glorify these organs. They do not need any compensation. They are, in truth, the most vital members of my body, whether I see them or not and whether others value them or not.”⁷⁵

A.F. Johnson writes “Contemporary churches and Christian organizations and institutions need to pay close attention to this teaching of Paul. Often the tendency is to showcase the most ‘successful’ Christians who have won achievement awards, excelled in gaining wealth, or risen to prominent positions in government, entertainment or book publishing. These members often are appointed as church leaders or college trustees. Instead, without ignoring these ‘parts,’ we should look for those who have less visibility yet have displayed unusual faithfulness, especially through suffering and loss, who have given away great wealth, are self-effacing, have showed restraint in material possessions, exhibited downward mobility in seeking to serve Christ, and are filled with the fruit of the Spirit despite relative obscurity. These and others like them should be our main showcase examples in the church.”⁷⁶

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? 31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way. (NASB95)

⁷⁴ Johnson, A. F. (2004). *1 Corinthians* (Vol. 7, p. 233). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁷⁵ True Spirituality: A Study in 1 Corinthians; page 281; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1999.

⁷⁶ Johnson, A. F. (2004). *1 Corinthians* (Vol. 7, p. 234). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Notice that Paul ranks the gift of apostleship as being first in importance and this is followed by the gift of prophecy and then the gift of teaching. The reason why Paul teaches that these three communication gifts have greater priority than the other gifts is because the exercise of these three communication gifts equips the saints for the work of service and builds up the body of Christ spiritually according to his teaching in Ephesians 4:11-12. In other words, the exercise of these three communication gifts enables the other gifts in the body of Christ to function.

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature, which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (NASB95)

Now, one cannot say that the other gifts such as helps, mercy, giving and the others are not important because these three communication gifts receive their value because of the existence of these other gifts. Again, all the gifts need each other to function properly in the body of Christ as Paul teaches in First Corinthians 12.

Ronal Trail writes “The ranking does not refer to relative importance but rather to a kind of precedence of one over others growing out of the role of establishing and building up of the church.”⁷⁷

Wiersbe writes “In this paragraph, Paul pointed out that there is a ‘priority list’ for the gifts, that some have more significance than others. But this fact does not contradict the lesson already shared—that each gift is important and each individual believer is important. Even in the human body, there are some parts that we can do without, even though their absence might handicap us a bit. The Apostles and prophets, of course, appeared first on the scene because they had a foundational ministry (Eph. 2:20). Teachers were needed to help establish believers in the faith. The other gifts were needed from time to time to help individual believers and to build the church.”⁷⁸

Constable writes “The ranking of these gifted individuals is evidently in the order of the importance of their ministries. When Paul said earlier that all the members were essential (v. 21), he did not mean that some did not have a more crucial function to perform than others. He did not mention this distinction there, because he wanted each member to appreciate the essential necessity of all the other members. In another sense, however, some gifts are more important than others (v. 31; 14:1).”⁷⁹

D.K. Lowery writes “The fact that Paul assigned ordinal numbers (**first ... second ... third**) to the first three gifts suggests that these may have been relegated to a lesser role by the Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor. 12:21–24). Those three kinds of gifted members—**apostles ... prophets ... teachers**—probably were rated lower than those who had the more spectacular gift of tongues. But the first three gifts may have

⁷⁷ Trail, R. (2008). *An Exegetical Summary of 1 Corinthians 10–16* (2nd ed., p. 159). Dallas, TX: SIL International.

⁷⁸ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 610). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁷⁹ Notes on 1 Corinthians; page 161; 2016 Edition; Published by Sonic Light: <http://www.soniclight.com/>

been **greater** (v. 31) because of their extensive value to the whole body of Christ. This may be why he listed them first and then said that the church should **eagerly desire** (v. 31) the exercise of those **gifts** in the assembly (cf. 14:1–5). Gifted apostles, prophets, and teachers characteristically ministered to a *whole* church, and so would engender unity and mutual edification. The gift of **tongues**, on the other hand, suited the Corinthian penchant for self-expression and the pursuit of personal freedom. This self-centeredness also afflicted the church in other areas (e.g., eating sacrificial foods, women in worship, celebration of the Lord’s Supper). Love for others was an essential need in the Corinthian church, and to that fundamental attribute Paul then turned to pay eloquent tribute.”⁸⁰

“**Apostles**” is the unique and temporary spiritual gift which held maximum authority in the church and was sovereignly delegated by the Lord Jesus Christ.

“**Prophecy**” refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet, which is no longer existent since it existed during the pre-canon period of the church to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed (See 1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2; 14:22; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11).

Wiersbe writes “*Prophets* were New Testament spokesmen for God whose messages came immediately from God by the Spirit. Their ministry was to edify, encourage, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3). Their messages were tested by the listeners to determine whether they were truly from God (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thes. 5:19–21). Ephesians 2:20 makes it clear that apostles and prophets worked together to lay the foundation of the church, and we may assume that they were no longer needed once that foundation was completed.”⁸¹

“**Teachers**” refers to the permanent spiritual gift of teaching or communicating the Word of God to the congregation.

“**Miracles**” was a temporary “sign” gift that was given to the apostles to establish their authority as coming from God and was an instrument used to draw the unsaved to hear the message of the gospel.

“**Healings**” was also a temporary spiritual gift given to the apostles to establish their authority as being from God (Acts 3:7; 5:16; 9:34; 14:10; 16:18; 19:12; 28:8).

“**Helps**” is synonymous with “service” in Romans 12:7 and is a permanent spiritual gift and expresses itself in a variety of ways that aid the church and its members and often individuals who hold the office of deacon have this gift.

“**Administrations**” is synonymous with the gift of “leadership” that appears in Romans 12:8 and is a permanent gift and provides the recipient the ability to administrate the affairs of the church and those with this gift often hold the office of deacon or some type of administrative capacity in a church.

“**Tongues**” was a temporary spiritual “sign” gift designed to evangelize the Jews in Gentile languages during the pre-canon period of the church age (See Isaiah 28:11–12; 1 Corinthians 14:21–22; 1 Corinthians 1:22).

⁸⁰ Lowery, D. K. (1985). 1 Corinthians. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 534). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁸¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 608). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

1 Corinthians 12:4-31 indicates several things about each individual member of the body of Christ: (1) Every believer has a freely-given grace gift given by the Spirit for serving the body of Christ. (2) Every believer is important. (3) Every believer is gifted. (4) Every believer is a servant of the body of Christ. (5) The purpose of God's gift is not the elevation of the individual, but rather the health of the whole body. (6) All do not receive the same gift. (7) We need each other.

Deffinbaugh writes "Too many people attend church to have their 'needs met.' Too many people leave churches, complaining that the church has not met their needs. The church is to build up itself in love, but the goal of the church is to live out the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, to His glory. We, the church, are the body of Christ. This means we, as the church, are to carry on His ministry in the world today. The church ministers to itself, to build itself up so that it may carry out its mission, and that mission is living out Christ in a fallen world. We have become so preoccupied with the church's ministry to us as individuals that we have failed to concentrate on the church's mission to the world, and our obligation to sacrifice ourselves in ministry to and through the church to the world. The question is not, 'What is the church doing for me?' The question is, 'What can I contribute to the church to participate in its fulfillment of its mission and calling?'"⁸²

1 Peter 4:10-11

The apostle Peter teaches in 1 Peter 4:10 that each and every believer in the church age has received only one spiritual gift at the moment of their conversion. This gift he teaches is to be employed by the believer in serving their fellow members of the body of Christ.

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (NASB95)

Principles from 1 Peter 4:10: (1) The word "**gift**" is the Greek word, *charisma*, which means "a gift of grace, a free gift." It is especially used of special spiritual abilities given by the Spirit for God to enable Christians to serve the body of Christ. (2) All believers have one spiritual gift. At the point of justification, when we believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, we become members of the body of Christ by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit who places us into union with Christ. According to the analogy portrayed in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, each believer becomes a gifted member, like an arm, or a foot, or an eye with ability and a function to perform. This is a matter of grace and the sovereign work and choice of the Spirit, never our merit or works (1 Corinthians 12:4, 11, 18). (3) Our gifts are to be viewed as a stewardship for which we are responsible as "**good** (Greek: *kalos*, noble, praiseworthy, useful) **stewards**." (4) Peter also teaches us gifts are given for "**serving one another**." They are for the common good of the body of Christ as an expression of love (1 Corinthians 13) and never for personal gain or selfish agendas (1 Corinthians 12-14).

The apostle Paul defines the common good by such things as edification (building up the body of Christ), exhortation, consolation, and instruction, attaining unto a mature man in Christ, etc. (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:3-5, 17, 19, 26, 31; Ephesians 4:11-16).

1 Peter 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength, which God supplies; so that in all

⁸² True Spirituality: A Study in 1 Corinthians; page 284; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1999

things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (NASB95)

Principles from 1 Peter 4:11: (1) For those who serve in other ways, Peter teaches that they must do so by the strength, which God richly supplies, rather than in their own strength (see 1 Corinthians 15:10; Colossians 1:29). All stewards need to be serving out of the source and sphere of fellowship with God and dependence on Him (John 15). (2) With the words, **“to whom belongs the glory and dominion, ...”** Peter reminds us that no matter what is done, the purpose or ultimate goal is God’s glory and dominion (rule) through the Lord Jesus. This forms a fundamental principle and a warning that should guide the whole of the Christian’s life and ministry as a steward of the various aspects of God’s grace.

Due to our innate self-centered tendencies, it is far too easy to serve from selfish agendas—to be accepted by others, or for praise, position, or prestige. This was one of the problems that Paul addressed with the church at Corinth. Some of the Corinthians were using their gifts, especially the more spectacular or showy gifts like tongues, for personal gain. Paul said, **“One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; ...”** (1 Corinthians 14:4a). In other words, they were using this gift for selfish purposes.

Though the one who speaks in a tongue does not understand what he is saying (vs. 14), they are still edified personally by the emotion and satisfaction of the experience. Clearly, his primary motive is not according to the excellent way of love for others (1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13; 14:4b, 12) and, therefore, it cannot truly be designed to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

For the proper functioning of spiritual gifts, we must cease thinking individualistically and begin to think corporately. We cannot look at ourselves as an island, independent of all others. We must see ourselves as a member of the body of Christ, with certain gifts or special enablements which equip us to carry out functions necessary to the equipping and ministry of the body.

There is individuality within the body, because there are many members, all with a different role to play. But there is no room for individualism, for we are inter-dependent as members of one body. We must rely on other members of the body just as they must rely on us. While we have been individually chosen, called, and justified, we have been joined to a body, the body of Christ. We must therefore think and act as members of this body.

Spiritual gifts are one of the means by which the body of Christ is sustained and through which the life of our Lord is manifested. Thinking straight necessitates thinking corporately.

Hindrances to good stewardship of our gifts: (1) The belief God only calls preachers, evangelists, missionaries, etc. (2) Fear that we will fail, we will be persecuted, or that we don’t know how. (3) Personal agendas in ministry for various reasons of covetousness—position, power, praise, applause. (4) Apathy, lack of devotion to the Lord and the body of Christ. (5) A wrong view of the church as an organization rather than an organism.

Stewardship and One’s Spiritual Gift

Each and every church age believer will give an account to the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church to determine if they were faithful stewards with the time, talent, treasure and truth which God gave them. The Christian will give an account to the Lord or in other words, they will

be held responsible by the Lord for their service, which involves a four-fold stewardship: (1) Time: Were they profitable in how they used their time on earth that the Lord gave them? (2) Talent: Were they profitable in how they used their spiritual gift the Lord gave them? (3) Truth: Were they profitable in how they used the truth the Lord gave them? (4) Treasure: Were they profitable in how they used their finances that the Lord gave them?

Church age believers are to be good stewards with their talent (they are to operate in their spiritual gifts) and treasure (they are to financially support each other when necessary) and truth (they are to apply the Word of God in their relationships with each other).

Time: Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Talent: 1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Treasure: Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure -- pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.

Truth: Colossians 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

At the Bema Seat, the believer's service, as expressed through their stewardship in these four areas, will be evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ to determine if they were a faithful and profitable steward in these four areas or not. If they were a faithful and profitable servant and steward with their time, spiritual gift, truth and finances that were given to them by the Lord as trusts, they will receive a reward from the Lord and if they were not, they will not receive a reward.

In Romans 14:11, Paul cites Isaiah 45:23 to affirm the certainty that each and every Christian must present himself to the Lord Jesus Christ at His Bema Seat in order to have their works evaluated by the Lord to determine if they merit rewards or not. Not only will their works be evaluated but also the Lord will determine if the church age believer was a faithful steward or not with his or her spiritual gift.

Chapter Ten: Heavenly Citizenship

In the book of Philippians, the apostle Paul teaches the Philippian church that they and all church age believers are citizens of heaven. Paul was addressing Roman citizens regarding their spiritual citizenship in heaven. To teach this, Paul employs the verb *politeuomai* in Philippians 1:27 and the noun *politeuma* in Philippians 3:20 which are terms the Philippian believers would be familiar with since Philippi was a Roman *politeuma*. This citizenship is also alluded to in Ephesians 2:19 and Hebrews 11:14-16.

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves (*politeuomai*) in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. (NASB95)

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship (*politeuma*) is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

The *politeuma* Metaphor is related to the uniqueness of the church age and the Christian's responsibility to grow to spiritual maturity and become an invisible hero with an invisible impact on human history. Heaven is the source of the church age believer's *politeuma*. In the metaphor, the foreign land is the world in which the church age believer presently lives.

Rome always set up the colony hence, heaven sets up the royal family of God. The third heaven (the abode of God) is analogous to the metaphor Rome while on earth is the locale of the *politeuma*. Church age believers are a special privileged group as members of the royal family of God. The church age believer has the privilege and opportunity to utilize privileges that no unbeliever has. Church age believers are a colony on earth. Church age believers live on earth with all the privileges of heaven. The church age believer is a privileged person because of his *politeuma* in heaven.

The verb *politeuomai* (πολιτεύομαι) in Philippians 1:27 and the noun *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) in Philippians 3:20 have an interesting history which helps us to understand how Paul is using them in these two passage.

The word *polis*, attested from Mycenaean Greek is perhaps derived from an Indo-Germanic root meaning to fill. This may suggest the *polis* as a filled-in wall, which served as a fortress and refuge. As early as Homer *ptolis* and its lengthened form *ptoliethron* meant a city, state, and *polites* a citizen. The *polis* in classical Greek referred to the political or economic center of a district, or city-state. *Politeuomai* means to be a citizen, live as a citizen, to administer the state, and conduct public affairs. The abstract noun *politeia* means citizen's rights, life of a citizen, his part in the life of the state, the condition or way of life of citizenship, and also civil policy, constitution, the state. The closely related noun *politeuma* had originally the same meaning. It was then used for individual political acts, measures or intrigues; in Aristotle for government, constitution, and also acts or branches of public administration. Later still the word meant political commonwealth, the state generally, and less frequently, citizen's rights.

In the Hellenistic period colonies abroad with established political constitutions are also so described. *Polites* is a *member* of a city or state, or the inhabitant of a country or district. The *polites* has all the rights and *privileges* of a citizen participating in the *ekklesia*, "the assembly." *Sumpolites* denotes a *fellow* citizen. *Politeia* signifies the *relation* in which a citizen stands to the state, the condition of a

citizen, citizenship. The noun *politeuma* signifies the *condition*, or life, of a citizen, citizenship. It was used in classical Greek from the 5th century B.C. onward of various acts, departments, and functions of government. It was used of the business of government, the administration of government, and the policy of government both local and foreign. Aristotle employed it in his work *Politics* for the government, those who hold political power or who hold a share in it.

From the time of the third century B.C. *politeuma* also meant “citizenship.” *Politeuma* was frequently used to designate a corporate body of citizens, a *colony* of foreigners who are residents in a *foreign* city while their citizenship and allegiance is *elsewhere*. The *-ma* suffix denotes the result of an action therefore in this case the result of the verb, which gives us this verb *politeuomai*.

The verb *politeuomai* is frequently used in the *middle* voice and appeared first in Thucydides in the fifth century B.C. It signified, metaphorically, conduct characteristic of citizenship. *Politeuomai* means “to be a citizen, to live as a citizen, to act as a citizen by taking part in political life, to show public spirit, to administer the state.” The verb *politeuomai* means “to conduct oneself with proper reference to one’s obligations in relationship to others, as part of some community, thus to live, to conduct one’s life, to live in relation to others.” It meant “to behave as a citizen; to avail one’s self of or recognize the laws, to conduct one’s self as pledged to some law of life.” It means, “to have one’s citizenship, to have one’s home, to lead one’s life according to privilege.”

Politeuomai does not occur in the canonical LXX except in the additions to Esther appended to 8:12. It does not occur in 2-4 Maccabees where it always means to live or conduct one’s life, to live life in accord with the law of God and the religious traditions of one’s forbearers.

The verb *politeuomai* appears twice in the NT (Acts 23:1; Philippians 1:27). The noun *politeuma* is a *hapax legomenon* (Philippians 3:20). The noun *polites* is found 4 times in the NT (Luke 15:15; 19:14; Acts 21:39; Hebrews 8:11). The noun *politeia* appears twice in the NT (Acts 22:28; Ephesians 2:12). The noun *politarches* is found twice in the NT (Acts 17:6, 8). The noun *polis* appears approximately 160 times in the NT. The noun *sumpolites* is a *hapax legomenon* (Ephesians 2:19). The noun *politeuma* was used in reference to the believer’s heavenly *citizenship*. The verb *politeuomai* was used in reference to the believer’s *conduct* as a citizen of heaven.

Late in the fifth century B.C. in Greece, the word *politeuma* was used for individual political acts or dealings. Eventually it came to mean “constitution, state, commonwealth.” It meant *privileges* that belong to citizens. The word was used in the golden age of Pericles. Attica was the poor part of Greece and was famous for olive oil and arts. Silver was discovered and silver mines belonged to the state. Every Athenian citizen received an equal share from the silver mines every year and had same privilege as *politeuma*. The Athenians shut down this citizenship at 30,000 people. The Aeolians, Boetians and Spartans and other Dorian groups were poor.

Politeuma was used of a new system of Greek colonization in Athens a couple of hundred years before the time of writing. When the Athenians defeated the Boetians and their allies the Calsidiens, they took possession of part of the land called Kelcis, and took the best part and called it the Celonstine plain. A very famous Athenian statesman named Cleisthenes divided the land 4000 lots, big lots, called *kleros*. He settled a corresponding number of Athenians there and these Athenian citizens were very disturbed that moving to this lot might mean that they would lose the privileges of their citizenship. They asked Cleisthenes about this matter and he said no that they would not lose their rights and

privileges as citizens and therefore invented a new system of colonization to send people into a foreign land retaining all of the privileges of their citizenship.

Herodotus later called these settlers, *kleroi*, and “allotment people.” Eventually that word died out and a new word took its place. Cleisthenes is regarded as the founder of Athenian democracy, serving as chief archon of the city-state from 525-524 B.C. Cleisthenes successfully allied himself with the Popular Assembly against the nobles and imposed democratic reform. Perhaps his most important innovation was the basing of individual political responsibility on citizenship of a place rather than on membership in a clan. He persuaded the people to change the basis of political organization from the family, clan and phratry (kinship group) to the locality. Public rights and duties would depend on membership of a *deme*, or township, which kept its own register of citizens and elected its own officials. The citizen would no longer be known only by his father’s name but also or alone by the name of his deme. When the whole system of Cleisthenes was finally put together it was called by two words: (1) *Politeia* (2) *Politeuma*.

Politeuma was “having the status to live in a foreign country but to have the status, the rights, and the privileges of the citizenship of your home country.” During the Hellenistic period, *politeuma* was used for citizens living in a foreign country in a colony who retained their national citizenship and political privileges pertaining to that citizenship. Alexander the Great had a policy of interfusion and mixture of the races he conquered and this resulted in the loss of national identity apart from what Alexander called *politeuma*. So it came down to Roman times through Alexander, therefore the Jews from Alexandria for example were called *politeuma* by Josephus and Arian Dydimus of Alexandria, the famous Stoic philosopher. In Crete, district of Arseno (sister of Cleopatra) there was a Roman colony called *politeuma*. Idomeans living in Memphis in Egypt had *politeuma*. These *politeumati* are not private associations but they were publicly recognized national groups living away from home and under the laws, rights and privileges of the mother country. The Roman’s took this from the Greek and called it *civitas* which was the same principle Cleisthenes had invented some 600 or 700 years before.

Politeuma: The rights, the privileges in the status of citizenship of a free state. A corporate body of citizen’s resident in a foreign country but under the laws of their homeland. One of the interesting systems for acquiring Roman citizenship was the autocratic grant of citizenship to slaves who had been freed. It was done with great formality. Touching of the lictor’s rod called *Vindicta*. Done in the presence of Magistrate. Enrolled immediately in census list of citizens with master’s approval. Imperial policy meant Emperor could grant citizenship that princes of another country if he desired. Rights of Roman citizens were required in different ways: (1) Birth (Roman parents). (2) Legislative extension. (3) 25 years of military service in Roman army. (4) Manumission from slavery. (5) Purchase of citizenship (million dollars in today’s money). (6) Imperial policy of granting citizens who did well in Roman Empire in some way.

There were six famous Romans who extended Roman citizenship beyond original group: (1) Gaius Gracchus (Republic). (2) Livius Drusus. (3) Gaius Julius Caesar (more than anyone) (49-44 B.C.). (4) Emperor Claudius (41-54 A.D.). (5) Vespasian (69-79 A.D.). (6) Emperor Hadrian (117-138 A.D.).

Politeuma in Paul’s day meant a Roman colony in a foreign land. It meant the rights, privileges of Roman citizens in Roman colony.

The Philippians were Roman citizens so Paul’s use of these terms were a part of their frame of reference. They would be able to identify with citizenship since the Philippians greatly valued their

Roman citizenship. Philippi is named after King Philip II. He took it from the Thracians and gave it his own name in 356 B.C. It was situated about 9 miles from the Aegean Sea and northwest of the island of Thasos. Philippi was situated near the eastern end of the Engatian Road (*via Egnatia*) which was the major overland route traversing the Balkan Peninsula. It is located in a broad flat plain and is surrounded by mountains. This broad flat plain extends generally to the northwest. Today much of the area has been reclaimed, and the swamps now yield both fruit and grain. To the south of Philippi lay its port city of Neapolis, which is known today as Kavalla and in medieval times as Christopolis. To the north are the foothills of the Balkan highlands. To the east is Mount Orbelos and to the west Mount Pangaeum. Philippi was a city of great strategic importance to the Greeks as well as the Romans by virtue of its being surrounded by mountains on almost every side. It was very close to the sea and was near the borders of Thrace. Gold was discovered at Mount Pangaeum, and the settlers from the island of Thasos seized the area. The Thracians called the city *Krenides* which means “springs,” or “fountains.”

Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great, realized the importance of *Krenides* and captured and rebuilt the city, renaming it Philippi. The Thracian settlers were driven out or were incorporated into the large influx of Macedonian inhabitants. What made Philippi important was not its mineral resources but its geographical and strategic location. It commanded the great high road between Europe and Asia. It served as a gateway between the two continents of Asia and Europe by virtue of its almost continuous mountain barrier, which was depressed so as to form a natural gateway. It was this advantageous position which led Philip to fortify the site and which led Octavian to plant a Roman colony there.

After the battle of Pynda in 168 B.C., Macedonia passed into the hands of the Romans who in turn made it a Roman colony in 146 B.C. Aemilius Paullus, the Roman consul, divided Macedonia into 4 major regions or districts according to the historian Livy (Livy xlv. 29). Philippi was situated in the first district, whose capital became Amphipolis. By the time of Caesar, Philippi had become a small settlement. Strabo says Philippi was a “small town.”

After assassination of Caesar in B.C. 44, a Civil War began in *SPQR*, which had a great effect on the future of Philippi as a city. Gaius Cassius Longimanus, the leader of the conspiracy and an experience general took over the Roman province of Syria. During this Caesar’s nephew Octavian and Marc Antony joined forces to deal with Civil War. They are called the Second Triumvirate because it was made up of three men: (1) Octavius (2) Marc Antony (3) Lepidus.

The Civil War pitted Brutus and Cassius vs. Octavius and Antony. The former represented those who were proponents for continuing the Republic while the latter represented those who were proponents of a Principate. Philippi was also the site of the pivotal battle to determine the future of the Roman Empire.

The first battle of Philippi took place on October 24, 42 B.C. By a series of maneuvers, these two great armies came near the ruins to what is called Philippi. Army of Octavian and Antony numbered: (1) 85,000 infantry. (2) 13,000 cavalry. Army of Brutus and Cassius numbered: (1) 80,000 infantry. (2) 20,000 cavalry. This famous battle proved that Octavian was not a good general and Brutus was the best general in the army of the Assassins. Brutus did a smart thing at dawn and attacked the camp of Octavius and almost wiped him out. Octavius actually fled to the ruins of Philippi. Marc Antony not knowing about this in the meantime attacked Cassius and wiped him out. Cassius fled with part of his army and then he turned and attacked the camp of Brutus. Brutus upon hearing that his camp had been

attacked by Marc Antony thought all was over, and stood near the ruins of Philippi and committed suicide and therefore the battle was called a draw.

Both armies soon regrouped and on November 16, the positions of the armies remained the same. This time Antony attacked through a swamp performing a very famous single envelopment on the left flank of Brutus. Octavian's core acted as the pivot since Octavius was not a good soldier. In the battle south of Philippi, Marc Antony with his famous march through the swamps routed the Republican army under Brutus. Brutus managed to escape through parts of four regions but he decided it wasn't worth it and he committed suicide. Philippi therefore became a Roman *politeuma*.

In honor of this victory Philippi was made a Roman colony and was named by Octavian *Colonia Victrix Philippensium*. Octavian gave the town its notable title of *Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis*, which appeared on coins. Philippi became a Roman colony primarily composed therefore of the victorious veterans of the Civil War for many who fought in the battles of Philippi received as rewards after retirement the land around Philippi. Philippi became a thriving city and many veterans after twenty years of service with a pension moved to Philippi. Philippi became sort of a colony for retired Roman soldiers of Marc Antony and Augustus. A Roman colony had to be made up of Roman citizens. Octavian planted in Philippi a colony of Roman veterans with farms attached, a military outpost and miniature of Rome itself and the language of Philippi was Latin.

As a Roman colony, Philippi received many privileges that other cities in the empire did not have. There was the freedom from taxation, scourging, freedom from arrest save in extreme cases, and the right of appeal to the Emperor. Of all the privileges, which this title conferred, the possession of the "Italic right" (*ius Italicum*) was the most valuable. It meant that the colonists enjoyed the same rights and privileges as if their land was on Italian soil.

Philippi became so great that every time that there was privilege to be granted to that part of the country, the Philippians were always involved. If you lived in Philippi as a Roman citizen you had no taxes for the rest of your life. Philippi was a Roman colony in a foreign country. They could vote and were governed by their own senate and legislature. Philippi was in effect a "little Rome" in itself. Hence, the Philippians had tremendous civic pride because of their intimate attachment to Rome. Luke brings out the fact that the Philippians had great civic pride in Acts (Acts 16:21). The Philippians took great pride in their Roman citizenship and Paul makes allusions to it in this epistle with the use of words such as *Philippenses*. Official names are used such as *duoviri* (Acts 16:21; 16:37), and "lictors" in Acts 16:35. Paul speaks of "**citizenship**" in Philippians 1:27 and 3:20, a term which would have special appeal to the Philippians who took great pride in their Roman citizenship. It truly was the "**leading city of the district of Macedonia**" (Acts. 16:12). It was the principle town of its district by virtue of its privileges as a Roman colony. The citizens of Philippi had good reason to claim that their large "colonial" city was the leading city of the district of Macedonia for it was made so by the Emperor Octavian himself.

Luke's description of Philippi in Acts 16:12 is therefore an accurate one, *prote tes meridos tes Makedonias polis kolonia*. It was the 1st city in the district of Macedonia by virtue of the Imperial edict, which proclaimed it a Roman colony. Philippi's intimate relationship with Rome made it the leading city of Macedonia. The inhabitants of nearby cities such as Thessalonica, Amphipolis and Neapolis did not have privileges that the Philippians enjoyed for they were not Roman colonies. Only Philippi could make the claim of being a Roman colony.

The History of Rome is generally divided into two periods: (1) The Republic (2) The Empire (Principate). During the Republican period a Roman citizen was technically one who had been born or adopted into one of the 3 original tribes of Rome. In practice this meant all males above 15 years of age who were neither slaves nor aliens, and all aliens received a grant of Roman citizenship. Roman citizenship was jealously guarded and highly prized during the Republican period and at the onset of the Empire. It meant membership in the relatively small group that was soon to rule the whole Mediterranean area. It brought immunity from legal torture or duress, and the right of appeal from any official in the Empire to the Assembly-or, later, the Emperor-at Rome. Obligations went with these privileges. The citizen, unless quite poor, was liable to military service at call from his 16th to his 60th year and he could not hold political office until he had served 10 years in the army. His political rights were so bound up with his military duties that the most important voting was done as a member of his regiment, or century. The first person in Roman law was the citizen. He was defined as anyone who had been accepted into a Roman tribe by: (1) Birth (2) Adoption (3) Emancipation (4) Governmental grant. Within this franchise were 3 grades: (1) Full citizens who enjoyed the 4-fold right of voting (*ius suffragii*), of holding office (*ius honorum*), of marriage with a freeborn person (*ius connubii*), and of engaging in commercial contracts protected by Roman law (*ius commercii*). (2) *Citizens without suffrage* who had the rights of marriage and contract, but not voting or office. (3) *Freedman* who had the rights of voting and contract, but not of marriage or office.

The full citizen had certain exclusive rights in private law: (1) The power of the father over his children (*patria potestas*). (2) The power of the husband over his wife (*manus*). (3) The power of an owner over his property, including slaves (*dominium*). (4) The power of a freeman over another by contract (*mancipium*).

A kind of potential citizenship, called *Latinitas* or *ius Latii*, was conferred by Rome upon the free inhabitants of favored towns and colonies, whereby they acquired the right of contract, but not of intermarriage, with Romans, and their magistrates received full Roman citizenship upon completing their terms of office. Each city of the Empire had its own citizens and conditions of citizenship and by a unique tolerance a man might be a citizen and enjoy the civic rights of several cities at once. The most precious privilege of a Roman citizen was the safeguarding of his person, property, and rights by the law, and his immunity from torture or violence in the trying of his case. The imperial period witnessed a large-scale spread of citizenship among provincials who retained their foreign residence and nationality. The beginnings of this development lay actually in the republican period when, as a consequence of a bloody rebellion of Rome's Italian allies (Social War, 90-88 B.C.), the citizens of the Italian cities received the status of Roman citizens.

Under the Principate, citizenship was often given to outstanding men in provincial cities. More important, it was regularly given to honorably discharged veterans of the army which then consisted largely of non-citizens. The effect of this policy was a change in the character of Roman citizenship. In theory, it was still conceived as that of the city of Rome, thereby retaining some of its splendor, in actual fact, it became an Empire citizenship.

Philippians 1:27 and 3:20

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. (NASB95)

“**Conduct yourselves**” is the second person plural present middle imperative form of the verb *politeuomai* (πολιτεύομαι), which means “to conduct one’s life according to the privilege and responsibility as a citizen of heaven.” It means “to have one’s citizenship, to have one’s home, to lead one’s life according to privilege.” It means to conduct oneself according to the privileges and responsibilities as a citizen of heaven which is worthy of the gospel of Christ. It means to behave in a manner which is in accordance to the privileges and responsibilities as a citizen of heaven.

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

“**Citizenship**” is the noun *politeuma* (πολίτευμα), which occurs only in the NT in this passage and means “citizenship”

Bauer, Gingrich and Danker define the word, “commonwealth, state”.⁸³

Louw and Nida define word, “the place or location in which one has the right to be a citizen – ‘state, commonwealth, place of citizenship’”.⁸⁴

Here in Philippians 3:20, the word *politeuma* should be translated “citizenship” since it denotes the status of being a citizen. It denotes the concept of possessing the privileges and responsibility of a citizen of your homeland although living in a foreign land. It is a concept that the Philippians would be familiar with since they were Roman citizens living in a Roman colony.

Paul is writing as a citizen to citizens: (1) Roman citizen to Roman citizens. (2) Heavenly citizen to heavenly citizens. *Politeuma* in Paul’s day meant a Roman colony in a foreign land. It meant the rights, privileges of Roman citizens in Roman colony.

By employing this word *politeuma* here in Philippians 3:20, Paul is contrasting the Christian attitude and lifestyle here with that of “the enemies of the cross of the Christ” in Philippians 3:18-19. Those who apply the three great fundamental principles of Biblical Christianity as listed in Philippians 3:3 did not live for self, or according to the old sin nature, the cosmic system or the traditions of men. The conduct of the Judaizers is the exact opposite as Paul states at the conclusion of Philippians 3:19: *hoi ta epigeia phronountes*, “those who are continually occupied with earthly matters.”

Those who are living according to the spiritual code of conduct mentioned in Philippians 3:16-17 which is enumerated in Philippians 3:3, are living in agreement with their status as heavenly citizens. It is actually a subtle rebuke to the regenerate Judaizers whose conduct is not agreement with their status as citizens of heaven. Those who are living according to the spiritual code of conduct are living up to their responsibilities as citizens of heaven because they are utilizing the privileges as citizens of heaven. Those privileges are mentioned in Philippians 3:3 and if they are faithful to death in living in those privileges, they will receive the ultimate privilege of reigning with Christ, which is noted in Philippians 3:12-14.

Philippians 3:12 “(I am) not (saying) that I have already achieved this, or I have already been brought to completion, but rather I am sprinting, if (by sprinting) I also may have captured the

⁸³ A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, page 686

⁸⁴ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, volume 2, page 132

prize for which I also have been captured by Christ Jesus. 13 Brothers, I do not evaluate myself to have captured the prize, but I am in fact continually concentrating on one thing, namely, by forgetting the past and by extending myself forward towards the future, bearing down upon the objective. 14 I am sprinting towards the finish line for the prize, which is God the Father's invitation to privilege residing in the Person of Christ Jesus.” (Author's translation)

Those in Philippians 3:18-19 are not conducting themselves as citizens of heaven, whereas those in Philippians 3:16-17 are doing so. The church is actually a “colony of heaven” since heaven is the source of the church age believer's *politeuma* and what is literal for the Roman citizens of Philippi is even more literal for the church age believers today as members of the royal family of God.

Wuest commenting on the word in this passage, writes, “The stability and security of the citizen under Roman Law filled the thoughts of the time with high conceptions of citizenship and its value. Philippi, being a Roman colony, and its citizens therefore, Roman citizens, thought in terms of citizenship. Paul seizes this fact as a good opportunity to illustrate to the saints their heavenly citizenship with its privileges and responsibilities. What a contrast between those mentioned in 3:18, 19, who are citizens of this earth, and those spoken of in 3:20-21, who are citizens of heaven”.⁸⁵

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ became a citizen of heaven at the moment of conversion through faith alone in Christ alone which results in regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit. Therefore, they did not have to pay for this citizenship since they received it simply by making the non-meritorious decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). In fact, as we noted, the doctrine of election states that the church age believer was elected to privilege in eternity past since God the Father from His omniscience looked down the corridors of time and saw that the believer would make the non-meritorious decision to believe in Christ for salvation if given the opportunity to do so. So actually, the apostle Paul is referring here to election since he employs the verb *hyparch* (ὑπάρχω ὁ), which refers to antecedent condition protracted into the present.

This word *politeuma* also conveys the fact of the church age believer's position in Christ is a result of the baptism of the Spirit where the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ at the moment of conversion. Paul is saying that the Philippians and himself possess the status of a citizen of heaven from eternity past under election and that they are people given great privilege and as a result, great responsibility.

The Christian is positionally a citizen of heaven because of the baptism of the Spirit and in fact it originates from eternity past under the doctrine of election. He is stating here by using this word *politeuma* that they should live in a manner that is in agreement with their status and position as a citizen of heaven. Their conduct should agree with their position or status as citizens of heaven, sons of God.

There are three characteristics that the believer as a citizen of heaven now possesses positionally as a result of regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit: (1) Christ is their King rather than Satan. (2) They have a different life rather than death and live under a different system than the cosmic system. (3) They have new rights, privileges and responsibilities.

The church age believer as a citizen of heaven has the privilege of having an audience with the King through prayer in order to make petitions and requests. As a citizen of heaven the believer has his name

⁸⁵ Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, volume 2, page 102

registered on the legal records in heaven and in particular the “book of life,” which is mentioned in Philippians 4:3.

The citizen of heaven is under law just as those who were citizens of Rome and Greece. The life of the believer should demonstrate that he is a citizen of heaven, but that doesn’t always take place because the believer reverts back experientially as a citizen of the cosmic system when he operates in the old Adamic-nature and employs cosmic viewpoint. The cross condemns what the world values. The citizen of heaven is not to live according to that which the cross of Christ condemned, namely, self, sin nature, cosmic system of Satan and traditions of men.

Everything that the Judaizers advocated had been condemned and eliminated by the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross. Christ ended the entire sacrificial system of the OT or the ritual plan of God when He made one sacrifice for sins at the cross (Hebrews 10:1-4). By His death and resurrection, He accomplished a “spiritual circumcision” that made ritual circumcision unnecessary (Colossians 2:10-13). Everything that the Judaizers lived for was condemned by the cross, thus they were the enemies of the cross.

The citizen of heaven whose conduct is in agreement with his position in union with Christ in His death and resurrection will experience the crucifixion of his old sin nature (Galatians 5:24), and the crucifixion of the cosmic system (Galatians 6:14). The believer’s citizenship is directly related to his membership in the kingdom of heaven which is synonymous with the term kingdom of God. Entrance into the kingdom of God takes place through regeneration (John 3:3, 5). The overcomers or winner believers will inherit the kingdom of God, i.e., the kingdom of heaven. This is the believer’s inheritance, which is reigning with the Christ during His millennial reign and throughout all of eternity. Not all the citizens of heaven, i.e., members of the kingdom of heaven will receive their inheritance and reign with Christ and the reason for this is the function of each member’s volition for not all the citizens of heaven will choose to utilize their privileges and fulfill their responsibilities on earth as ambassadors for Christ.

So, heaven is the source of the church age believer’s *politeuma*. What is literal for the Roman citizens of Philippi is even more literal for the church age believers today as members of the royal family of God. The *Politeuma* Metaphor is related to the uniqueness of the church age and the Christian’s responsibility to grow to spiritual maturity and become an invisible hero with an invisible impact on human history. In the metaphor, the foreign land is the world in which we live as born-again believers. Rome always set up the colony hence, heaven sets up the royal family of God. The third heaven (the abode of God) is analogous to the metaphor Rome while on earth is the locale of the *politeuma*. Born-again believers are a special privileged group as members of the royal family of God. The special privileges are the two great divine provisions: (1) Word of God (2) Spirit of God.

Church age believers are a colony on earth. They live on earth with all the privileges of heaven. They are a privileged group of people because of his *politeuma* in heaven. In the *politeuma* metaphor, heaven is the abode of God and is analogous to Rome while planet earth is the local of the *politeuma*, which is a heavenly colony. The *politeuma* metaphor is related to the uniqueness of the church age, the Christian’s responsibility to become an invisible hero through the divine provision of the unique grace support of this Christological dispensation. In the dispensation of the hypostatic union there was *politeuma* for one person-the Lord Jesus Christ. In the dispensation of the church age there is *politeuma* for *all* believers-the royal family of God.

Paul is writing as a Roman citizen to Roman citizens and as a heavenly citizen to heavenly citizens. Paul is commanding the Philippians in Philippians 1:27 and 3:20 and all church age believers to whom it is applicable to conduct themselves as citizens of heaven while here on earth. He is commanding the Philippians and all church age believers to function or conduct themselves under all the privileges and responsibilities that their heavenly citizenship confers.

Chapter Eleven: The Spiritual Gift of Pastor-Teacher

With the death of all the apostles and the close of the New Testament canon at the end of the first century, the spiritual gifts of apostleship and prophet no longer exist during the church age. This leaves the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher as the most important communication spiritual gift during the church age since the man with this spiritual gift holds the highest delegated authority in the church. The authority of the apostles is found in their teaching in the New Testament. The man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is to communicate the Lord and the apostles' teaching to the church. Also, the function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher provides protection from sin and Satan and nourishes spiritually the body of Christ with the Word of God. This results in the building up spiritually of the body of Christ. It also enables the believer to function properly in their spiritual gift and enables them to serve their fellow believers (Ephesians 4:12-13).

By way of definition, the pastor-teacher is a male church age believer who at the moment of conversion and by divine appointment has been given the spiritual gift and authority to communicate the Word of God to his fellow believer priests in the royal family of God who have been assigned to him by God. He is to exercise this authority in order to further the spiritual growth of his congregation to Christ-likeness.

Every believer in the church age has been assigned to a pastor-teacher without exception (1 Peter 5:1-4). Every believer without exception has been assigned to a pastor-teacher who has charge over them in the Lord (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). The pastor has been delegated authority from the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the human instrument used by God to communicate His Word.

The pastor-teacher has four responsibilities that are the means by which he tends and shepherds the flock of God: (1) Study (2 Timothy 2:15) (2) Teach (1 Timothy 4:13) (3) Pray (Acts 6:1-4) (4) Set an Example (Philippians 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 9; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 5:3).

The spiritual growth of each individual believer is dependent upon that which the pastor-teacher provides, namely, the Word of God, which he is to communicate (Ephesians 4:7-16). God has given the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher to men only (1 Timothy 2:11-14; 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:2). According to the Scripture a woman is to never exercise authority over a man (1 Timothy 2:11-14).

If a pastor loves the Lord and the Lord's flock, he will feed them (John 21:15-17). The pastor who is diligent in feeding the flock of God are to be highly esteemed (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). The congregation is to imitate their conduct, which is a result of applying that which they teach their congregation (Hebrews 13:7). The congregation is to submit to their spiritual authority since they keep watch over the souls of the congregation (Hebrews 13:17).

The pastor is to make the Word of God available on a daily basis to the congregation. Our Lord set the example for the pastor-teacher in the church age by teaching daily in the Temple (Matthew 26:55; Mark 14:49; Luke 19:47). He is to be repetitious in his teaching since he is the believer's spiritual drill instructor and just like drill instructor in the military is repetitious in training troops in the use of their weapons for combat so the pastor-teacher is to be repetitious in training his spiritual troops in their use of the spiritual weapon (the Word of God) for spiritual combat (Philippians 3:1; 2 Peter 3:1-2).

No accusation against a pastor should ever be received unless there are two or more witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19).

Although the pastor-teacher is the spiritual authority in the local assembly, he is not to lord his authority over the congregation. He is to adhere to the principle of spiritual authority operate, namely, humility. The pastor's humility is expressed through his dedicated, self-sacrifice and service to the congregation by study, teaching and praying, which provides the congregation their spiritual food and protection from the kingdom of darkness (Matthew 20:24-28; John 13:1-17).

His authority is solely derived from the Scriptures. His policies are to be solely are to be derived from the mystery doctrines for the church age. He is not to employ any Madison Avenue techniques to get people to come to his church. He is not to institute programs to attract parishioners, but is simply to communicate the Word of God. The Word of God is to be the attraction.

The pastor is not to be looked down upon because of his youth or age (1 Timothy 4:12). The man with the gift of pastor-teacher is not promoted to the office of pastor-teacher until he first demonstrates over a period of time his Christ-like character in a local assembly and his obedience to another pastor's authority (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

The pastor is also under stricter discipline because of his position of authority and responsibility (James 3:1). He should be supported financially by his local assembly or his flock (Galatians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 9:7). He will be rewarded for his faithful service at the Bema Evaluation of the church (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20; 1 Peter 5:4).

Different Terms for the Man with the Spiritual Gift of Pastor-Teacher

There are many terms used in the Greek New Testament for the pastor. The first one we will note is the noun *episkopos*, "overseer." As we noted, this word emphasizes his role as the protector of the souls of his congregation from the false doctrine that permeates the cosmic system of Satan (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25).

Episkopos is a compound word composed of the preposition *epi*, "over, upon" and the noun *skopos*, "one who watches," hence, "one who watches over someone." The word means "guardian, overseer, supervisor, superintendent." It should never be translated "bishop" because this gives rise to an ecclesiastical system never authorized by the Word of God.

Acts 20:28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopos*), to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 3:2-3 An overseer (*episkopos*), then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. (NASB95)

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6 namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7 For the overseer

(episkopos) must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. 10 For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain. (NASB95)

In the Greek New Testament, *episkopos* means, "Guardian, overseer, supervisor, superintendent, one who watches over others."

The *episkopos* is responsible for the protective care of his congregation's spiritual life. The pastor-teacher is responsible for the protective care of the souls of his congregation. He is to keep watch over their souls through the consistent daily communication of the Word of God, which roots out any false doctrine that has invaded the souls of his congregation from contact with the cosmic system.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. (NASB95)

Acts 20:17-28 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. (NASB95)

Presbuteros is an adjective which means, "elder" and emphasizes the pastor's role as chief policy maker of the church since he is the one delegated by the Holy Spirit with authority to communicate the Word of God (Acts 20:17, 1 Timothy 5:1, 17, 19; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1).

1 Timothy 5:17 The elders (*presbuteros*) who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." 19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses." (NASB95)

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders (*presbuteros*) in every city as I directed you. (NASB95)

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders (*presbuteros*) among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. (NASB95)

This word is frequently found in Homer and the poet Pindar and means, "old man" but not in the sense of age but in the sense of authority. The *presbuteros* were to receive respect, honor and authority based upon their wisdom and experience. The plural form of *presbuteros*, which is *presbuteroi*, referred to the committee or group of older men who controlled the business, economic and social affairs of society. They were to be honored and respected because they were in positions of authority.

The Spartans used the word as a political title to denote the president of a college. The heads of the tribes of Israel were called *presbuteroi*. Also, outstanding theologians and expositors of the Law were called *presbuteroi*. The members of the Sanhedrin were called *presbuteroi*. The leaders of the Jewish synagogues were also identified by the word.

Presbuteros is used in the Gospels with reference to the Sanhedrin. It referred to the leaders in Israel who were the enemies of our Lord and the apostles (Matthew 16:21; 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; 26:59; 27:1, 3, 12, 20, 41; 28:12; Mark 8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1; Luke 9:22; 20:1; 22:52; John 8:9; Acts 4:5, 8, 23).

Presbuteros is also used to refer to pastor-teachers (1 Timothy 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1, 5; 2 John 1; 3 John 1). It is synonymous with *episkopos* in the NT epistles. J. H. Thayer says that the two words are employed indiscriminately (Page 536, The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon).

In Acts 20:18-28, both *episkopos* and *presbuteros* refer to the pastor-teacher who presides over a local assembly of believers. They are not two different offices in the Church but one in the same. This is attested to by some of the greatest scholars that the church has ever produced, such men as Lightfoot, Thayer, and Jerome.

The verb *poimaino* means “shepherd” and emphasizes the function of the pastor in feeding and nourishing his congregation with the Word of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Peter 5:2).

1 Peter 5:2 Shepherd (*poimaino*) the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness. (NASB95)

The fact that *episkopos*, “overseers”, *poimaino*, “shepherd,” and *presbuteros*, “elders” are synonymous is attested to by the passage in Acts 20 where the apostle Paul calls for a meeting with the pastor-teachers in Ephesus.

Acts 20:17-28 teaches that *episkopos*, *poimaino* and *presbuteros* are synonymous terms and Jerome, who lived from 347 A.D. to 419 A.D., and was one of the greatest scholars that the church has ever produced wrote, confirms this rather forcefully in his Letters.⁸⁶

Jerome, who lived from 347 A.D. to 419 A.D. who translated the Latin Vulgate and was one of the greatest scholars that the church has ever produced, confirms forcefully in his letters that these two words *episkopos*, “overseer,” and *presbuteros*, “elder” are synonymous (The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, volume 6, page 288). Jerome writes, “We read in Isaiah the words ‘the fool will speak folly,’ and I am told that someone has been mad enough to put deacons before presbyters (*presbuteros*), that is, before bishops (*episkopos*). For when the apostle clearly teaches that presbyters (*presbuteros*) are the same as bishops (*episkopos*), must not a mere server of tables and of widows be insane to set himself up arrogantly over men through whose prayers the body and blood of Christ are produced? Do you ask for proof of what I say? Listen to this passage: ‘Paul and Timothy, the servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops (*episkopos*) and deacons.’

⁸⁶ The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, volume 6, page 288

Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Polycarp, all acknowledge that *episkopoi* and *presbuteros* are synonymous with each other, referring to the pastor-teacher who has authority over the local church.

There is another word in the Greek New Testament that is used to describe the pastor-teacher and it is the noun *diakonos*, “minister.” This word emphasizes the pastor’s responsibility to the Lord in being devoted and faithful in studying and teaching the Word of God to his congregation and praying for their spiritual growth (1 Corinthians 3:5, 2 Cor 3:6, 6:4, Ephesians 3:7, 6:21, Colossians 1:7, 23, 25, 4:7, 1 Thessalonians 3:2, 1 Timothy 4:6). Our Lord teaches His disciples to be the *diakonos* of each other meaning that they are not to be self-absorbed and self-centered but to serve each other as He served them by dying for their sins (Matthew 20:26, Mark 9:35, 10:43; John 13). The *diakonos* of Christ must be occupied with doing his Lord’s will as His *doulos* (“slave”), which is to become like Christ. All believers are the *diakonos*, “servants,” of Christ (John 12:26). The word is used in reference to those men who hold the office of deacon in the local assembly (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8, 12).

Ephesians 6:21 But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister (*diakonos*) in the Lord, will make everything known to you. (NASB95)

Colossians 1:7 just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant (*diakonos*) of Christ on our behalf. (NASB95)

Colossians 4:7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant (*diakonos*) and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. (NASB95)

1 Thessalonians 3:2 and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker (*diakonos*) in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith. (NASB95)

When *diakonos* is applied to the pastor-teacher, it refers to the pastor’s devotion and faithfulness to studying, teaching bible doctrine to his congregation and praying for their spiritual growth. *Diakonos* is synonymous with *episkopos*, *presbuteros*, *didaskalos*, and *poimen* when referring to the pastor-teachers with each describing a different aspect of the pastor-teacher’s role in the body of Christ. The apostle Paul describes himself and Apollos, who was a pastor-teacher, as a *diakonos* (1 Corinthians 3:5).

The fifth word that we will note that is used in the Greek New Testament for the pastor-teacher is the noun *apostolos*. This word does not always signify the office of apostle but at times refers to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has delegated the pastor as the spiritual commander of his congregation (Acts 14:14; 2 Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 2:25; 1 Thessalonians 2:6; Revelation 2:2).

The noun *apostolos* is first found in maritime language since the Greeks were a seafaring people and it was also used of military expeditions. It was used by the Greeks to designate a cargo ship, a freighter, transport ship, or the fleet sent out (Demosthenes). Later it denoted a commander of a naval expedition, or a band of colonists sent overseas. In striking contrast with classical Greek, *apostolos* is used in the NT only in the general sense of messenger, and particularly as the fixed designation of a definite office, the office of apostleship.

In classical Greek, the LXX and in Judaism *apostolos* designates an authorized messenger or one who is commissioned by legitimate authority. It is significant that with a few exceptions this word in the

NT designates one who has received a commission from the Lord Jesus Christ and has been authorized to represent Him before the churches throughout the Roman Empire as His messenger. It is critical to understand that the apostolos never receives his authority from men but from the Lord Jesus Christ.

The authorized messenger of the Lord Jesus Christ has 3 different manifestations: (1) Spiritual gift of apostleship (Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Tm. 1:1; 2 Tm. 1:1). (2) Colonial apostles (Acts 14:14; Romans 16:7; Galatians 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:1). (3) Spiritual gift of pastor-teacher (Acts 14:4 2 Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 2:25; 1 Thessalonians 2:6).

The sixth word that we will note that is used of the pastor-teacher is *hegeomai*, which is a verb that is used as a substantive participle and means, “leaders.” It emphasizes the pastor’s role as the spiritual authority in the congregation whose function is to watch over the souls of his congregation by feeding them the Word of God and praying for them (Hebrews 13:7, 17). Just as the physical body has many members with each having a different function so the body of Christ has many members with each having a different function (1 Corinthians 12). Just as the physical body has joints, which give it freedom of movement, so the pastor-teacher gives the body of Christ freedom of movement by abundantly supplying his congregation the Word of God (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers. (NASB95)

“**Pastors and Teachers**” is composed of the accusative masculine plural definite article *ho* and the accusative masculine plural form of the noun *poimen*, “**pastors**” and the conjunction *kai*, “**and**” which is followed by the accusative masculine plural form of the noun *didaskalos*, “**teachers**.”

This expression *tous poimenas kai didaskalous*, “**pastors and teachers**” is a figure of speech called hendiadys, where these two nouns are used to express one idea or concept. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns, and are always joined together by the conjunction “and.” The two nouns are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic.

Here in Ephesians 4:11 the nouns *poimenas* and *didaskalous* are separated by the conjunction *kai*, “and,” and are both in the accusative case.

The noun *didaskalous* becomes an adjective and can be translated with the English adjective “teaching.” So we can translate these two nouns with the phrase “teaching pastors.”

The Granville Sharp rule applies here as well in Ephesians 4:11 and this rule states that when two nouns are separated by the conjunction *kai* (and) and the first noun has a definite article preceding it and the second noun does not, the two nouns express one idea or concept, thus, the expression *tous de poimenas kai didaskalous* translated “pastor-teachers” refers to one office, two-fold ministry.

The noun *poimen*, “pastor,” emphasizes his role of feeding his congregation the Word of God, which nourishes and cares for the spiritual well being of his congregation (Ephesians 4:11).

The noun *didaskalos*, “teacher” emphasizes the pastor’s responsibility to systematically impart his technical knowledge of the Word of God to his congregation on a regular or sustained basis (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11; James 3:1).

Ephesians 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature, which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (NASB95)

“By what every joint supplies” is composed of the preposition *dia*, “through” and the genitive feminine singular form of the adjective *pas*, “every” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *haphe*, “joint” and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *epichoregia*, “abundantly provides.”

The preposition *dia* with the genitive noun *haphe* denotes intermediate agency and denotes the means or the instrument by which a thing is affected. The source of the spiritual growth of the Body of Christ is Christ Himself. Christ affects this spiritual growth in the believer through the intermediate agency of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.

Haphe refers to the pastor-teacher who is the intermediate agency that the Lord uses to affect the spiritual growth of the individual members of the Body of Christ. The word is found only twice in the NT (Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:19). *Haphe* has three basic meanings in classical literature. The word is used by the historian Herodotus for the “lighting of the lamps” (Herodotus 7.215). It also meant “point of contact, or “touch,” and was used for the “grip” of wrestlers. Aristotle used *haphe* for the point of contact in the physical body such as a ligament or joint.

The word is used metaphorically in Ephesians 4:16 and Colossians 2:19 for the pastor-teacher and should be translated “joint.”

Epichoregias a compound word found only twice in the NT (Ephesians 4:16; Philippians 1:19) and means “ample supply, ample provision, ample support and aid for someone.” This compound word is composed of the preposition *epi*, “over, above,” and *choregia*, “support to defray the cost of a public chorus.”

The preposition *epi* intensifies the meaning of the noun *choregia*. Its cognate verb is *epichoregeo*, which means, “To give, to provide for, support someone or something at one’s own expense.” The preposition *epi* also intensifies this verb’s meaning, thus it means, “to provide or supply with unrestraining generosity.” The verb *choregeo* in classical literature meant, “to lead a chorus.”

Metaphorically, the word means “to minister to, to furnish abundantly with.” It is found only twice in the NT (2 Corinthians 9:10; 1 Peter 4:11). The great dramas that were produced in Athens, Greece during the fourth and fifth century B.C. were financially supported by one of the rich citizens of the community. This person was called a *choregos* meaning “director of the chorus.” It was the privilege

and responsibility of this man to pay the cost of training the singers, dancers, and actors, and to meet the expenses of presenting one of the compositions. Sometimes the *choregos* would spend a fortune upon scenery, costumes, and actors. The *choregos* would often spend a fortune to produce the play that would win the prize.

The word *choregeo* developed from the role of provider of the needs of a production to the metaphorical meaning, “to supply, to furnish, to minister.” The root meaning of the noun *epichoregia* is derived from this verb *choregeo* and means “ample support and provision for the members of a choral dance troupe.” The metaphorical meaning of the noun is “abundantly provide.” We will translate this, “through every joint which abundantly provides”

The prepositional phrase *dia pases haphes tes epichoregias* is used the apostle Paul as a metaphor for the pastor-teacher who is the intermediate agency used by the Head (Christ) to abundantly provide the Body (the Church) with the necessary spiritual food (Word of God) that produces spiritual growth.

The *Haphe* Metaphor is used by Paul to illustrate the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ uses men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher to abundantly supply the individual members of His Body with the Word of God.

Ephesians 4:16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together through every joint which abundantly provides (the Word of God) according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (NASB95)

The noun *haphe*, “joint” is a metaphorical term which emphasizes the importance of the pastor-teacher’s function in the body of Christ since the Word of God which he supplies the congregation is essential to their spiritual growth, function of their spiritual gifts and protection of their souls from the lies of the cosmic system of Satan (Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:19).

Paul employs *haphe* metaphorically for pastor-teachers in the church who are to abundantly supply their congregations the Word of God, which gives the congregation the capacity to grow to spiritual maturity and gives them freedom of movement to serve the Lord and the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 2:19).

The source of the spiritual growth of the Body of Christ is Christ Himself. Christ affects this spiritual growth through the intermediate agency of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. *Haphe* refers to the pastor-teacher who is the intermediate agency that the Lord uses to affect the spiritual growth of the individual members of the Body of Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ, as the Head of the Body, feeds the individual members of His Body (the Church) through men with the spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher, who by metaphor are referred to here in Ephesians 4:16 as His “joints.” The pastor-teacher is to amply supply his congregation with the Word of God (John 21:15-17). This joint metaphor is found in the book of Colossians as well as in Ephesians.

Colossians 2:18 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on {visions} he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, 19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God. (NASB95)

Just as the physical body has many members with each having a different function so the body of Christ has many members with each having a different function (1 Corinthians 12). Just as the physical body has joints, which give it freedom of movement, so the pastor-teacher gives the body of Christ freedom of movement by abundantly supplying his congregation the Word of God (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Ephesians 4:12-16

Ephesians 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. 7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says, 'WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.' 9 (Now this expression, 'He ascended,' what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things) 11 and He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers. (NASB95)

Ephesians 4:11 says that after the ascension and session of our Lord in heaven that our Lord gave the church four great communication gifts: (1) apostles (2) prophets (3) evangelists (4) pastor-teachers. 1 Corinthians 12:28 has a corresponding list.

First the Lord gave the church the apostles, some of whose writings are found in the New Testament. Paul says in Ephesians 2:19-20 that the Church which is "God's household" has been "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone." The mystery doctrine of the church age was revealed to the apostles and prophets through God the Holy Spirit (John 13-17; Ephesians 3:4-5).

The gift of apostleship is no longer extant and is a temporary spiritual gift. Apostleship was the highest temporary spiritual gift and was accompanied by the gift of teaching, healing, prophecy and miracles, which were given to prove that the apostles were from God. The men with spiritual gift of apostleship had maximum authority to command in the church.

The gift of apostleship was given only to twelve men. The spiritual gift of apostleship functioned under two categories: (1) Writers of the New Testament (2) Establishment of local churches.

The apostles in establishing local churches were responsible for: (1) The clarification of the mystery doctrine for the church age (2) The maintenance of a true systematic theology with dispensational emphasis (3) The training of pastors (4) Establishment of local church policy.

The second spiritual gift mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 is that of the prophet. This also was a temporary spiritual gift and is no longer extant today. The prophets were given to the church for the purpose of communicating God's will, purpose and plan for the church age before the canon of Scripture was completed in 96 A.D.

Now that the canon of Scripture has been completed there is no longer a need for prophets. Everything that God desires to say to us today is found in the completed canon of Scripture. We now have the completed revelation from God now that the canon of Scripture is closed. God does not communicate to man in the church age through dreams or visions or through prophets because everything He desires to communicate to the church is found in the completed canon of Scripture (Hebrews 1:1-2).

The third spiritual gift mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 is that of the evangelist. This too was a communication gift just as the gifts of apostleship and prophet. This spiritual gift is still in existence today and is for the benefit of the unbeliever and not for the believer. The spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is specifically designed for the believer. The spiritual gift of evangelism is specifically designed for the unbeliever. The man with the spiritual gift has the dynamic ability to communicate the gospel to the unbeliever. The evangelist must be under the authority of a pastor-teacher. He does not have authority over the pastor-teacher.

The fourth gift given to the church by our Lord after his ascension and session is that of the gift of teaching. As we noted in our vocabulary study of the different words ascribed to the pastor-teacher in the Greek New Testament, the phrase “pastors and teachers” in Ephesians 4:11 is an incorrect translation. It does not speak of two individuals but in fact speaks of one man because of the figure of hendiadys.

God uses all types of men to communicate His Word throughout history. He employed kings, peasants, prime ministers of countries, fisherman and even a donkey (Nm. 22:30). The personality of the man is not important or critical in choosing a pastor. You choose a pastor-teacher based upon the content of his message and not his charming personality or dignified appearance. It’s the message not the man that counts. It is the content of the Pastor’s message that is important and not his overt personality or appearance. Paul rebuked the Corinthians who rejected his authority due to his unimpressive personal presence and oratory skills (2 Corinthians 10).

The Scriptures do not place any personality qualifications on the pastor-teacher. He is responsible to study and teach the Word of God to his congregation. The delivery of the pastor’s message is not the issue, only the content of his message. Never select a man to be your pastor on the basis of his overt personality or appearance. The selection of a pastor-teacher must be based upon the content of his message. Does he have the spiritual gift? The presentation or delivery of his message is irrelevant. The content of his message is what is relevant. The content of his message will be determined by how faithful he has been studying the original languages of Scripture.

A pastor who studies diligently the Word of God will not rely upon his personality. Pastors who do not study have no content in their message and rely upon being personable behind the pulpit. The pastor must level with his congregation (Galatians 4:16). He is a sinner with an old sin nature saved by the grace of God just like the members of his congregation; therefore, the members of his congregation should also deal with him with in grace.

The arrogance of certain members of the congregation put the pastor on a pedestal and become shocked when he sins or doesn’t measure up to their own false concept of what a pastor should be. He does and will sin. He is not impeccable, the Lord is. This does not imply that the pastor is not

responsible to exemplify Christian conduct, he is. His job is not to marry and bury you but to feed you the Word of God on a daily basis. He should communicate Bible doctrine and not emote.

The pastor's doctrine should be imitated and not his personality or lifestyle. His lifestyle should be one of studying and teaching Bible doctrine. The pastor, who loves his congregation, feeds his congregation the Word of God. His love for his congregation is determined by his attitude toward studying and teaching Bible doctrine (John 21:15-17). He is not a counselor but rather the Word of God is his council.

The pastor is not a marriage counselor. He is not someone you tell all your problems to or sin for that matter! He is responsible for communicating the Word of God to you in order for you to deal with your own problems under your very own royal priesthood.

Three-Fold Purpose of the Spiritual Gift of Pastor-Teacher

Ephesians 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. (NASB95)

There are three prepositional phrases in verse 12 which express the three-fold purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ providing the church with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.

“For the equipping of the saints” is composed of the preposition *pros*, **“for”** and the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *katartismos*, **“the equipping”** and the articular genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios*, **“of the saints.”**

The preposition *pros* plus the accusative *katartismos* in Ephesians 4:13 not only expresses purpose but is also used adverbially to express the manner in which this training is to take place. The preposition *pros* means, “face to face,” and implies a close intimate personal intercourse with someone.

In Ephesians 4:12, *pros* plus the adverbial accusative noun *katartismos* expresses the face-to-face manner of training in the Word of God that the believer is to receive from his divinely ordained pastor-teacher.

The first purpose in giving the body of Christ the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is to train members of the body of Christ to operate in their spiritual gift by communicating the Word of God to them in a face-to-face manner.

The apostle Paul under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit does not use the preposition *eis* here as he does in the following prepositional phrases because he wants to emphasize the manner in which the training is to take place.

The noun *katartismos* is from the *katartizo* word group and is a medical term in classical Greek denoting the “setting of the bone.” It also has a more general meaning “preparation, equipment, equipping,” and it also can be translated “training,” or “discipline.”

Plutarch used the word twice of education with *paideia* (Themistocles and Alexander). *Paideia* referred to a child's training, teaching and its goal was for the child to become an obedient and useful citizen of the community. The training was designed to produce character, self-control and courage.

Katartismos refers to the training one receives which equips them to serve in a particular capacity. In Ephesians 4:12, the word refers to the training in the Word of God received by the church age believer in a face to face manner by the function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, which in turn equips them to operate in their spiritual gift, which is designed to edify the body of Christ.

“For the face to face training of the saints” refers to the pastor-teacher training individual members of the body of Christ under his spiritual authority for Christian service by communicating the Word of God in a face to face manner.

“For the work of service” is composed of the preposition *eis*, “for” and the accusative neuter singular noun *ergon*, “**the work**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *diakonia*, “**of service.**”

Eis plus the accusative denotes a purpose or a goal in time. The anarthrous construction of the noun *ergon*, “work” emphasizes the quality of the noun and therefore, the quality or character of the work involved here and this quality is defined by the noun *diakonias*, “service,” which is an epexegetical genitive.

The noun *diakonias* explains or defines the quality of the work here, namely it is work, which is Christian service to the body of Christ. Furthermore, the anarthrous construction of the noun *diakonias* indicates the quality or character of the service, namely, Christian service. Therefore, the second prepositional phrase *eis ergon diakonias*, “**for work, which pertains to Christian service.**”

This second prepositional phrase refers to the fact that the function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher provides the believer the capacity to operate in his spiritual gift and therefore, to take part in Christian service, which produces divine good. The communication of bible doctrine trains and prepares the believer for Christian service, which produces divine good.

The progression of these prepositional phrases here in Ephesians 4:12 indicates that the training of the believer through the communication of the Word of God in a face to face manner by the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher precedes Christian service.

The prepositional phrase *pros ton katartismon ton hagion* preceding the prepositional phrase *eis ergon diakonias* emphasizes the fact that the believer must first receive training from their right pastor-teacher before they are to serve. The function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher provides the necessary training needed to perform effective Christian service.

The first prepositional phrase *pros ton katartismon ton hagion*, “for the face to face training of the saints,” states that the initial purpose of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is to communicate the Word of God to the believer in a face-to-face manner.

This leads to the second prepositional phrase, which refers to the fact that the function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher provides the believer the capacity to perform Christian service, which

produces divine good of intrinsic value that will be rewarded at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the believer that will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The third purpose for the Lord Jesus Christ providing the body of Christ with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is expressed by yet a third prepositional phrase.

Ephesians 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. (NASB95)

“**To the building up of the body of Christ**” is composed of the preposition *eis*, “**to**” and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *oikodome*, “**the building**” and the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *soma*, “**of the body**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos*, “**Christ**.”

The preposition *eis* plus the accusative means, “for,” and expresses the ultimate purpose for the Lord Jesus Christ bestowing the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher to the body of Christ.

In Ephesians 4:12, *oikodome* has both a metaphorical and collective connotation and should be translated “construction, building up,” or “building process.” *Oikodome* in Ephesians 4:12 refers to the building up of the Body of Christ. The noun *Christos* is a genitive of possession expresses the fact that the body mentioned here in Ephesians 4:12 belongs to Christ who is the Head of the body.

The third prepositional phrase: “**For the ultimate purpose of the construction of the body belonging to Christ.**”

Ephesians 4:11 And He (the Lord Jesus Christ) gave the apostles, and the prophets, and the evangelists, and the pastor-teachers 12 for the face to face training of the saints for the work, which pertains to Christian service, for the ultimate purpose of the construction of the body belonging to Christ. (Author’s translation)

The Lord Jesus Christ provided the body of Christ with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher in order to train in a face to face manner each individual member of the body of Christ, which in turn enables the believer to perform Christian service resulting in the spiritual growth of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Peter 2:5).

Four-Fold Responsibility of the Pastor-Teacher

The Scriptures teach that the pastor-teacher, i.e. the overseer has four responsibilities that are the means by which he tends and shepherds the flock of God: (1) Study (2 Timothy 2:15) (2) Teach (1 Timothy 4:13) (3) Pray (Acts 6:1-4). (4) Exemplify the Christian way of life.

Let’s take a look at the first responsibility of the pastor-teacher, which is to study. The pastor-teacher’s study of the Word of God involves many different aspects.

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 2:15 I solemnly charge you to diligently study in order to present yourself approved to God as a workman who is not ashamed, accurately communicating the Word of Truth and do it now. (Author's translation)

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel. (NASB95)

Acts 26:20 While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad." (NASB95)

2 Timothy 4:13 When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. (NASB95)

William Tyndale, made a similar request in 1536 just before he was martyred, ". . . kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend time with that in study."

John Wesley told the preachers under his care to read or get out of the ministry!

The great men of God have notoriously been great prayer warriors and great readers! While Timothy is to be instructing and warning his disciples, he must never lose sight of his own spiritual welfare. There is a holy selfishness, which must characterize the man of God if he is to have an eternal impact upon his generation.

Wesley, wrote in his diary: "I sit down alone; only God is here. In His presence I open, I read His book . . . and what I learn, I, teach."

The pastor-teacher's impact for God in public is predicated upon God's impact on him in private.

2 Timothy 2:15 confronts the pastor-teacher with his earthly responsibilities to God and His Word. The pastor-teacher must first devote himself to prayer and study of the Word of God before he can communicate the Word of God. The content of his message will be determined by how diligently he studies and prays. The lifestyle of the pastor must be one that is constantly devoted to prayer, study and the teaching of the Word of God.

"Be diligent" is the second person singular aorist active imperative form of the verb *spoudazo*, which is *spoudason*.

The verb *spoudazo* can have the following meanings depending upon the context in which it is used: "to be busy or eager to do a thing, to pay serious attention to a person, to be serious or earnest, to give diligence to something, to diligently study, to lecture, to teach, to do anything hastily or earnestly, to zealously pursue something, to take up a serious occupation with something, to treat someone or something with respect, to do something with intense effort and motivation."

The word is used often of being "intensively involved with something, to be intensely serious about something." The Athenian Philostratus who lived between third and second century B.C. wrote that Dio

of Prusa “did not neglect the diligent study (*spoudazo*) of letters, but sustained himself with two books” (Lives of the Sophists 1.7.2).

Spoudazo is employed 11 times in the New Testament (Galatians 2:10; Ephesians 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 2:17; 2 Timothy 2:15; 4:9, 21; Titus 3:12; Hebrews 4:11; 2 Peter 1:10, 15; 3:14). In the context of 2 Timothy 2:15, *spoudazo* means, “to diligently study the Word of God.”

Spoudazo expresses the first function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, which is study. Study must *precede* the communication of the Word of God. The pastor-teacher must first fill his bucket with water before he can feed his congregation.

In Ephesians 5:25, the Word is analogous to water. The believer after salvation is “**cleansed by the washing of water with the Word**” (Ephesians 5:26). In John 13:3-14, our Lord washed the disciples’ feet, which was analogous to the cleansing effect that the Word of God has on believers after salvation. Just as water cleanses us in the physical realm, so does the Word of God cleanse us in the spiritual realm from all the garbage we pick up in our souls from the cosmic system.

The aorist tense of the verb *spoudazo* in 2 Timothy 2:15 is a constative aorist tense contemplating the action of the verb in its entirety. The constative aorist takes an action and, regardless of its extent of duration, gathers it into a single whole or summarizes it. The constative aorist of *spoudazo* in 2 Timothy 2:15 indicates diligent study and exegesis of the original languages of Scriptures is to be the *lifestyle* of the pastor-teacher.

Acts 6:4 “But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” (NASB95)

Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun diligence, “persevering application, speed, haste, the attention and care legally expected or required of a person as a party under contract.” It defines the adjective diligent, “characterized by steady, earnest, and energetic application and effort.”

Timothy was to spend his time diligently studying the Scriptures in order to be approved by God. He is commanded by Paul to be intense and zealous in his studies.

The active voice expresses the fact that Timothy is to produce the action of this verb and is thus to obey the command. This is also an imperative of command where one will makes a direct, positive appeal to another. The apostle Paul under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit is communicating the will of God to Timothy and all men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. The aorist imperative is constative for a solemn or categorical command. The stress is not “begin an action,” nor “continue to act.” Rather, the stress is on the solemnity and urgency of the action; thus “I solemnly charge you to act—and do it now!” Therefore, we will translate *spoudazo* here in 2 Timothy 2:15, “**I solemnly charge you to diligently study-and do it now.**”

The pastor-teacher is first and foremost must be a student of the Word of God himself; therefore he must be diligent in learning the Word.

Proverbs 1:3 To receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity. (NASB95)

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. (NASB95)

Proverbs 4:2 For I give you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction. (NASB95)

Proverbs 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell {it}, {get} wisdom and instruction and understanding. (NASB95)

In 2 Timothy 2:15, the verb *spoudazo* also addresses the pastor-teacher's responsibility to be diligent in his exegesis and exposition of the original languages of Scripture.

2 Timothy 2:15 I solemnly charge you to diligently study in order to present yourself approved to God as a workman who is unashamed, accurately communicating the Word of Truth-and do it now. (Author's translation)

Intense study is wearying to the body.

Ecclesiastes 12:12 But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body. (NASB95)

1 Thessalonians 5:12 Appreciate those who diligently labor (study Bible doctrine) among you (pastor-teachers) and have charge over you (spiritual authority) in the Lord and give you instruction (communicate Bible doctrine). (Author's translation)

The word for “**labor**” is the verb *kopiao*, “to work strenuously and earnestly to the point of exhaustion.” This word denotes physical as well as mental exhaustion as a result of hard work. The verb *kopiao* refers to the mental exhaustion that will result in the pastor-teacher who is working hard at doing his job. Paul says under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit that the believer is to “**esteem**” their pastor-teacher who diligently labors in studying and teaching Bible doctrine (1 Thessalonians 5:13).

1 Timothy 5:17 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.” (NASB95)

There will be shame for the cosmic pastor who was not faithful in studying and teaching the Word of God.

1 John 2:28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (NASB95)

“**Accurately handling**” is accusative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *orthotomeo*, which is made up of two words, *orthos*, “straight,” and *temnos*, “to cut,” thus “to cut straight.”

Orthotomeo is hapax legomenon meaning it is found only once in the New Testament. It is not found in classical literature, but is found twice in the Septuagint (Prov. 3:6; 11:5), where it is used along with *hodos*, “path,” and thus means “to cut a path in a straight direction.”

Temnos and *hodos* were used together by the classical authors. Thucydides used this phrase in the literal sense for “cutting a path” through thick forest or rough terrain in, order that a traveler may go directly to his destination. Plato though used this same phrase in the figurative sense, “to proceed along the way of legislation which has been cleared by our present discourse” (Plato, Laws 7.801E).

The classical authors used *orthos* both literally and metaphorically. Literally, the word meant, “straight in height, standing, straight in line as the antithesis to what is crooked, straight, such as right opposite the sun,” or “to face the front originally held.”

Metaphorically, *orthos* meant, “right, safe, prosperous, to speed in a prosperous course, right, true, correct, real, genuine, upright, just,” and of persons, “straightforward.” It was also used by Aristotle of right angles.

Vine notes that *orthotomeo* “passed from the idea of cutting or dividing, to the more general sense of rightly dealing with a thing.” He also notes concerning the word’s usage in 2 Timothy 2:15, “What is intended here is not dividing Scripture from Scripture, but teaching Scripture accurately” (Vine’s Unabridged Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, page 329).

In 2 Timothy 2:15, the verb *orthotomeo* addresses the pastor-teacher’s responsibility of exposition where he is to accurately communicate the Word of God to his congregation.

Orthotomeo in 2 Timothy 2:15, refers to the straightforward, line upon line, precept upon precept, accurate communication of the Scriptures by a man who is competent to do so.

Isaiah 28:13 So the word of the LORD to them will be, “Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there,” That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive. (NASB95)

This word presents the antithesis to the false teachers, who engage in “**worldly empty chatter**,” which Timothy was warned to avoid by Paul in 1 Timothy 6:20, and in the next verse, 2 Timothy 2:16.

1 Timothy 6:3-5, 2 Timothy 16-18, and 2 Peter 2:2-3 describes these false teachers who are side-tracked by their arrogance for personal gain and fail to communicate accurately the Word of God. These false teachers are incompetent to communicate the Scriptures and are crooked in their handling of the Scriptures whereas Timothy is to be straightforward or accurate in his handling of the Scriptures. Timothy is told by Paul to “**pay close attention to himself and his teaching**” (1 Timothy 4:16).

Orthotomeo not only implies accuracy in expository teaching of the Scriptures, but also competency in teaching it. The pastor-teacher must have information to communicate to his congregation in order for him to teach them. He must have content in his message, and not simply random thoughts. Teaching involves preparation and preparation involves study. Study also involves meditation upon that which you have exegeted in the original languages.

The pastor-teacher must not only exegete the original languages but also meditate upon the text itself for the purpose of making his own personal application.

1 Timothy 4:16 Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. (NASB95)

The pastor-teacher is to meditate upon that which he has learned from his exegesis of the passage he is studying and make personal application to his own life. Biblical meditation involves repetitive, reflective and reverential reading of the Word of God and making application to one's own life. Meditation means "the act of focusing one's thoughts, thus to ponder, think about." It consists of reflective thinking or contemplation, usually on a specific subject to discern its meaning or significance or a plan of action.

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. (NASB95)

Biblical meditation consists of reflective thinking or contemplation on the Word of God in order to discern its meaning for the purpose of making personal application (Philippians 4:8-9). Biblical meditation is an expression of rejecting self-sufficiency in favor of the sufficiency of God's Word. The goal of Christian Biblical meditation is to adopt the attitude or thinking of Christ, which is expressed in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. The purpose of Christian Biblical meditation is to develop the character of Christ in the believer.

The next responsibility of the pastor-teacher that we will note is that of teaching (1 Timothy 4:11).

1 Timothy 4:11 Prescribe and teach these things. (NASB95)

"**Prescribe**" is the second person singular present active imperative form of the verb *parangello*, which is a compound verb composed of the preposition *para*, "beside" and the verb *angello*, "to announce, proclaim, bear a message." Therefore, the compound verb *parangello* means, "to proclaim or announce beside." It means, "to pass on an announcement or proclamation," hence denotes "to give the word, order, give a charge, command."

The word expresses the idea of a forward movement, thus, "the passing on" of the message or proclamation, or "instructing," serves as the verb's basic meaning. But this "directing" has notes of authority and obligation attached to it as well.

For example, it was used in Greek classical literature when philosophers, military personnel, or gods wish to "enjoin, direct," or "obligate" others.

The word in the Greek New Testament expresses an authoritative command.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 Now we command (*parangello*) you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 6:13 I charge (*parangello*) you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate 14 that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

The verb *parangello* in the context of 1 Timothy 4:11 means, “to command, issue orders” regarding all that Paul discussed in 1 Timothy 4:1-10. Paul is commanding Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:11 to exercise his spiritual authority as a pastor-teacher by passing along to his congregation Paul’s apostolic commands that appear in Timothy 4:1-10.

1 Thessalonians 5:12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction. (NASB95)

This is a customary present imperative whose force is for Timothy to simply continue exercising his spiritual authority and pass along the commands and orders that he received from the apostle Paul. The present imperative is a command for action to be continued, action that may or may not have already been going on. It is often a character building command to the effect of “make this your habit,” “train yourself in this, discipline yourself.” This is the use of the present imperative in general precepts. In 1 Timothy 4:11 the present imperative of *parangello* means, “to continue or make it a habit to issue these orders.”

“**Teach**” is the second person plural present active imperative form of the verb *didasko*, “to teach, to educate, to impart information in a public assembly.”

The verb means, “to provide Biblical instruction in a local assembly.” The present imperative form of the verb in 1 Timothy 4:11 expresses the Holy Spirit’s desire that Timothy is to make it his habit of teaching the Word of God, educating his congregation in the Word of God and impart to his congregation information regarding the will of God, which is expressed in the Word of God in a local public assembly.

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. 13 Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. (NASB95)

“**Exhortation**” is the noun *paraklesis*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *para*, “beside” and the noun *klesis*, “a summons, call.” Thus, the word means, “a calling to one’s side, or one’s aid.”

The concept of exhortation is built on the intent of encouraging and blessing another person and is not intended to be a rebuke or critical commentary. Sometimes, however, it can retain a serious or impressive character.

The noun *paraklesis* in 1 Timothy 4:13 is commanding Timothy to encourage his flock by means of the Scriptures.

“**Teaching**” is the noun *didaskalia*, “the act or occupation of teaching, information, instruction, precept, doctrine.”

In 1 Timothy 4:13 the apostle Paul is commanding Timothy to teach Bible doctrine.

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. 15 Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. 16 Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 4:1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. (NASB95)

“**Preach**” is the second person singular aorist active imperative form of the verb *kerusso*, “to authoritatively proclaim the Word of God.” It was the formal, official and authoritative manner in which the Gospel was proclaimed or announced.

The aorist imperative form of the verb *kerusso* in 2 Timothy 4:2 expresses a solemn charge by Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to Timothy that he act immediately, i.e. do it now, to authoritatively proclaim the Word of God to his congregation.

In 2 Timothy 4:2, we can translate the second person singular aorist active imperative form of the verb *kerusso*, “I solemnly charge you to immediately publicly proclaim the Word as a herald in a dignified and authoritative manner which commands the respect and attention of those who hear it.”

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. 5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 6:1 All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. 2 Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles. 3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, 4 he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, 5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. 6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. 20 O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding

worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called ‘knowledge’—21 which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you. (NASB95)

The third responsibility of the pastor-teacher is to pray.

Acts 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. 2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. (NASB95)

Peter is saying here that the number one priority and responsibility of the apostles is to pray and serve spiritual food to the souls of the flock of God, namely the Word of God instead of serving food for their bodies. The deacons were to serve food for the body to members of the congregation while the apostles were to serve the Word of God, which is food for their souls.

Lastly, the fourth and final responsibility of the pastor-teacher is to exemplify the Christian way of life.

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 3:10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! (NASB95)

Can Women Be Pastors?

1 Timothy 2:11 A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. 12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. 13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. 14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 2:11-15 is arguably the most controversial passage in the Bible for those who live in America since its teaching contradicts the culture and attitudes of many where women possess places of authority in government and business and many times in the home!

Warren Wiersbe writes, “In these days of ‘Women’s Lib’ and other feminist movements, the word ‘submission’ makes some people see red. Some well-meaning writers have even accused Paul of being a ‘crusty old bachelor’ who was antiwomen. Those of us who hold to the inspiration and authority of the Word of God know that Paul’s teachings came from God and not from himself. If we have a problem

with what the Bible says about women in the church, the issue is not with Paul (or Peter—see 1 Peter 3:1–7), but with the Lord who gave the Word (2 Timothy 3:16–17).”⁸⁷

Unfortunately, when the idea of women submitting to men comes up, women become defensive and revolt at such a notion because in many cases they’ve been deceived and indoctrinated by the cosmic system of Satan. They’ve been deceived into thinking that to subordinate to men demonstrates inferiority, which is clearly not the case. The Bible does not teach that but Satan does since he is the author of rejection of authority because he rebelled against God in eternity past. You are not inferior as a woman because you submit to the authority of your husband or your pastor-teacher.

Sadly, in many cases, it is not deception that has caused many women to reject the idea of submission to a man but rather it is the result of having suffered physical and verbal abuse from their husband or father in the home.

The Son and the Spirit subordinate themselves to the Father, though both are equal to the Father. Adam and Eve were both created in the image of God and are equal. However, their roles are quite different in that Adam was formed first and Eve was formed after him for the express purpose of being a corresponding helpmate. She was equal to him but was to be subordinate to him in their relationship with each other. This divine design is referred to by Paul in verse 13a when giving his reasons for his instructions in verse 11.

With respect to 1 Timothy 2:11-15, the major question that is asked is whether or not Paul’s teaching is limited in its application or is it something that is universal in its application? Was Paul addressing a specific historical situation in the church at Ephesus or was he teaching something that was to be obeyed throughout history by the church? Was Paul teaching that only the women in Ephesus in the first century could not teach and exercise authority over men in the church or was he teaching something that was always to be the case throughout history? The reasons that Paul presents in verses 12-14 for prohibiting women from possessing authority over men and teaching are taken from Genesis 1-3 and support a universal application.

Genesis 1-3 teaches that Adam was formed first and then Eve (verse 13) and Eve was deceived not Adam (verse 14). Thus, Paul is teaching that the role of women in the church and their relationship to men in the church is based upon God’s plan for creation and Eve being deceived rather than Adam. Many reject Paul’s use of Genesis as support for his instructions in 1 Timothy 2:11.

Douglas Moo rejects this idea, he writes, “It has become customary to fault the Apostle’s interpretation of the creation accounts and to reject his conclusions for this reason. Representative is the assertion of the Catholic Biblical Association of America’s Task Force on the Role of Women in Early Christianity: ‘The presuppositions of Paul’s patriarchal culture have influenced his interpretation of Genesis.’ Such a conclusion is unacceptable to those who, like myself, would maintain the inerrancy of Scripture, and it must be noted that this is precisely what is involved: Scripture errs if any part presents false teaching through faulty exegesis and argumentation. But, to assert the position is not to justify it and it must be asked whether Paul’s understanding of the Genesis passages can be justified. While the majority of modern commentators deny the presence of any subordinationism in the second creation narrative and rightly criticize some of the excesses found in older works, there are two points at which some degree of subordination seems to be implied. The first is found in the purpose for which woman is

⁸⁷ Wiersbe, W. W.; 1996; The Bible exposition commentary; 1 Ti 2:9; Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books

created, to be a ‘helper corresponding to man’ (*‘ezer kēnegdōr* Gen 2:18). The fundamental correspondence between man and woman, in contrast to man and the beasts, is clearly affirmed (2:23), but this ‘likeness’ in no way diminishes the fact that woman is created as a ‘helper.’ Nor does the fact that *‘ezer* is commonly used of God in the OT necessarily remove the sense of subordination in Genesis 2. For when God is portrayed as the ‘helper’ of his people, it is a manifestation of His grace. Once again, it is crucial that the distinction between essence and relationship be maintained: essentially, of course, God is not inferior to man nor is woman to man, but in the sphere of relationship (God-man at certain points; female-male at every point), a sustaining, helping role can exist which has as its purpose the welfare of the other. The man’s ‘naming’ of the woman is the second point at which some degree of subordination can be discerned. In Hebrew culture, to name something is to express its fundamental characteristics, but also generally implies the authority of the one giving the name. While it is asserted that no sense of authority can be inferred in the ‘naming’ activity in Gen 2:23, the niphal imperfect form of *qr* suggests otherwise: it is employed most often in prophetic speech, where the destiny or character of a person or thing is to be characterized in the name. So, for instance, Gen 17:5: ‘No longer shall you be named Abram,’ and Isaiah 56:7: ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer...’ The element of authority inherent in such semi-imperative predictions is clear. Adam, *ish*, names Eve, *isha*, and expresses thereby both her essential equality with him and his right to predict determinately her character. In addition to an alleged incorrect understanding of Genesis 2, Paul has been accused of misusing the creation accounts by employing Genesis 2, where female subordination might be implied, in isolation from Genesis 1, which affirms the full equality of the sexes. However, Genesis 2 is certainly to be understood as an expansion of the brief account of Genesis 1, the second narrative focusing particularly on the relationship between man and woman. Thus the second account, which is more specific on the matter of relationship, is more important for that question and is naturally employed when that is the subject of discussion.”⁸⁸

Some who reject Paul’s teaching in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 use Galatians 3:28 as justification to reject this teaching.

Again, Douglas Moo, “It has become popular to view Gal 3:28 as an expression of the most basic and authentic Pauline attitude toward women and to interpret it as establishing an equality between man and woman that annuls any gender-based distinctions within the church. Three objections to this view may be offered. First, Paul in this text is making an assertion about the equality of all people before God, probably with a view to the Jewish prayer in which the man expressed his thanks to God that he had not been created a woman, a slave or a Gentile. Although it is frequently pointed out, it must be reiterated again: equality in status before God does not require the abolition of all hierarchical relationships. Secondly, then, it is false to view Gal 3:28 as the central Pauline text on women, since that is not the basic topic. Thirdly, it is methodologically objectionable to exalt one text to programmatic status and dismiss or interpret in a forced manner all others. Much more acceptable is the approach which seeks to allow each text to speak and then determine where assimilation into a consistent outlook is possible. In this case it is. In essence and in terms of means and ability in approaching God all are equal; in relationships with one another, distinctions, sometimes involving submission and obedience, are maintained. In this light, the frequently noted parallel to the Trinity is apt: Jesus, though one with the Father, also does all that His father commands him.”⁸⁹

1 Timothy 2:11-15 says something similar in 1 Corinthians 14:33-35.

⁸⁸ 1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance, Trinity Journal volume 1, number 1, Spring 1980; pages 78-80

⁸⁹ Ibid., pages 78-79

1 Corinthians 14:34 the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. 35 If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. (ESV)

As is the case in American culture today and many places around the world, the Spirit inspired Pauline prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:11 ran counter to the culture in Ephesus in the first century A.D. since women officiated in the mystery religions in that city.

In verse 9, we read that Paul prohibited the women in the Christian community in Ephesus from being immodest with the way they dressed. Now here in verses 11-15, he is prohibiting them from being insubordinate, which would be very immodest on the part of the women who have a tendency to be insubordinate to men. This is why Paul prohibits women from teaching and having authority over men in his writings as well as commanding them to obey their husbands.

In 1 Timothy 2:11, Paul gives three instructions to the women in the Christian community which are applicable to Christian women in every dispensation of history. In verse 12, he amplifies these instructions and the explains the Lord's reasoning in verses 13-15. The three instructions in verse 11 are: (1) Christian women are to remain quiet in the local assembly rather than be vocal. (2) Christian women are to receive instruction rather than give the instruction themselves. (3) Christian women are prohibited from exercising authority over men in the local assembly, which would be manifested by teaching men.

The authority inherent in teaching the Word of God, and thus in the teacher, is indicated by the fact that the spiritual gift of teaching was restricted to particular individuals (the pastor-teacher, elder, and overseer in the Pastorals [1 Timothy 3:2, 5:17; Titus 1:9]). It is indicated by the combinations in which one finds the word for teaching, thus, Paul who was appointed a "herald, apostle and teacher of the nations" (1 Timothy 2:7; cf. 2 Timothy 1:11) "proclaims, admonishing and teaching" (Colossians 1:28), and Timothy is encouraged to "command and teach" (1 Timothy 4:11), to "teach and exhort" (1 Timothy 6:2) and to "preach the Word... in teaching" (2 Timothy 4:1).

In verse 11, Paul continues to address the proper conduct of the Christian women in the church at Ephesus. In verses 11-15, he addresses their proper role and function in the body of Christ. In this passage, there is a contrast between the woman learning the Word of God, which is encouraged and her relationship to the teaching of the Word of God, which she is prohibited from doing in the local assembly in the presence of men. She is allowed to teach immature Christian women (Titus 2:2-3) but never men.

Also, it must be added that because women are commanded to learn does not infer or imply that they are to teach men in the local assembly, which is an argument from silence that must be rejected and is not supported anywhere in the New Testament. The reason the woman is to learn is not so she can teach men but teach other immature women and for spiritual growth (Ephesians 4:11-16). Women like men are to learn so as to be obedient and to grow up to be like Christ.

Women Are to Receive and Not Give Instruction

1 Timothy 2:11 A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. (NASB95)

In 1 Timothy 2:11 as was the case in verse 9 and 10, the noun *gune* means, “woman” or “female” as opposed or in contrast to men or a male just as *aner* in verse 8 meant “men” in contrast or as opposed to the women in verse 8.

Some contend that *gune* refers to married women in these verses citing that the woman in verse 15 is married and is the most natural reading since most women were married in Paul’s day. However, it is better to interpret *gune* in these verse as referring to women in general without reference to their marital status since one of the major problems in Ephesus that Paul was dealing with concerned itself with widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16). Therefore, if Paul in verse 9 was addressing only the married Christian women in Ephesus, why would he omit entirely the widows in that place? Furthermore, why would Paul address the way the married women dress and not the widows or single women? Why would he prohibit only married women from teaching and not the widows or the single women? If *gune* is referring to married women then *aner* in verse 8 is speaking of married men. However, would Paul command only the married men to pray and not the single men? Of course, not.

Therefore, as was the case in 1 Timothy 2:9 and 10, the noun *gune* in 1 Timothy 2:11 means, “woman” or “female” as opposed or in contrast to men or a male. It refers to the Christian women throughout the church age without reference to their marital status.

Gune functions as a generic noun, which is appropriate since Paul in verse 11 is addressing a general truth. In relation to this, notice that Paul uses the plural form of this word in verses 9-10 but uses the singular in verse 11 and that is because he is teaching an eternal spiritual truth that is applicable in every dispensation.

In 1 Timothy 2:11, the verb *manthano* means “to learn” and refers to acquiring information as the result of instruction, in the local assembly. This indicates that Paul is commanding Christian women to receive information about the Christian faith through instruction from their pastor-teachers quietly and with complete submission.

The verb *manthano* refers to the act of carefully communicating and instructing the body of Christ whether in writing or face to face the tradition concerning Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection as well as the significance of His person and these events in His life. It is communicating the authoritative proclamation of God’s will to believers in light of that tradition.

This verb means that Christian women are to acquire information regarding the thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ quietly and with total submissiveness. It means that they are to receive instruction regarding the doctrines of Christ. It means that they are to be furnished with knowledge of Christ through a systematic method of teaching. They were to be furnished with knowledge of the doctrines of Christ through the systematic method of teaching the Word of God. They were to be educated in the teachings of Christ. They were to be trained in the doctrines of Christ through the systematic method of teaching of the Word of God. It indicates that they were to receive authoritative instructions from their pastor-teachers regarding their conduct as Christians.

This is a “customary present imperative,” which is a command for action to be continued, action that may or may not have already been going on and is often a character building command to the effect of “make this your habit,” “train yourself in this, discipline yourself.” The present imperative of the verb is used of a general precept for habits that should characterize one’s attitude and behavior. Therefore, the

present imperative form of the verb *manthano* indicates that as a general precept, Christian women must receive biblical instruction quietly and with complete submissiveness. It denotes that they are to be characterized as receiving biblical instruction from their pastor-teachers quietly and with complete submissiveness.

The fact that Paul has to address this issue in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 with regards to the woman's role in the church implies that there was a problem among the Christian women in Ephesus attempting to be teachers and being insubordinate since why mention it except for preventive maintenance.

Undoubtedly, there were many women who were not insubordinate by attempting to teach the Word of God to men in the local assembly and of course there must have been a few that did otherwise he would not address this issue in the first place. So, it appears that some women were insubordinate and many were not and thus it is best to view this present imperative as Paul, simply communicating a general precept of the Word of God and the Lord and the apostles' teaching without reference to whether there was a violation of this command or not.

“Quietly” is composed of the preposition *en* (ἐν), **“with”** and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun *hesuchia* (ἡσυχία), **“quietly.”**

This word is used in classical Greek to describe a place of “rest, quiet.” It is used 12 times in the Septuagint in a similar fashion. In this body of literature, it is used of “rest” after circumcision (Joshua 5:8) and of a “peaceable” or “safe” place to live (1 Chronicles 4:40; Ezekiel 38:11). The term occurs only 4 times in the New Testament (Acts 22:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Timothy 2:11, 12).

In Acts 22:2, the word is used of the Jerusalem mob being “silent” in order to hear the apostle Paul speak. The apostle Paul uses the word in 2 Thessalonians 3:2 when instructing the Thessalonian church that they are to work in silence meaning to not disturb others.

In 1 Timothy 2:11 and 12, the noun *hesuchia* can either mean “silence” or “quietness.” The latter denotes the attitude of proper deference to another speaking and the former to refraining from speaking in a public setting. The latter denotes demonstrating total deference to the man with spiritual gift of pastor-teacher when he is communicating the Word of God in a public setting in the church. The former denotes totally refraining from speaking audibly to the church in a public setting. Specifically, it speaks of refraining from teaching the Word of God in the presence of men in the local assembly.

We must balance this by noting that 1 Corinthians 11:5 does permit women to speak to the church if they possess the gift of prophecy and when they take part in corporate prayer meetings. Titus 2:2-3 does permit women to teach other women.

Since in context, Paul is addressing the proper behavior or conduct of Christian women while functioning in the local assembly along with men, the correct interpretation is that Christian women are to not speak the Word of God in a public setting in the local assembly. Thus, *hesuchia* means “silence” rather than “quietly” or “quietness.”

1 Corinthians 11:5 and Titus 2:2-3 make clear that Paul is speaking with respect to a particular activity in the church, namely the communication of the Word of God since the former permits women

to speak if they have the gift of prophecy and the latter permits her to teach other women who are immature or younger.

This interpretation is further indicated by the prepositional phrase ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ· that also modifies *manthano*. Christian women must learn the Word of God with complete deference to the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher when he is communicating to the Word of God in the local assembly by not teaching the Word of God to men in the local assembly.

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 2:11 *hesuchia* does not have any reference to the woman's attitude when receiving the Word of God but rather her conduct and role with respect to the teaching of the Word of God. Paul is prohibiting the women in the Christian community from giving biblical instruction in the local assembly when in the presence of men. They are to show complete deference to those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher when they are communicating the Word of God to the church by not teaching men in the local assembly themselves.

So, Paul's command here in 1 Timothy 2:11 is specifically addressing the conduct of women in a public worship setting with respect to the exercise of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. Therefore, this passage teaches implicitly that women have not been given the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. Other passages teach this, for example in 1 Timothy 3:2, Paul teaches that an overseer must be the "husband" of one wife. If an overseer could be a women, then why does he not say the overseer must be the "wife" of one husband. In fact, Paul says in 1 Timothy 3:4 that the overseer must manage "his" own household if he is to be qualified to manage the household of God. He does not say "her" household. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul tells Timothy to entrust his apostolic teaching to faithful "men" so that they can teach others. Notice again, there is no mention of women.

The women's silence in this public worship setting demonstrates her complete submission to the will of God. "It is a concrete expression of the principle of submission, which Paul articulates in the next prepositional phrase." (Knight, page 139)

The word *hesuchia* is the object of the preposition *en*, which functions as a marker of manner denoting the manner in which the action of the verb *manthano* is accomplished. The manner can be an accompanying action, attitude, emotion or circumstance. Here an action on the part of Christian women is in view. If the word can be converted into an adverbial form it is most likely a dative of manner. If not then it is more than likely a dative of means. If the word adds color to the action of the verb, it is likely a dative of manner and if it defines the action of the verb, it is a dative of means. A dative of manner is used with abstract nouns whereas a dative of means using a more concrete noun. Here we have an abstract noun in *hesuchia*.

"With entire submissiveness" is composed of the preposition *en* (ἐν), **"with"** and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), **"entire"** and the dative feminine singular form of the noun *hupotage* (ὑποταγή), **"submissiveness."**

This noun refers to "the state of submissiveness, subjection, subordination, as opposed to setting oneself up as controller." (Danker, Frederick William, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature; Third Edition; page 1041; University of Chicago Press; Chicago and London)

The term does not appear in the Septuagint and only 4 times in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 9:13; Galatians 2:5; 1 Timothy 2:11; 3:4). In 2 Corinthians 9:13, the word is used of the Corinthians' "submission" to the gospel as evidenced by their testimony and generosity. Paul uses it again in Galatians 2:5 saying that he did "submit" to the Judaizers and their teaching. He uses it in 1 Timothy 3:4 of the overseer's children "submitting" to his authority in the home.

In 1 Timothy 2:11, the noun *hupotage* means "submission" and refers to Christian women submitting to the spiritual authority of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher by receiving silently his instruction while in a public setting in the local assembly. This is indicated by the fact that in context Paul is addressing the conduct or behavior of Christian women in a public worship setting. This word speaks of Christian women subordinating themselves to the spiritual authority of men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. It thus speaks of a particular situation and role that the women are to play in the local church. The word is not used in the context of the woman's submission to the authority of her husband but rather it refers to her submission to the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher when he is exercising that gift in a public setting in the local assembly by communicating the Word of God.

The adjective *pas* is modifying the noun *hupotage* and means "complete" since it pertains to a high degree of completeness.⁹⁰ It means "complete" in the sense of fully carrying out one's submission to another. Here it indicates that Paul wants Christian women to receive instruction silently with "complete" submissiveness in the sense of fully carrying out all that is required of them with respect to the teaching of the Word of God by the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.

The word *hupotage* is the object of the preposition *en*, which functions again here as a marker of manner denoting the manner in which the action of the verb *manthano* is accomplished. Here Christian women are to receive biblical instruction in a public worship setting "with" complete submissiveness to their pastor-teacher.

1 Timothy 2:11 A woman must discipline herself in making it her habit of receiving instruction silently with complete submission. (Author's translation)

Christian Women Are Prohibited from Teaching Men

1 Timothy 2:12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. (NASB95)

"**But I do not allow a woman to teach**" is composed of the conjunction *de* (δέ), "**but**" and the first person singular present active indicative form of the verb *epitrepo* (ἐπιτρέπω), "**I do allow**" and the emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὐ), "**not**" and the dative feminine singular form of the noun *gune* (γυνή), "**a woman**" and the present active infinitive form of the verb *didasko* (διδάσκω), "**to teach**."

The conjunction *de* is employed by Paul in a mildly adversative sense meaning that it is introducing a statement that is a mild contrast with his command in verse 11. In verse 11, the apostle commands Christian women to discipline themselves in making it a habit of receiving instruction silently with complete submission. Now, here in verse 12, he prohibits Christian women to teach or exercise authority

⁹⁰ BDAG, page 783

over Christian men. The contrast is therefore between the command to learn silently with complete submission and the prohibition in verse 12 to not teach or exercise authority over a man. They are to learn “however,” they were not to learn for the purpose of teaching men. The reasons why are presented by Paul in verses 13-14.

The apostle Paul does not use the strong adversative conjunction *alla* here but *de* since he is not contrasting two fundamentally different groups of people but rather the same group of people, namely Christian women. He is contrasting the positive function of these women in a public setting in the local assembly with the negative function which is that they are prohibited from teaching or exercising authority over a Christian man in the local assembly in a public setting. We will translate *de*, “**however.**”

In 1 Timothy 2:12 as was the case in verses 9, 10 and 11, the noun *gune* means, “woman” or “female” as opposed or in contrast to men or a male just as *aner* in verse 8 meant “men” in contrast or as opposed to the women in verse 8. It refers to the Christian women throughout the church age without reference to their marital status. It functions as a generic noun, which is appropriate since Paul in verse 12 is addressing a general truth.

The noun *gune* functions as a dative direct object meaning it is receiving the action of the verb *epitrepo*. The word is put in the dative rather than accusative case since Paul is emphasizing the proper relationship that must exist in the church between men and women if this relationship is to honor the Lord. We will translate *gune*, “**a woman.**”

The verb *epitrepo* is a compound word composed of the preposition *epi*, “on, to, toward” and the verb *trepo*, “lead, guide,” thus the word literally means “to lead or direct something into something.” Hence, it means “to allow” or “permit.”

In classical Greek, the word means “to allow or grant permission.” In the Septuagint, the verb occurs only 8 times. It is used of Joseph having certain responsibilities “entrusted” to him or “committed” to him (Genesis 39:6). The Septuagint also has the meaning “commission with duty or responsibility.” It is related to the primary meaning in that one is “permitted” to assume certain responsibilities. *Epitrepo* appears 18 times in the New Testament where it primarily has the meaning “allow” or “permit.”

In 1 Timothy 2:12, the verb *epitrepo* means “to permit” and its meaning is emphatically negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, which means “absolutely not.” Thus, Paul is saying with these two words that he absolutely does not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man in the church.

The first person singular form of the verb is an obvious reference to the apostle Paul. The active voice indicates that Paul from his apostolic authority and the authority of the Scriptures is performing the action of not permitting Christian women to teach or exercise authority over a man in the local assembly.

The indicative mood is “potential,” which is used with verbs of obligation, wish or desire followed by an infinitive. In our passage, we have the verb *epitrepo*, which expresses Paul’s Spirit inspired desire that Christian women not teach or exercise authority over man in the local assembly and is followed by the infinitive form of the verb *didasko*, “**to teach**” and *authenteo*, “**to exercise authority over.**”

Some interpreters contend that this is a descriptive present indicating that Paul “at the time of writing” is prohibiting Christian women to by no means teach or exercise authority over a man. The implication is that Paul wanted the women not to teach and exercise authority over a man until they were fully instructed. The descriptive present would indicate that this prohibition is restricted to a particular period in history when Paul wrote this epistle. Thus, leaving open the idea that in the future women would be permitted to teach men and exercise authority over men when they had been fully taught.

However, this totally ignores the context and the semantic meaning of *epitrepo*. First of all, *epitrepo* is a strong term. In fact, Moulton and Milligan cite the word’s legal use in a legal context. Paul uses the word in 1 Corinthians 14:34 when prohibiting women to speak in the local assembly. It is used again in 1 Corinthians 16:7 where he tells the Corinthians that he desires to spend more time with them if the Lord permits.

Epitrepo has a strong authoritative force to also in Matthew 19:8 and Mark 10:4 where it is used of Moses permitting divorce among the Israelites. It is used in Mark 5:13 and Luke 8:32 of Jesus exercising His sovereign authority over the demons and permitting them to indwell pigs. It is used Paul requesting permission from the tribune to speak (Acts 21:39-40) and from Agrippa (Acts 26:1), from a centurion (Acts 27:3). It can be an authoritative command bordering on the legal (Mounce, page 121).

Therefore, the semantic force of *epitrepo* is obviously authoritative and this is further indicated by the context. In verse 11, he commanded women to keep silent with complete submission and now in verse 12 he does not want them to teach or exercise authority over men. So, the indicative mood of the verb does not lessen the authoritative tone of the word.

The present tense of the verb is a “gnomic present,” which is used to describe something that is true “any” time and “does” take place. With the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, it indicates that Paul is prohibiting Christian women from “at any time” teaching men the Word of God.

That this is a gnomic present is indicated by the fact that it is used with a generic object, namely *gune*, “**woman**.” Also, the reasons given for the prohibition in verses 13 and 14 are based upon creation and the fall. This would indicate that Paul is teaching a universal truth that applies throughout the church age and all of human history rather than addressing a specific period of history, which the descriptive present would denote.

This could also be interpreted as a customary present used to signal an ongoing state. This would indicate that Paul “always” prohibits women from teaching men or exercising authority over them.

The verb *didasko* means, “to teach, to educate, to train, to impart information in a public assembly.” In classical Greek, the verb *didasko* could mean, “to educate” in the sense of imparting information to others or even “to train” as in horsemanship or even warfare.

The verb *didasko* was used “for the impartation of practical or theoretical knowledge,” which was basic to the development of skill of any kind. The word was used typically for the relationship between teacher and pupil, instructor and apprentice.

The practice of teaching through example was not intended to elicit imitation of the teacher but rather the aim was to develop the skills and talents of the student without jeopardizing the student's individuality.

The word *didasko* is used in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament) in relation to God teaching Israel the Law through Moses (Deuteronomy 4:1; 6:1). These ordinances were to be taught by the Israelites to their children (Deuteronomy 11:19) and was also used by David of being trained by the Lord for combat (Psalm 18:34).

In the Gospels, the verb *didasko* was used of the Lord Jesus Christ “educating, teaching and instructing” His disciples in regards to the kingdom of God. Our Lord was often addressed as the *didaskalos*, “teacher,” or Rabbi (Matthew 8:19; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25; John 3:2; 20:16).

The verb *didasko* is used of the Lord Jesus Christ's teaching ministry in which He was always teaching publicly whether in the Temple in Jerusalem, the synagogues or outside in the open air (Matthew 4:23, 5:2; 9:35; 11:1; 26:55; 28:20; Mark 1:21-22; 2:13; 4:1-2; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:35; 14:49; Luke 4:15, 31; 5:3, 17; 6:6; 11:1; 13:10, 22; 19:47; 20:1; 21:37; 23:5; John 6:59; 7:14, 28; 8:2, 20; 18:20; Acts 1:1).

Our Lord set the example for the pastor-teacher in the church age by teaching daily in the Temple (Matthew 26:55; Mark 14:49; Luke 19:47). The apostles taught in the Temple in the midst of the stiff opposition from the Sanhedrin (Acts 5).

The verb is used of Paul's “teaching” ministry (Galatians 1:12; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Colossians 1:28). The pastor-teacher's job is to communicate doctrine and God the Holy Spirit is the believer's true Teacher or Mentor (John 16:7-11, 13; 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:13). The pastor's job is to supply the believer with spiritual information or Bible Doctrine (Ephesians 4:16).

Didasko is used in Ephesians 4:21 of being taught about the Lord Jesus Christ and His ways. It is used of “teaching” Christians the Word of God (Colossians 1:28; 2:7; 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 5:12; 1 John 2:27).

The word in Romans 2:21 means, “to teach, to educate, to train, to impart information” and is used of the unsaved Jewish teachers “teaching, educating, imparting information” to their unsaved Gentile pupils from the Old Testament Scriptures. In Romans 12:7, the verb *didasko* refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of teaching or communicating the Word of God to the congregation.

The noun *didaskalos*, “**teachers**” is used to signify this gift of teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and in Ephesians 4:11.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. (NASB95)

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers. (NASB95)

In 1 Timothy 2:12, the verb *didasko* means “to teach, instruct.” It speaks of “providing authoritative instruction” in the Word of God in a formal setting, namely the public worship service. The verb denotes the preservation and communication of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ. Thus, Paul is prohibiting Christian women from teaching authoritatively the Word of God to men in the public worship service.

1 Corinthians 11:5 and Titus 2:2-3 make clear that Paul is speaking with respect to a particular activity in the church, namely the function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher and communicating the Word of God in a public setting in the local assembly. The former permits women to speak if they have the gift of prophecy and the latter permits her to teach other women who are immature or younger.

In 1 Timothy 2:12, the present tense of the verb *didasko* is a “gnomic present,” which is used to describe something that is true “any” time and “does” take place. With the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, it indicates that Paul is prohibiting Christian women from “at any time” teaching men the Word of God. The active voice indicates that Paul as the subject is prohibiting women from teaching men. The verb functions also as a complementary infinitive meaning it completes the thought of the verb *epitrepo*. Therefore, we will translate the verb *didasko*, “**to teach**.”

“**Or exercise authority over a man**” is composed of the negative particle *oude* (οὐδέ), “**or**” and the present active infinitive form of the verb *authenteo* (αὐθεντέω), “**exercise authority over**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the noun *aner* (άνήρ), “**a man**.”

This verb *authenteo* is composed of *autos*, “self,” and *entuo* or *entuno*, “to prepare or equip.” The “self” factor in the meaning is very strong being enforced not only in *autos* but also by the nature of the verb *entuno*. Classical writers used this verb to describe murders plotted against one’s own (self) family members for one’s own (self) benefit. Related cognates are rendered “original” or something “created” by a person. Another classical use of *authenteo* is that of “absolute authority.”

The verb is a rare word not attested prior to the first century B.C. and then only in a couple of papyri. It does not occur in the Septuagint or Josephus. Although, cognates *authentēs* and *authentia* appear in the former (Wisdom 12:6; 3 Maccabees 2:29 respectively).

The verb *authenteo* appears only once in the New Testament, here in 1 Timothy 2:12. Most scholars and lexicographers agree that the word’s basic meaning is either the neutral “to exercise authority over” or the negative “to domineer” in the sense of abusing authority or exercising authority in a coercive manner.

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition defines the verb “to assume a stance of independent authority, give orders to, dictate to with genitive of person.”⁹¹

In 1979 Catherine Kroeger argued that the word is an erotic term best translated “to engage in fertility practices,” the implication being that in 1 Timothy 2:12 Paul is countering specific heretical aberrations in ancient Ephesus and hence not laying down a principle applicable for all time. Douglas

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Moo writes that this meaning of the word is “nowhere attested in the classical and Hellenistic period.”⁹² This interpretation is based on the fallacy that a word must mean the same as its cognates.

In 1984, George Knight III researched all the occurrences of the verb in extant Greek literature and confirmed the rendering “to have authority,” which is the natural meaning.⁹³ He writes “The authority in view in the documents is understood to be a positive concept and is in no way regarded as having any overtones of misuse of position or power, i.e., ‘to domineer.’”⁹⁴

In 1988, Leland Wilshire sought to modify some of Knight’s conclusions based on the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* computer project at the University of California at Irvine. The research, however, did not contradict Knight’s findings. His work emphasized the importance of the papyri, which supports Knight’s position.⁹⁵

In 1992, Kroeger and Kroeger did significant research into the nature and background of ancient Ephesus and have suggested an alternative interpretation to 1 Tim 2:11-15. While they have provided significant background data, their suggestion that the phrase “to have authority” (*authentēin*, *authentēin*) should be rendered “to represent herself as originator of man,” which has gained little support among scholars.

Andrew Perriman has the following comment, he writes, “While it would be hazardous to speculate on the exact course of the term’s semantic evolution, this sense of ‘acting authoritatively’ must at least be considered as an available and significant nuance alongside those of ‘perpetrating a crime’ and ‘having authority.’ In fact, to introduce the idea of ‘authority’ into the definition at all may be misleading if it is taken to mean a derived or ordained authority: it is ‘authorship,’ not ‘authority,’ that is at the heart of the meaning of ἀὐθεντέω.”⁹⁶

H. Scott Baldwin argues the word involves the concept of authority and that in 1 Timothy 2:12, it could mean “control, dominate, assume authority over” or even “to flout authority of.”

There are two papyri in which *authentēo* appears, which is significant since they are very close to the way Paul uses the word in 1 Timothy 2:12. The first: “I [Trypho] considered that Antilochos having thrown out the goods and subcontracted to his advantage counting with that termination of purchase and this not having altered the dispute in any particular. So *exercising my authority* on him (the man who hired the boat) that he pay fully to Calatyti the boatman to his fare in the hour, to which he [Antilochos?] yielded.” (Papyrus BGU 1208 (27 B.C.) The second: “Of Protogenos and Isidoros being bookkeepers of Leonides and being in charge of the memorandum and written-testimony of the clerk Leonides. Through the not-yet transmitted-items books done is at the risk of those bookkeepers *having authority* and he was in charge of his own portion, through-he himself Leonides being-present of one of those having authority bookkeepers.” (Papyrus Tebtunis 15; 100 A.D.)

These two papyri are significant since they use *authentēo* in a sense that agrees with the study of Baldwin. They reveal that the word cannot mean “to usurp authority” or “domineer.”

⁹² 1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance; Trinity Journal volume 1, number 1, Spring 1980; page 67

⁹³ George W. Knight III, “ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2:12,” New Testament Studies 30 (January 1984): 143-57

⁹⁴ *ibid*, pages 150-151

⁹⁵ Leland Edward Wilshire, “The TLG Computer and Further Reference to ΑΥΘΕΝΤΕΩ in 1 Timothy 2:12,” New Testament Studies 34 [1988]: 120-34)

⁹⁶ What Eve Did, What Women Shouldn’t Do, Tyndale Bulletin, 44.1.137; 1993

Andreas Köstenberegger argued that the syntactical construction *ouk didaskein oude authentein* (“not teach nor have/exercise authority”) requires that both *didaskein* and *authentein* have a positive sense. He examined fifty two examples of the same *ouk...oude* (“not... nor”), construction in the New Testament, as well as forty eight extra-biblical examples covering the third century B.C. to the third century A.D. His conclusion was that the syntactical construction has two patterns. Either both activities referred to must be positive (the first pattern), or both activities must be negative (the second pattern).

He writes “The forty-eight syntactical parallels to 1 Tim 2:12 in extrabiblical literature (as well as the one exact parallel in the NT, Acts 21:21) identified in this study all feature the construction ‘negated finite verb + infinitive + *oude* + infinitive’ and in every instance yield the pattern positive/positive or negative/negative. This yields the conclusion that 1 Tim 2:12 is to be rendered either: ‘I do not permit a woman to teach [error] or to usurp a man’s authority’ or: ‘I do not permit a woman to teach or to have (or exercise) authority over a man,’ the latter being preferred owing to the positive connotation of *didaskein* elsewhere in the Pastorals.”⁹⁷

He goes on to write “Since, therefore the term διδάσκειν is viewed absolutely in the New Testament for an activity that is viewed positively in and of itself, and since οὐδὲ coordinates terms that are either both viewed positively or negatively, ἀθηνεῖν should be seen as denoting an activity that is viewed positively in and of itself as well.”⁹⁸

Köstenberegger concluded that teaching has a positive meaning in such passages as 1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2, and 2 Timothy 2:2.45 The force of the *ouk...oude* construction would therefore indicate that *authenteo* likewise has a positive meaning, and does not refer to domineering but the positive exercise of authority.

His research was very well received by the scholarly community. His study has received wide acceptance from both complementarian and egalitarian scholars, substantiating the case for a positive sense of *authenteo* in 1 Timothy 2:12. On the other hand, the egalitarian interpretation of the word as having a negative sense such as “domineer,” has been rejected by the majority of egalitarian and complementarian scholars. Standard modern English Bible translations typically continue to render the word in its positive sense of having or exercising authority.

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 2:12, the verb *authenteo* means “to exercise authority over” and is used with respect to Christian women “exercising authority over” Christian men.

The negative particle *oude*, which is composed of the negative particle *ou*, “never” and the conjunction *de*, “and,” and thus is rendered, “neither, nor.” *Oude* is used with the negative *ou*, “**absolutely not**,” which emphatically negates the meaning of the verb *didasko* that appears earlier in the sentence. Together, *oude* and *ou* form a correlative clause that combines the verbs *didasko* and *authenteo* together. They serve to connect two concepts: (1) Christian women are prohibited from teaching the Word of God to men. (2) Christian women are prohibited from exercising authority over men. They speak of two different spiritual gifts which composed the leadership of the church: (1) Pastor-teacher (2) Leadership, i.e. Administrations. We will translate *oude*, “**nor**.”

⁹⁷ Teaching and Usurping Authority: 1 Timothy 2:11-15, Chapter 12 by Linda L. Belleville, Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood; 10.1.44-45, 1995

⁹⁸ A Complex Sentence Structure in 1 Timothy 2:12, NTS 30; page 91; 1984

The present tense of the verb *authenteo* is a “gnomic present,” which is used to describe something that is true “any” time and “does” take place. With the negative particle *oude*, it indicates that Paul is prohibiting Christian women from “at any time” exercising authority over a man. The active voice indicates that Paul as the subject is prohibiting women from exercising authority over men. The verb functions also as a complementary infinitive meaning it completes the thought of the verb *epitrepo*.

The Spiritual Gift of Leadership, i.e. Administrations

In 1 Timothy 2:12, the clause οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός prohibits Christian women from holding positions of authority in the church. This means that the Lord did not give women the gift of leadership nor the gift of pastor-teacher. The gift of leadership is mentioned in Romans 12:8 and 1 Corinthians 12:28.

Romans 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

“**He who leads**” is the articular nominative masculine singular present middle participle form of the verb *proistemi*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *pro*, “before” and the verb *histemi*, “to stand,” thus the word literally means “to stand before.”

In classical Greek, this verb was used of those who “stood before” an army in order to lead or of those who “stood over” the affairs of government. It also indicated the support, help and care offered by those in permanent positions.

This verb appears only seven times in the Septuagint where in most cases it is used substantively as a participle to indicate the head of a house (2 Samuel 13:17 [LXX 2 Kings 13:17]; Proverbs 23:5; Amos 6:10 [Septuagint only] or the priests of a temple (Bel and the Dragon 8). Isaiah 43:24 reflects the meaning of “to stand before” as God accused Israel of failing to offer proper sacrifices while “standing before” Him in their sins and iniquities. It appears in a military context in 1 Maccabees 5:19 where Joseph and Azarias are ordered to “take charge” of the people in Jerusalem in order to defend the city against imminent attack.

Proistemi appears in Proverbs 26:17 where it denotes a man who “tries to take charge” of other people’s quarrels and thus meddles in something he knows nothing about. Lastly, the word is found in 4 Maccabees 11:27 where it is used of a young man while being severely tortured announces that the divine law is set over him.

The verb also appears eight times in the Greek New Testament, all of which are in Paul’s writings. In Titus 3:8 and 14, it means “to show concern for” or be “engaged in” good works on behalf of the body of Christ. It appears in 1 Thessalonians 5:12 and in this passage Paul commands the Thessalonian church to appreciate those who diligently labor among them and have authority over them in the Lord and give them instruction. This indicates that he is referring to the pastor-teacher since his gift is instructing the body of Christ in the Word of God.

Proistemi appears twice in 1 Timothy 3:4-5 and this passage Paul is identifying the qualifications for the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, one of which is that he must do a good job of exercising his authority in his own home before he is given responsibility over the flock of God. It is found in 1

Timothy 3:12 where Paul is listing the qualifications of a deacon, and like the pastor, a deacon must be someone who does a good job of exercising authority over his children and own household before they are given the responsibility to exercise authority over the flock of God.

In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul teaches Timothy that elders who lead well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. This would indicate that pastor-teachers are to be considered worthy of double honor if they work hard at preaching and teaching since their gift involves these two functions, which are directly related to each other since they both deal with communicating the Word of God. This passage also makes a distinction between elders who communicate the Word of God and those who don't since Paul singles out those elders, i.e. the pastor-teachers who work hard at communicating the Word of God. This indicates that elders are those who are pastor-teachers or those who exercise the gift of teaching and those who exercise the gift of leadership, which Paul mentions with the verb *proistemi* in Romans 12:8.

Therefore, in Romans 12:8, the verb *proistemi* in the middle voice means “to devote oneself to the exercise or function of leadership” and refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of leadership. It is permanent in that it was not discontinued with the completion of the canon of Scripture as was the case with the gift of prophecy.

This gift is identified by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:28 as “**administrations**” which translates the noun *kubernesis*.

The noun *kubernesis* is related to the verb *kubernao*, which means “to steer a ship.” It is used figuratively in classical Greek of statesmen meaning “the government of states” and of deity meaning “divine governance.” It is used three times in the Septuagint of wise counsel or direction and appears only once in the Greek New Testament and means “administration.”

In 1 Corinthians 12:28, this word refers to the spiritual gift of leadership and those men who help the pastor-teacher lead and administrate the affairs of the church.

Those individuals who possess this gift of leadership, along with the pastor-teachers, help compose the leadership of the local church. These individuals often hold the office of deacon, which remember is not a spiritual gift since it was established by the apostles and those who were deacons were elected by the Jerusalem congregation according to Acts 6:1-6.

The spiritual gift of leadership does not signify an ecclesiastical office but rather is a gift that manifests itself in leading the local assembly in various ways. Those individuals with this gift are often found in the board of directors of local churches. Like the gift of teaching, only men have been given the gift of leadership by the Holy Spirit since Paul teaches in 1 Timothy 2:12-14 that a woman is prohibited from exercising authority over men because of the divine order and because Eve was deceived and Adam was not.

Christian Women Are to Remain Silent with Respect to Teaching and Exercising Authority

1 Timothy 2:12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. (NASB95)

“**But to remain quiet**” is composed of the conjunction *alla* (ἀλλά), “**but**” and the present active infinitive form of the verb *eimi* (εἶμι), “**to remain**” and the preposition *en* (ἐν), “**with**” and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun *hesuchia* (ἡσυχία), “**quietly**.”

The strong adversative conjunction *alla* is introducing another infinitive clause that stands in direct contrast with the previous correlative clause that prohibits Christian women from teaching and exercising authority over men. The clause it introduces teaches that women should remain silent. Thus, the contrast is between Christian women teaching men the Word of God and exercising authority over men with being silent. We will translate the word “**but rather**.”

In 1 Timothy 2:11 and 12, the noun *hesuchia* can either mean “silence” or “quietness.” The latter denotes the attitude of proper deference to another speaking and the former to refraining from speaking in a public setting. The latter denotes demonstrating total deference to the man with spiritual gift of pastor-teacher when he is communicating the Word of God in a public setting in the church. The former denotes totally speaking audibly to the church in a public setting. Specifically, it speaks of refraining from teaching the Word of God in the presence of men in the local assembly.

We must balance this by noting that 1 Corinthians 11:5 does permit women to speak to the church if they possess the gift of prophecy and when they take part in corporate prayer meetings. Titus 2:2-3 does permit women to teach other women.

Since in context, Paul is addressing the proper behavior or conduct of Christian women while functioning in the local assembly along with men, the correct interpretation is that Christian women are to not speak the Word of God in a public setting in the local assembly. Thus, *hesuchia* means “silence” rather than “quietly” or “quietness.”

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 2:12 *hesuchia* does not have any reference to the woman’s attitude when receiving the Word of God but rather her conduct and role with respect to the teaching of the Word of God. Paul is prohibiting the women in the Christian community from giving biblical instruction in the local assembly when in the presence of men. They are to show complete deference to those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher when they are communicating the Word of God to the church by not teaching men in the local assembly themselves. They are to show complete deference to those men with the spiritual gift of leadership, i.e. administrations.

So, Paul’s command here in 1 Timothy 2:12 is specifically addressing the conduct of women in a public worship setting with respect to the exercise of the spiritual gifts of pastor-teacher and leadership. Therefore, this passage teaches implicitly that women have not been given the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher or leadership. The women’s silence in this public worship setting demonstrates her complete submission to the will of God.

The word *hesuchia* is the object of the preposition *en*, which functions as a marker of a state or condition. This is indicated by the fact that the verb *eimi* that it modifies denotes being in a particular state or condition.

1 Timothy 2:12 However, I always absolutely do not at any time permit a woman to teach nor exercise authority over a man but rather she herself is to be in a state of silence. (Author’s translation)

The First of Two Reasons for the Command in Verse 11 and the Prohibition in Verse 12

Next, we will note 1 Timothy 2:13, which presents the first of two reasons why Paul commands women to learn silently with complete submissiveness in verse 11 and then prohibits them from teaching in public in the presence of men in the local assembly and exercising authority over them in verse 12. In this verse, he refers to Genesis 2 and teaches that he prohibits women from these two functions because of the divine order, namely that Adam was created first and then Eve. Then, in verse 14, he references Genesis 3, which records the fall of Adam and Eve. Paul is basing his prohibition in verse 12 on both the created order and the Lord's original design for the relationship between Adam and Eve. Adam was designed to be the leader of the relationship and not Eve who was designed to be subordinate to him. However, this does not imply inferiority on her part with respect to her husband since they were both created in the image of God.

1 Timothy 2:13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. (NASB95)

Verse 13 is composed of the conjunction *gar* (γάρ), “**for**” and the nominative masculine singular form of the noun *Adam* (Ἀδάμ), “**Adam**” and the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *plasso* (πλάσσω), “**was created**” and the nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *protos* (πρῶτος), “**first**” and the adverb *eita* (εἶτα), “**then**” and the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *Eua* (Εὕα), “**Eve**.”

The conjunction *gar* is introducing a statement that presents the reason or the basis for the previous command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12. As we can see, in verse 11, Paul commands Christian women to discipline themselves by making it a habit of receiving instruction silently from their pastor-teachers with complete submission. Then, in verse 12, he prohibits them from at any time teaching the Word of God to men in a public setting in the local assembly nor are they permitted to exercise authority over them, which is a reference to the spiritual gift of leadership. Thus, women were not given the spiritual gifts of pastor-teacher or leadership by the Lord.

Now, in verse 13, the apostle Paul employs the conjunction *gar* which presents the basis or the reason for the command in verse 11 and the prohibition in verse 12. In verse 13, he cites the creation account of Adam and Eve, which is recorded in Genesis 2. Specifically, he is citing the formation of their physical bodies as indicated by the use of the verb *yatsar* in Genesis 2:7 and *bana* in Genesis 2:21. Genesis 1:26 records the creation of their souls as indicated by the use of the verb *bara* in this passage. This accounts for Paul's use of *plasso* instead of *ktizo* or *poieo* (as in the LXX translation of Genesis 1:26) in 1 Timothy 2:13.

In Genesis 2:7, the verb *yatsar* is used with respect to the formation of Adam's body and speaks of forming something from existing material since the text teaches that his body was formed from the dust of the earth. In Genesis 1:26, the verb *bara* is used with creation of the souls of both Adam and Eve and speaks of forming something out of non-existent material since the text teaches the Lord brought Adam and his wife into existence when they didn't previously and the soul of Adam is immaterial and created in the image of God. Eve's body is said to be built from Adam's body or from the material from his body. In Genesis 2:21, the verb *bana* means, “to build” indicating that the Lord “constructed” the physical body of the woman from the biological life of Adam.

Chronologically, Genesis 1:26 teaches that the Lord created the soul life of Adam and Eve simultaneously and both were created in the image of God, thus making them equals. However, Genesis 2 teaches that the biological life or the physical body of Adam was formed from the dust of the ground and then Eve's biological life was constructed from the biological life of her husband. Genesis 2 also teaches that Eve was designed to be the corresponding helpmate for Adam thus she was subordinate to him though not inferior since she was also created in the image of God like her husband.

So, in 1 Timothy 2:13, Paul teaches that Adam was created first and then Eve. Therefore, Paul is teaching that the reason for the prohibition in verse 11 and command in verse 12 is that the biological life of Adam was formed first from the dust of the ground and then Eve's biological life was constructed from Adam's biological life or physical body.

Some contend that the conjunction *gar* in 1 Timothy 2:13 is not causal but rather is explanatory, which would indicate that the word is introducing a statement that is presenting an illustration for an example. The implication of this interpretation is that Paul has not based his command in verse 11 and his prohibition in verse 12 on the order of creation and the Lord's design of women being subordinate to men but has appealed to Genesis 2 as an illustration of the consequences of women teaching men and exercising authority over them. However, the problem with this interpretation is that Genesis 2 does not present the consequences of Eve teaching but rather it presents the chronological sequence of the formation of their physical bodies and the roles placed upon them by the Lord. Genesis 3 presents the disastrous consequences of Adam not exercising his authority by protecting his wife from the serpent. It presents the disastrous consequences of Adam giving greater priority to his relationship with his wife rather than obeying the Lord.

Further indicating that *gar* is not explanatory and thus is not presenting the disastrous consequences of women teaching, is that the context indicates that the word is causal. In 1 Timothy 2:11-12, Paul is addressing the conduct of Christian women in relation to Christian men in public worship in the local assembly. In these verses he is defining their roles in public worship with respect to each other based upon the teaching of Genesis. Thus, the causal idea makes much greater sense than the explanatory idea since Paul is not interested in illustrating why women can't teach men but the reason why he wants them to be subordinate to men in a public worship setting. The entire force of the passage is lost if *gar* is explanatory rather than causal for this reason. Lastly, we would expect reasons to follow commands.

The Greek noun *Adam* (Ἀδάμ) is the transliteration of the Hebrew term and a reference to the first human being, the first male in the human race. It is not used in a generic sense meaning "male" but rather it speaks a specific individual, namely the first human being and male created by the Lord. This is indicated in that the noun is set in contrast to *Eua*, "Eve" which speaks of a specific individual, namely the first women in the human race created by the Lord.

In 1 Timothy 2:13, the noun specifically refers to the physical body of Adam since the verb *plasso* is used with respect to the formation of his physical body and not the creation of his soul out of non-existing material. It does not refer to the creation of his soul since Paul would not use this word if that were the case. He would have used *poieo* as the Septuagint does in Genesis 1:26 or even *ktizo*. Instead he uses *plasso* since he is referring to Genesis 2:7 which refers to the formation of Adam's physical body from the elements found in the earth.

In the Septuagint translation of Genesis 2:7 *plasso* renders the Hebrew verb *yatsar*, which refers to the Lord constructing of Adam's physical body from the elements found in the earth. The verb *bara* in Genesis 1:26 is rendered with the verb *poieo* and speaks of the Lord creating the soul of Adam and his wife out of non-existing material since the soul of both is immaterial and in the image of God who is invisible.

Therefore, Paul uses *plasso* in 1 Timothy 2:13 since he is not referring to the creation of the soul of Adam out of non-existing material but rather the formation of his physical body from the dust of the earth.

In 1 Timothy 2:13, the noun *Adam* is a nominative subject meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *plasso* indicating that Adam and specifically the soul of Adam received the action of the Lord forming a physical body for him from the dust of the ground.

The verb *plasso* in classical Greek is used of the creative activity of gods and especially men. This includes both material products such as an idol as well as ideas. In relation to divine creation, the word is dualistic in that a chief makes souls but lesser gods shape (*plasso*) bodies.

In the Septuagint and specifically, in Genesis 2:7, *plasso* renders the Hebrew verb *yatsar*, which refers to the Lord forming Adam's physical body from the elements in the earth whereas *poieo* is used in Genesis 1:26 of the Lord creating the soul of Adam and his wife out of non-existing material since the soul of both is immaterial since it is created in the image of God who is invisible.

Plasso appears only twice in the Greek New Testament (Romans 9:20; 1 Timothy 2:13). In Romans 9:20, the word means "the one who forms an object" and alludes to a potter who forms an object from clay. This word is analogous to the Creator of mankind.

In 1 Timothy 2:13, Paul used the word to help explain why he did not permit woman to teach men in the public worship services and exercise authority over them. In this verse, the verb is used of the formation of Adam's physical body from the dust of the ground before Eve.

It does not refer to the creation of his soul since Paul would not use this word if that were the case. He would have used *poieo* as the Septuagint does in Genesis 1:26 or even *ktizo* to translate *bara*. Instead he uses *plasso* since he is referring to Genesis 2:7 which refers to the formation of Adam's physical body from the elements found in the dust of the earth.

As we noted in the Septuagint, in Genesis 2:7, *plasso* renders the Hebrew verb *yatsar*, which refers to the Lord forming Adam's physical body from the elements in the earth. The verb *poieo* is used to translate *bara* in Genesis 1:26 and speaks of the Lord creating the soul of Adam and his wife out of non-existing material. Some reject this definition of the verb *bara*. However, it is clear from the context that *bara* means "to create out of non-existing material" since the soul of both Adam and his wife and all human being is immaterial since it is created in the image of God who is invisible. Therefore, Paul uses *plasso* in 1 Timothy 2:13 since he is not referring to the creation of the soul of Adam out of non-existing material but rather the formation of his physical body from the elements of the ground.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the moment when the Lord Jesus Christ formed a physical body from the dust of the ground for the soul of Adam. The

passive voice is a divine passive meaning that the soul of Adam received the action of the Lord forming a physical body for him from the dust of the ground. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

This is the fourth time that we have seen *protos* in our study of 1 Timothy. In 1 Timothy 1:15, the adjective meant “foremost” and was used in a qualitative sense emphasizing that Paul was the most “prominent” or “foremost” opponent of the Lord Jesus Christ and His church. It indicates that he was infamous in the church and in heaven. This is how it is used in verse 16 as well. In 1 Timothy 2:1, the word functions as an adverb of degree and emphasizes the urgency and priority of prayer for all men to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. *Protos* does not denote first in sequence. Rather, it denotes first in importance since prayer for all men to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation is the Father’s will. If no one gets saved, then no one will be entered into the family of God and thus there will be no growth of the church of God. Therefore, *protos* emphasizes that of all that Paul will be commanding to the Ephesians, the command to pray for all men to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ to receive eternal life is the most important.

In 1 Timothy 2:13, the adjective *protos* functions in a temporal sense and means “first.” It is used in a chronological sense meaning that the physical body of Adam was formed from the dust of the ground first in time and then Eve’s was formed from her husband’s physical body. It does not denote Adam’s superiority and Eve’s inferiority since Genesis 1:26 teaches that the souls of both were created out of non-existing material in the image of God. Thus, Paul is rejecting that which was taught in Judaism in his day and in Greco-Roman culture, namely that women were inferior to men.⁹⁹

Protos along with *eita* emphasizes the chronological priority of Adam with respect to Eve and thus the chronological priority of Christian men with respect to Christian women. It emphasizes that Eve was designed to be subordinate to Adam, thus Christian women are to reflect this divine design with respect to men and women.

This word functions as a predicate nominative indicating that it is making an assertion about Adam with respect to his wife Eve, namely that he was to be in a position of authority over her as reflected by the fact that his physical body was formed from the dust of the ground first and then her body was constructed from his body.

The adverb *eita* is an adverbial particle of time and means “then, next, afterward.” It denotes a point of time following another point of time. In 1 Timothy 2:13, the word denotes the point of time when the Lord constructed the physical body of Eve from the body of Adam after his body was constructed from the dust of the ground. Together with *protos*, the word denotes the chronological priority of Adam and that Eve was designed to be subordinate to Adam. Genesis 2 teaches quite clearly that the original design of the women was to be a helpmate for the man. We will translate the word “**then.**”

The noun *Eua* is the transliteration of the Hebrew proper name *chawwah*, which means “life” and is translated by the LXX with the Greek noun *zoe*, “life.” So, Paul is using the transliteration rather than the LXX translation. This noun *Eua* appears once in the LXX (Tobit 8:6) and twice in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13).

⁹⁹ Josephus; Against Apion, 2.200; Philo, Apology for the Jews, 7.3

In 1 Timothy 2:13, the noun *Eua* refers to the first women in the human race. Specifically, it is a reference to the construction of her physical body from the biological life of her husband Adam since the verb *plasso* is used with respect to the formation of her physical body and not the creation of her soul out of non-existing material. It does not refer to the creation of her soul since Paul would not use this word if that were the case. He would have used *poieo* to translate the Hebrew verb *bara* in Genesis 1:26 as the Septuagint does or even *ktizo*. Instead he uses *plasso* since he is referring to Genesis 2:21 which refers to the formation of Eve's physical body from the biological life of Adam.

In the Septuagint translation of Genesis 2:21, *plasso* renders the Hebrew verb *bana*, which refers to the Lord constructing Eve's physical body from the biological life of Adam. The verb *poieo* is used in Genesis 1:26 of the Lord creating the soul of Adam and his wife out of non-existing material. Again some reject the idea that *bara* means "to create out of non-existing material." In response to this it is clear the word does indeed mean this since the soul of Adam and Eve and all human beings is immaterial since the text says that Adam and Eve were created in the image of God and we know the Bible teaches that God is invisible. Therefore, Paul uses *plasso* in 1 Timothy 2:13 since he is not referring to the creation of the soul of Eve out of non-existing material but rather the formation of her physical body from Adam's biological life.

In 1 Timothy 2:13, the noun *Eua* is a nominative subject meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *plasso* indicating that Eve and specifically the soul of Eve received the action of the Lord forming a physical body for her from the biological life of Adam.

The Creation of Adam and Eve

Genesis 1:26-27 presents the record of Adam and Eve's creation.

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make ('*asah*) man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (NASB95)

"**Make**" is the verb '*asah* and in Genesis 1:26 means, "to model" in the sense that the soul of mankind is a "copy" of God and is "patterned" after God's invisible essence, thus man as to his essence is the shadow image of God who is invisible, thus the essence of man is invisible, i.e. the soul.

The verb *bara* in Genesis 1:27 indicates that the soul of mankind was created out of non-existing material whereas the verb '*asah* in Genesis 1:26 indicates that the soul of man was "modeled" or "patterned" after God's invisible essence.

Genesis 1:27, "God created (*bara*) man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (NASB95)

The verb *yatsa* in Genesis 2:7 means, "to construct or form out of existing material" indicating that the physical body of man is constructed out of the dust of the earth.

Genesis 2:7, "Then the LORD God formed (*yatsar*, "to construct out of existing material") man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (NASB95)

Therefore, we have the “dichotomy” of mankind meaning that he is composed of body and soul. Regenerate human beings meaning human beings who are saved are “trichotomous” meaning they are composed of body, soul and spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

Adam and Ishah were “dichotomous” (Genesis 2:7) and not “trichotomous” since eternal life is not imputed to a human spirit until the spiritual birth or regeneration.

In 1 Corinthians 15:45, Paul’s statement that the first Adam, “**became a living soul**” clearly indicates that God did not create Adam with a human spirit since if He did create him with a human spirit, the Scriptures would not have called him a “**living soul**” but rather a “spirit” as is stated of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (NASB95)

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (NASB95)

“**In Our image**” means that humanity was modeled according to the invisible image or likeness of God meaning that humanity was to reflect God’s invisible essence, thus man as to his essence is the shadow image of God who is invisible, thus the essence of man is invisible, i.e. the soul.

“**Let them rule**” indicates that the Lord delegated authority to Adam and the Woman to rule over every living creature in the sea, in the air and on the land, which was another way that he would reflect the image of God who is sovereign over creation.

Genesis 1:27 God created (*bara*, “to create out of nothing”) man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (NASB95)

(1) “**God created out of nothing the essence of man in His own image**”: Mankind is the direct result of the creative activity of God and that as to his essence, he is the shadow image of God who is invisible and the essence of man is his soul.

(2) “**In the image of God, He created him out of nothing**”: Mankind is unique among God’s creatures in that he was created in the image of God.

(3) “**Male and female, He created them out of nothing**”: The soul of both the male and the female were created out of nothing according to the image of God and that mankind was created as two individuals (male and female) who were to form a unit and were to be united.

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (NASB95)

“**Blessed**” is the verb *barakh*, which means, “to bless,” in the sense that the Lord endued Adam and Eve with power to produce offspring in great numbers by the Word of the Lord.

“**Be fruitful**” is the verb *parah*, which means, “to be fruitful” in the sense of to reproduce.

“**Multiply**” is the verb *ravah*, which means, “to multiply, to increase” in number or quantity and denotes not only the concept of multiplication of one’s progeny but also sexual prosperity.

“**Fill**” is the verb *male* and is used here of mankind and is never used in reference to bird life or land animals since the earth was given to man whereas the word is used in Genesis 1:22 with reference to marine life filling the various bodies of water on earth.

Psalms 115:16 The heavens are the heavens of the LORD, but the earth He has given to the sons of men. (NASB95)

“**Subdue**” is the verb *kavash*, which refers to harnessing the potential built into the earth by the Creator for his own comfort and prosperity and well-being.

“**Rule**” is the verb *radhah*, which expresses the fact that Adam would reflect the image of God who is sovereign by exercising sovereignty over every living creature in the sea, in the air and on the land (Genesis 1:29-30).

Satan usurped the rulership of the first Adam over the earth but the Last Adam, the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ has regained that rulership over the earth (Hebrews 2:6-9).

Genesis 1:26-28 reveals that God delegated authority to Adam to rule over creation. Therefore, he had an exalted position.

Genesis 2:7 gives us more details concerning the creation of man on the sixth day, which is recorded in Genesis 1:26-27.

Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (NASB95)

“**Formed**” is the verb *yatsar*, which means “to construct something out of existing material,” which is used in reference to the physical body of Adam and indicates that the Lord designed the appearance and function of the human body.

“**From the ground**” indicates that the Lord constructed from the elements of the ground, Adam’s physical body.

The physical body of Adam was “not” created in the image of God but rather his soul since Genesis 1:27 states that Adam was created in the image of God and this is not said of his physical body.

Furthermore, John 4:24 records the Lord teaching that God is spirit and thus invisible therefore, the human body could not be formed in the image of God but rather the soul of man, which is invisible.

“**Breathed into**” is the verb *naphach*, which has as its subject, the Lord, thus teaching that He is responsible for human life and not man.

“**Breath of life**” means that God produces the human soul life.

The human soul contains: (1) Volition: Enables us to make decisions (2) Self-consciousness: We are aware of who we are (3) Conscience: Where our norms and standards reside (4) Mentality: Where we do our thinking (5) Emotion: Where we respond to what is in the mentality of the soul.

Genesis 2:7 teaches that Adam did “not” become a living soul until God imputed soul life to his biological life, thus, indicating that life does “not” begin until God imputes soul life to the physical body.

The Lord is the Creator of every human soul-past, present and future but Adam is the only human being to have his physical body personally formed by the Lord since the physical bodies of every human being since Adam have been produced by the sexual union between men and women.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only human being to be born with a human spirit, thus demonstrating further His uniqueness and everyone else in the human race receives a human spirit with eternal life imputed to it the moment they accept the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. **46** However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. **47** The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. (NASB95)

In Genesis 2:8-14, we have more details given to us by Moses regarding the sixth day of restoration and in particular, we have a description of the environment that Adam was to inhabit, namely, a garden located in a land called Eden. This garden that was located in Eden would be the sight where the ancient prehistoric conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan would continue.

In eternity past, like Adam, Satan, who was called, “**the bright morning star, son of the dawn,**” was created perfect and lived in a garden called Eden. Therefore, the Garden of Eden of Genesis 2 and 3 is a “restored” one whereas the one that Satan lived in was the “original.”

Genesis 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. (NASB95)

“**Garden**” is the noun *gan*), which refers to “a protected enclosure.”

The LXX (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) translates the Hebrew noun *gan* in Genesis 2:8 with the noun *paradeisos*, “Paradise.” The term “paradise” is borrowed from the Persian by the LXX translators and suggests a “royal park.” This garden or royal park was located in a place called “**Eden.**”

“**Eden**” is the proper noun *Edhen*, which means, “delight” and comes from the Akkadian-Sumerian word *eden*, “plain, steppe.” The early Sumerians got their word *eden*, “a plain” from the fact that the original Eden was a flat, fertile tract of land. Therefore, the Garden of Eden was a “garden of delight, a land of delight, a delightful royal park.”

“**Towards the East**” is composed of the preposition *min*, “**towards**” and the noun *qedhem*, “**East**” indicating that this garden that the Lord planted was located east of the land of Canaan or at least, the Jordan River, which was location of the recipients (Israel) of the book of Genesis.

We must remember that God views everything from the standpoint of the land of Israel, therefore the garden of Eden was located east of the land of Israel. The Garden of Eden mentioned and described in Genesis 2:8-14 is “not” the original one but a “restored” one with a different occupant.

Ezekiel 28:13 teaches that the original Garden of Eden had as its occupant Satan who before his fall according to Isaiah 14:12 had the title *Hallel Ben Shachar*, “**star of the morning, son of the dawn.**”

Ezekiel 28:13 “You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared.” (NASB95)

The original garden of Eden was destroyed as a result of God’s judgment of Satan’s rebellion since according to Genesis 1:2 the earth was an empty desolation and was enshrouded in darkness and flooded with water.

Genesis 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. (NASB95)

Genesis 2:8 indicates that Adam was created and his physical body constructed outside of this garden that was located in Eden since the passage says the Lord “**placed**” Adam in the garden implying that he was outside of this garden.

Genesis 2:9 Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (NASB95)

The “**tree of the knowledge of good and evil**” was the only tree in the garden that had a prohibition attached to it in order that God would test the obedience of Adam and the Woman and Satan could have an opportunity to prove God unjust for sentencing him to the lake of fire for his disobedience.

If Adam and the Woman ate the fruit from the “**tree of life**” it would continue to perpetuate their life of their physical bodies. If Adam and the Woman ate the fruit from the “**tree of the knowledge of good and evil**” they would separate themselves from God, which is called spiritual death. Not only did God tell Adam to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but He told him *why*, which is that he would die spiritually meaning he would be separated from God for his disobedience.

Genesis 2:16 The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” (NASB95)

The fact that the Lord told Adam why he cannot eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil demonstrates God’s love and concern for Adam and that He had his best interests in mind.

Now Genesis 2:10-14 gives us a greater description of the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2:10 Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. (NASB95)

Genesis 2:15 teaches that the Lord gave Adam work to do and was not simply always reclining in a hammock drinking a beer or having a class of wine.

Genesis 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (NASB95)

“**Put**” is the verb *nuach*, which in the hiphil (causative) stem means that the Lord caused Adam to “settle down” in this garden located in land of Eden and refers to the fact that the Lord was establishing this garden to be his home. This word indicates that the Lord had a specific geographical location that He wanted Adam to be in order to serve Him. The “geographical” will of God refers to where God wants us to be in order to serve Him.

“**Cultivate**” is the verb *`avadh*, which is in the infinitive construct form and preceded by the preposition *l^e* (lamed) denotes the first “purpose” for which the Lord caused Adam to settle down in the garden of Eden, which was to “work” the garden.

“**Keep**” is the verb *shamar*, which is in the infinitive construct form and is preceded by the preposition *l^e* (lamed) denotes the second “purpose” for which the Lord caused Adam to settle down in the garden of Eden, namely, to “take care of” this garden.

Adam was to serve the Lord in the garden by working it and take care of it in a stewardship capacity for the Lord. Work was originally designed by the Lord to be a blessing for man but after the Fall, it became a curse (Genesis 3:17-19).

God built a suitable helpmate for Adam, which Adam named “Woman.” Her physical body was constructed from one of Adam’s ribs.

Genesis 2:21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 22 The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib, which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. 23 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was

taken out of Man.” 24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (NASB95)

Genesis 2:18-25 records for us the creation of the woman and the construction of her physical body from Adam’s physical body in order to provide for Adam a partner who would help in ruling over every living creature as well as to populate the earth and rule over it. Remember, Genesis 2 gives us more details concerning the sixth day of restoration, which is recorded in Genesis 1:24-31.

In Genesis 2:18-25, Moses gives us more information regarding the creation of Adam and the Woman and in particular the formation of their biological life, Adam’s from the dust of the ground and the woman’s from the biological life of Adam. Also, in Genesis 2:18-25, we have recorded for us the Lord establishing the institution of marriage.

Genesis 2:18 Next, the Lord God said, “it is not good for the man to be alone, I will form out of existing material for his benefit a helper as his counterpart.” (Author’s translation)

“**Not good**” does “not” mean that it was evil that Adam was alone but rather it means that he was not complete in the sense that he did not have companionship with someone who was of his own species.

In the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal, sharing the same nature and share perfect and perpetual fellowship with one another. Among the angels, there is companionship since there is more than one angel.

In the animal kingdom, each species of living creature has both a male and female counterpart. Yet, Adam was the only category of living creatures that did not have companionship and among all of God’s creatures with the exception of the angels (there are no male and female sexes among the angels), did not have a female counterpart.

“**I will make**” is the verb *’asah*, which means, “to form out of existing material.” The Lord would produce the physical body of the woman from a portion of Adam’s side.

“**Helper**” is the noun *’ezer*, which indicates that the woman was designed to be Adam’s “partner” in accomplishing the task that he was given by the Lord to populate the earth with human beings and to rule over each and every creature and the earth itself (cf. Genesis 1:26, 28).

Genesis 2:19 Consequently, the Lord God constructed from the ground each and every creature of the field as well as each and every bird of the air. Then, He brought to the man in order to see what name he would designate to them. Consequently, whatever name the man designated to these living creatures that was its name. (Author’s translation)

As with the soul of Adam, the soul of marine and animal life and the birds were *bara*, “created out of nothing or non-existing material.”

The “physical bodies” of animal and marine life and the birds as well as mankind was *yatsar*, “to form out of existing material,” namely, the earth.

The same elements found in the earth are found in the physical bodies of animal, marine and bird life as well as the physical body of human beings. The verb *bara* in Genesis 1:21 indicates that the soul of marine and animal life and the birds was created out of non-existing material whereas the verb *yatsar* in Genesis 1:24 and 2:19 and the verb *`asah* in Genesis 1:25 indicates that the physical bodies of marine and animal life and the birds were produced out of existing material, namely, the earth.

Genesis 2:20 Thus, the man designated names to each and every domestic animal and to the birds of the air and to each and every wild animal of the field but for man there was not found a helper as his counterpart. (Author's translation)

By designating names to each and every living creature on the land and in the air, Adam was exercising the delegated authority that the Lord had given him.

To the Hebrew mind, giving a name to something involves giving a designation that is expressive of its character and nature. The names that Adam designated to each and every living creature were appropriate and accurate description of each creature.

The fact that the Lord brought each and every living creature to Adam in order to give them names was the Lord's way of revealing to Adam his need since Adam would see that all these living creatures came in pairs, male and female and yet he did not have a female counterpart. As one after another of the animals passed before Adam, no doubt in pairs male and female, he could not help but be impressed with his own uniqueness. He would discern that he was superior in ability but also he would see he was very much alone. Adam would find that he had nothing in common with the animals and that there was none like him and thus none of the animals could provide fellowship for him or companionship.

Adam, of all God's creatures, was really alone and the Lord said that this was not good or beneficial to Adam since Adam was a social being that was created in the image and likeness of God who is a social being since God is three persons who have the same divine essence. Therefore, the Lord set out to create a suitable companion for him that would be a perfect complement to him and would help him rule over the works of God's hands.

Genesis 2:21 Then, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, thus he slept and He surgically removed a portion of his side and then He closed up the place with flesh. (Author's translation)

The Lord administered a divine anesthetic to Adam, which caused him to be unconscious enabling the Lord to surgically remove "not" a rib but a portion of his side.

"One of his ribs": (1) Number *`echadh*, "portion" (2) Preposition *min*, "from" (3) Feminine plural form of the noun *tsela*, "side" (4) third person masculine singular pronominal suffix, which functions as a possessive pronoun meaning, "his."

The noun *tsela* means, "side" and does not refer to a rib of Adam although the word does imply that the bone of a rib was taken from him by the Lord.

In Genesis 2:21, the noun *tsela* refers to the side of Adam's torso indicating that the Lord did not simply take out a rib but rather He removed a portion of Adam's side, which would include skin, flesh, blood, nerves and of course bone.

In Genesis 2:21, the number *`echadh* is used as an indefinite article meaning "a portion of something," thus the Lord built the physical body of the woman from a "portion" of the side of Adam's torso.

Genesis 2:22 Then, the Lord God built this portion of his side, which He had surgically removed from the man up into a woman. Then, He brought her to the man. (Author's translation)

"Built" is the verb *banah*, which means, "to build" indicating that the Lord "constructed" the physical body of the woman from the biological life of Adam.

"Woman" is the noun *`ishshah*, which denotes the woman as the physical counterpart of man and is used in the sense of a wife to whom the man is to be completely committed.

Like Adam, the woman's soul was modeled after the image of God, which is indicated by the use of the verb *`asah* in Genesis 1:26. Like Adam, the woman's soul was created out of nothing, which is indicated by the use of the Hebrew verb *bara* in Genesis 1:27.

The fact that the soul of Adam and the woman were both created out of nothing indicates that the woman was not intellectually inferior to Adam but rather she was his equal and a perfect complement to him. The woman was not merely an extension of the man but possessed her own individuality since her soul was also created out of nothing in the image of God. She was unique like Adam and unlike the animals, had the capacity to be a companion to Adam and provide fellowship for him that was not only beneficial to him but also to her.

Together, the man and the woman were unique in God's creation and were a dynamic couple superior to all of God's creatures on planet earth and were designed to rule together over the earth.

Notice also, that Adam's physical body was formed first and then Eve's thus constituting a divine order between the sexes meaning that the man was designed to be the authority over the woman even though she was his equal.

Principle: You are not "inferior" to authority by submitting to authority and you are not "superior" to those under your authority by being in a position of authority.

1 Corinthians 11:1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ. 2 Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you. 3 But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. 4 Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. 5 But every woman who has her head uncovered (a symbol of the husband's authority over her) while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. 6 For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head. 7 For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is

the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. 8 For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. 10 Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12 For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God. (NASB95)

Genesis 1-2 emphasizes that man is completely different and distinctive in God's creation. He is superior to marine life and the animal kingdom and the bird kingdom. This creation and restoration account in Genesis 1 instructs us that man was the special focus of God's creation and restorative purposes since he was designed to resolve through the function of his volition the ancient prehistoric angelic conflict between God and Satan.

Everything prior to the creation of man was designed to sustain and benefit man. So even though man stands subordinate to God in dependence upon God, man also holds the status of a unique and special personality in relation to God.

A comparison of Genesis 1:27 and 2:7 indicates that chronologically the soul of man was created first before his physical body. The fact that God created the soul of man out of nothing and his physical body was constructed from the dust of the earth indicates man is connected to both heaven and earth.

Also, the creation of the soul before the physical body indicates God's emphasis upon the soul, which He considers as being more important than the physical body. The fact that the soul of man was created out of nothing in the image of God and not the physical body also confirms this fact. The soul of man originates with God who is in heaven and his physical body originates from the dust of the earth.

Man was designed to join heaven and earth in not only the physical sense but also in the spiritual sense. God accomplished this through the death, resurrection and session of the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14). The fact that God created both the male and female indicates that like God, man is a "social" being who is designed to not only have fellowship with God but also with his fellow human being. In the case of the first man, Adam and his wife were to have fellowship with each other. Therefore, man was not created in human isolation.

Man had a responsibility towards his relationship with God and with his fellow human being (Mark 12:28-31). Individually and together, the man and the woman were obligated to not only God but also to each other and each and every creature in the air, land and sea since they were to rule over these creatures.

In Genesis 1:27, we have the diversity and unity of man since they were created both male and female. Man is part of the cosmos since both the male and the female are the sphere of the task God has given to him. His achievements are to be in relation to the cosmos. Man is a part of creation and does not transcend creation like God. He is the second category of moral rational creatures created by God. The first category is of course the angels.

Genesis 1:27 presents to the reader the original condition and state of man as being in the image of God. The fall of Adam has distorted that image. The Lord Jesus Christ's death and resurrection and session has restored it and elevated it.

Now, those who are believers in Christ are in possession of the divine nature and are in union with Christ (Ephesians 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Believers hold a superior position than the first man in his original sinless condition since the former is in union with Christ on the basis of grace whereas the latter in his sinless original condition was not under grace (Romans 5-6). Grace being defined as unmerited favor and blessings.

The record of the fifth day of restoration recorded in Genesis 1:20-23 and the record of the sixth day of restoration recorded in Genesis 1:24-31 clearly states that mankind is distinct and superior to each and every living creature in the air, on the land and in the sea. Therefore, man did not evolve from a lower species of animal.

Man's original unity, or that the whole of mankind has descended from one human pair, is one of the obvious teachings of Scripture (Acts 17:26; 1 Corinthians 15:21, 47).

Also, Genesis 1:27 anticipates and refutes the evolutionary concepts developed by man. Genesis 1:27 teaches that man is the result of the immediate creative action of God and did not spring out of nature by some natural evolutionary process. It teaches that man, both the male and female derive their origin and essence from God and not from the earth or some evolutionary process.

The Second Reason for the Command in Verse 11 and the Prohibition in Verse 12

In 1 Timothy 2:14, the apostle Paul presents the second reason for his command in verse 11 and his prohibition in verse 12. In this verse, he is citing Genesis 3 and by way of implication, Genesis 3:16 as support for his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12.

1 Timothy 2:14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (NASB95)

“**And it was not Adam who was deceived**” is composed of the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” which is followed by the nominative masculine singular form of the noun *Adam* (Ἀδάμ), “**Adam**” and the emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὐ), “**not**” and the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *apatao* (ἀπατάω), “**was deceived.**”

The conjunction *kai* is used in an adjunctive sense meaning that it is introducing a statement that presents a reason for Paul's command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12, which is “in addition to” the reason he presented in verse 13. That the word is adjunctive is indicated by the fact that verse 14 parallels verse 13. This parallel structure is indicated by the fact that Adam in both verses is the subject of the verb and in the emphatic position. Thus, these verses emphasize that Adam was created first and was not deceived indicating Adam has a dominant role over Eve. Thus, this parallel structure between the verses indicates that the second reason expressed in verse 14 for the command in verse 11 and the prohibition in verse 12 is similar to the first reason expressed in verse 13. Therefore, we will translate *kai*, “**also.**”

The verb *apatao* means “to deceive, to cause someone to have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth” (Louw and Nida, 31.12). In the passive, as we have here in 1 Timothy 2:14, the term means “to be deceived” by someone. In context, the verb refers to Eve being deceived by the devil into disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The

word's meaning is emphatically negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, which means "by no means." Thus with these two words Paul is saying that Adam was by no means deceived by the devil.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the moment when Eve was deceived by the devil and Adam was not. The passive voice indicates that Adam as the subject by no means received the action of being deceived by the devil into disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The indicative mood is "declarative" presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

Eve Was Deceived

1 Timothy 2:14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (NASB95)

"**But the woman being deceived**" is composed of the conjunction *de* (δέ), "**but**" and the articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *gune* (γυνή), "**the woman**" and the nominative feminine singular aorist passive participle form of the verb *exapatao* (ἐξαπατάω), "**being deceived.**"

The conjunction *de* is used in an adversative sense meaning that it is introducing a statement that stands in a mild contrast with the previous statement that Adam was by no means deceived in the Garden of Eden by the devil. Paul does not use the strong adversative conjunction *alla* because Adam and Eve were not fundamentally different from each other. We will translate the word "**however.**"

In 1 Timothy 2:13, the articular form of the noun *gune* means, "the woman" and refers specifically to Eve. This is indicated by the word's articular construction, which signifies that this woman that was deceived is well known to Paul's readers.

The word is a nominative subject meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *exapatao*. This indicates that Eve received the action of being thoroughly deceived by the devil.

The verb *exapatao* is a compound word composed of the verb *apatao* and the preposition *ek*, which intensifies the meaning of the former. Thus, the word means "to thoroughly deceive" or "to completely deceive." It occurs only twice in the Septuagint where it is used of the deceit of Pharaoh talking with Moses and Aaron (Exodus 8:25). It is found 6 times in the New Testament (Romans 7:11; 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 2:14).

Richards commenting on the word, writes, "*Apatao* and its derivatives indicate ethical enticement...Deception sometimes comes from within, as our desires impel us to deceive. But more often in the NT, deceit is error urged by external evil powers or by those locked into the world's way of thinking."¹⁰⁰

The verb appears five times in the Greek New Testament. It appears in 2 Corinthians 11:3 where Paul uses it of Satan deceiving Eve.

¹⁰⁰ Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. (NASB95)

The word is used again by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 in order to warn the believers in Thessalonica of false teachers who taught that the day of the Lord had already come.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. (NASB95)

It is used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:18 to warn the Corinthian church of becoming involved in self-deception.

1 Corinthians 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise. (NASB95)

In Romans 7:11, the verb is used with the sin nature as its subject in relation to the apostle Paul and means not only to give a false impression but to actively lead astray. The word indicates that Paul's sin nature "thoroughly and completely deceived" him. It means to cause someone to believe or accept false ideas about something with the implication of that one is led out of the right way into error and especially to sin.

Romans 7:11 For you see because the sin nature seized a base of operations by means of the tenth commandment, it deceived me and in addition by means of it, put me to death. (Author's translation)

Paul uses the word in Romans 16:18 where it again means "to deceive" and is used of the Judaizers "deceiving" unsuspecting Christians by teaching that they must adhere to the Law.

Romans 16:17 Now, I warn each and every one of you without exception, spiritual brothers and sisters to keep a watchful eye out for those who cause those divisions as well as those temptations to sin and apostatize contrary to the teaching, which each and every one of you without exception learned. Also, all of you continue making it your habit of keeping away from them. 18 because, such individuals are by no means characterized as being slaves to our Lord, who is Christ but rather their own stomach and in addition by means of their smooth talk, yes flattering talk too, they deceive the hearts of the naïve. (Author's translation)

The verb *exapatao* is used in 1 Timothy 2:14 in the passive voice and means "to be thoroughly or completely deceived." It refers to Eve being thoroughly and completely deceived by the devil in the Garden of Eden so that she disobeyed the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Paul does not use this word instead of *apatao* for stylistic reasons but rather to express the depth to which Eve was deceived by the devil. Also, another why Paul is not using the word for stylistic reasons is that he is making an obvious contrast between Adam and Eve.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the moment when Eve was thoroughly and completely deceived by the devil into disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not

eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The passive voice indicates that Eve as the subject received the action of being thoroughly and completely deceived by the devil into disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The participle form of the verb is a participle of cause meaning that it indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the main verb. Here in 1 Timothy 2:14, the main verb is *ginomai*. This indicates that "because" the woman, i.e. Eve was thoroughly and completely deceived by the devil, she entered into transgression and disobeyed the Lord's prohibition. The causal participle usually precedes the verb it modifies, which is the case here in 1 Timothy 2:14.

Eve Fell into Transgression

1 Timothy 2:14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (NASB95)

"**Fell into transgression**" is composed of the third person singular perfect active indicative form of the verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) and the preposition *en* (ἐν), "**into**" and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun *parabasis* (παράβασις), "**transgression.**"

The verb *ginomai* means "to enter into a new state or condition" with the implication of never experiencing this state or condition before. It refers to entering into the state of committing a particular act. Here in 1 Timothy 2:14, it refers to Eve entering into the state of disobedience by committing the act of disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It speaks of her entering into the state of disobedience by committing a particular act that she had never done before, namely disobeying the Lord.

The perfect tense of the verb is an intensive perfect, which is used to emphasize the results or present state produced by a past action. The present state in our context is Eve in the state of being a transgressor of God's law and the past action is that of her being deceived by the devil into being a transgressor. The active voice is stative indicating that Eve existed in the state of being a transgressor of God's law. The indicative mood is "declarative" presenting this Pauline assertion about Eve as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

Parabasis means "transgression" and refers to Eve disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is the object of the preposition *en*, which functions as a marker of state or condition indicating that the state of Eve being a transgressor of God's law because she was deceived by the devil into disobeying His prohibition.

1 Timothy 2:14 Also Adam was by no means deceived however because the woman was thoroughly and completely deceived, she entered into transgression. (Author's translation)

Summary of 1 Timothy 2:14

To summarize, 1 Timothy 2:14 presents the second reason for Paul's command in verse 11 and his prohibition in verse 12. In this verse, he is citing Genesis 3 and alluding specifically to Genesis 3:16 as support for his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12.

Genesis 3:16 To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” (NASB95)

“**Rule over**” is composed of the third person qal imperfect form of the verb *mā-šāl* (מַשָּׁל), “**rule**” and the preposition *b^e* (בְּ), “**over**.”

The verb *mā-šāl* means “to govern, be in control, be in charge, i.e. have a person or entity exercise authority over persons or governments.” Thus, the Lord is saying that because of Eve’s disobedience, which was the result of being deceived by the devil, Adam would “govern, be in charge” over her. He would exercise authority over her. This verse clearly teaches that Adam would rule over Eve because she disobeyed the Lord’s prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In 1 Timothy 2:13, Paul does not cite Genesis 3:16 explicitly to support his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12. Rather, he alludes to Eve’s being deceived which led to the Lord decreeing that Adam would rule over her. This parallels his use of Genesis 2 in which he does not explicitly mention Genesis 2:7 and 21, which when compared reveal that Adam was formed first and then Eve. He also does not explicitly mention Genesis 2:18, which reveals that Eve was designed to be a helpmate for Adam.

Paul is simply presupposing that his readers know the events recorded in Genesis 2 and 3 and does not feel the need to mention these verses explicitly. Thus, in verse 13, Paul cites that Adam was formed first and then Eve (Genesis 2:7, 21), which presupposes that his readers know that this was because Eve was to be a helpmate for Adam (Genesis 2:18). In verse 14, he teaches that Adam was not deceived but that Eve was totally deceived and thus entered into transgressing the Lord’s prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This presupposes that his readers know that this resulted in the Lord issuing the judgment that Adam would rule over her because she was deceived into disobeying His prohibition.

In 1 Timothy 2:13 and 14, Paul is using a common rabbinic method of referring to the Old Testament, a method known as summary citation. That is, he used the summary statement in 1 Timothy 2:13 to point the reader to the entire pericope describing the creation of man and woman (Gen 2:4–24), and in 1 Timothy 2:14 he referred back to the entire pericope detailing the Fall (Gen 3:1–25). Paul was not limiting his focus to two specific, isolated thoughts; rather, he was drawing on two complete narratives.

Ann Bowman writes, “If Paul had focused on specific verses taken from the Genesis 2 and 3 account, he would probably have quoted or closely paraphrased specific verses and likely would have used one of the common introductory formulas he used elsewhere. To name only a few of these formulas: ‘so also it is written’ (οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται) in 1 Corinthians 15:45; ‘as it was written’ (καθὼς γέγραπται) in 1 Corinthians 1:31; 2:9; 2 Corinthians 8:15; 9:9; ‘then will come about the saying which is written’ (τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος) in 1 Corinthians 15:54; ‘for the Scripture says’ (λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή) in 1 Timothy 5:18. A thorough listing of introductory formulas may be found in Bruce Metzger, ‘The Formulas Introducing Quotations of Scripture in the New Testament and the Mishnah,’ *Journal of Biblical Literature* 70 (1951): 297-307; Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, ‘The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament,’ *New Testament Studies* 7 (1960–61): 299-305. Also see Joseph Bonsirven, *Exégse rabbinique et exégse paulinienne* (Paris:

Beauchesne et ses fils, 1939), 264–65...An example of a single statement recalling an entire pericope is Luke 17:32, ‘Remember Lot’s wife.’ To understand Jesus’ implied warning, one must recall the circumstances that caused Sodom’s destruction (Gen 18:22–19:11), the flight of Lot and his family from the city (19:12–25), and the sin of Lot’s wife and its results (vv. 17, 26).¹⁰¹

Therefore a comparison of Genesis 2:7, 18 and 21 with 1 Timothy 2:13 indicates that Christian women are to learn the Word of God silently with complete submission because the Lord’s original creation design was that Eve would be a helpmate for Adam. It indicates that Christian women are prohibited from teaching men the Word of God in a public worship service in the local assembly and exercising authority over them but are to be in silence for the exact same reason.

Also, a comparison of Genesis 3:16 with 1 Timothy 2:14 indicates that Paul issued the command in verse 11 and the prohibition in verse 12 because Adam was not deceived by Satan in the Garden of Eden. But rather Eve was totally deceived and entered into transgressing the Lord’s prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The consequences of Eve being deceived and as a result disobeyed this prohibition is that the Lord decreed that Adam would rule over her and this would be the case throughout history that men would rule over women.

Therefore, we can see that Paul issued the command in verse 11 and the prohibition in verse 12 for two reasons: (1) The Lord designed the women to be subordinate to the man as a helpmate. (2) The judgment from the Fall. Thus, in 1 Timothy 2:13-14 Paul is teaching that Christian women are to learn the Word of God silently with complete submission and not teach men the Word of God nor exercise authority over them in the public assembly but be in silence because of creation and the fall.

1 Timothy 5:15 indicates that some Christian women in Ephesus were already following in the footsteps of Eve and were being deceived into following those who taught false doctrine in that city. Satan was a false teacher and Eve fell victim to his false teaching. Paul does not want the Christian women in Ephesus to follow Eve’s example and fall victim to the deception of those pastors in Ephesus teaching false doctrine. Thus, the reason for his command in 1 Timothy 2:12 and his prohibition in verse 13.

The apostle Paul is no way suggesting that women are more easily deceived than men or that women are less intelligent. Both Scripture and history witness repeatedly to the ease with which both men and women may be deceived, especially with regard to doctrine.

Romans 5:12-21 lays the blame for the fall at Adam’s feet and not his wife. 1 Timothy 2:14 makes clear that Adam knew what he was doing. He was in effect choosing his relationship with Eve over his obedience to the Lord. The fall took place because Adam did not exercise his authority. He could have stopped his wife but did not. She should have followed his lead but did not and instead she listened to a stranger, the devil. If she remained subordinate to Adam, she would have gone to him for protection from the serpent or asked her husband about him. She did not. In Genesis 3:17, the Lord said to Adam that because he “obeyed” his wife, the earth was under a curse and he would physically die. So, there was a role reversal in the Garden of Eden and Paul in 1 Timothy 2:11-14 is seeking to prevent that from taking place with the church at Ephesus. He wants the men to lead the church so as to protect the church from false doctrine.

¹⁰¹ Bibliotheca Sacra 149:594; April 1992; page 205

Fall of Adam and Eve

In Genesis 3:1, Moses records that Satan indwelt a snake in order to disguise himself so that he might deceive Eve in the garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” (NASB95)

“**Serpent**” is the noun *nachash*, which refers to a literal snake. According to Genesis 3:14, this snake had legs but after the Fall of Adam, the Lord cursed this snake saying it would go on its belly and will eat dust all the days of its life, thus implying that it was not created to go about on its belly and therefore had legs.

According to 2 Corinthians 11:3 and Revelation 20:2, Satan indwelt this serpent and through this serpent disguised himself to deceive Eve.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. (NASB95)

Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. (NASB95)

Satan indwelt this literal snake in order to disguise himself and deceive Eve. The principle stratagem of the devil is lies and deception.

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (NASB95)

Satan employed the strategy of deception against the woman in the Garden of Eden. The devil’s purpose for deceiving the human race is to divert worship from the Lord Jesus Christ and to himself.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” 4 The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.” (NASB95)

Genesis 3:1-7 records three different steps that lead to sin and rebellion against God: (1) Added to God’s Word: God did not say that Adam could not eat from any tree in the garden but rather He prohibited eating from only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:1); God did not say

that Adam could not “touch” the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but rather He said do not eat from it (Genesis 2:15-17) (2) Altering God’s Word: God did not say that they would die if they touched the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but rather the Lord said they would die if they ate from it, which Eve omits. (3) Denying God’s Word: Satan blatantly God called a liar and contradicted what God said to Adam by saying **“You shall not surely die”** (Genesis 3:4).

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” (NASB95)

“**More crafty**” is the adjective *`arum*, which is used in a negative sense to describe the “craftiness” of the snake and forms a word play with the adjective *`arom*, “**naked**” that is used in Genesis 2:25 to describe the sinless innocence of Adam and Eve. The two words describe a contrast between the innocent vulnerability of Adam and his wife and the craftiness of Satan.

“**Craftiness**” describes the skill or ability used for evil purposes, cunning, deceit, guile.” Satan’s craftiness is demonstrated in addressing Adam’s wife and not Adam and asking her a question. Satan approached the woman rather than Adam because the woman was the “weaker” of the two in the sense that she is a responder and is therefore susceptible to flattery and deception (cf. 1 Peter 3:7).

Also, Satan approached the woman rather than Adam since Adam was the one who received the prohibition directly from the Lord to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and not the woman since she was not created as of yet (Genesis 2:15-25). Therefore, the woman heard about the command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil directly from Adam rather than from the Lord. She also would be with Adam when the Lord at the end of the day reminded Adam of the prohibition (Genesis 3:8). It was Adam’s responsibility to relate the prohibition accurately to the woman since God delegated him as the authority over her.

Her failure to accurately convey the Word of the Lord back to Satan was in essence Adam’s failure as the head of the marriage since she received the command from him and he was right there while she was conversing with Satan according to the phrase **“she gave also to her husband with her”** in Genesis 3:6.

Adam kept silent the entire time that his wife was being tempted by the devil, thus he failed in his responsibility to protect and care for his wife.

God did not say that Adam could not eat from **“any”** tree in the garden but only that they could not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17).

Satan deliberately distorted the Word of the Lord in order to get Adam’s wife to doubt God and of course, ultimately to deceive her into disobeying God and then Adam would follow. Satan employed this tactic of distorting the Word of God when tempting the impeccable human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), but the Lord Jesus Christ defeated Satan and resisted the temptation to sin by having a precise and accurate knowledge of the Word of God.

Satan is emphasizing God’s prohibition rather than His provision to eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and he did this in order to make God appear harsh.

Genesis 3:2 The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” (NASB95)

The woman is correct in identifying that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil had a prohibition attached to it but she was incorrect in adding to the prohibition by saying she was prohibiting from touching it. The Lord did not say that they could not touch it but rather that they could not eat from it and this failure to accurately convey what the Lord prohibited gave Satan a foothold and she was now open to deception. Failure to accurately understand and apply the Word of God leads to deception from Satan.

Genesis 3:4 The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!” (NASB95)

After hearing Eve inaccurately convey what the Lord said in the prohibition, Satan blatantly calls God a liar by saying that they would not die if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (cf. John 8:44).

Genesis 3:5 “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (NASB95)

Not only does Satan deny the Word of God and calls God a liar but he also casts doubt upon the character of God suggesting that God was envious and jealous, holding them back from their destiny. Of course, Satan is envious and jealous of God and is therefore involved in “projecting” meaning he is ascribing to God his failure of jealousy and envy of God (cf. James 3:14-16).

Both Adam and his wife had not reason to doubt God’s love and goodness since like Satan, their entire existence originated directly from God who created them. God had their best interests in mind and in fact, by prohibiting Adam and his wife from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the Lord God was protecting them from evil and calamity. God prohibits us from doing things in order to protect us from misfortune rather than to prevent us from enjoyment.

Adam and his wife had no reason whatsoever to accept the suggestions of this stranger (Satan) over obedience to the commands of their loving and caring Lord. God had withheld no good thing from Adam and Eve and yet they rebelled against Him like Satan, which is a sin of the worst kind, namely, ungratefulness. Satan has successfully gotten the woman to mistrust and be suspicious of God.

Also, Satan states that if she ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that she will be like God knowing good and evil, which is ridiculous since God knows about evil but not through personal experience, which would be the case when the woman disobeyed God.

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. (NASB95)

The steps leading to Adam and his wife disobeying the Lord by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are described in Genesis 3:6, which correspond to the description given by the apostle John in 1 John 2:15-16.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. (NASB95)

“Lust of the flesh” is a temptation appealing to the physical appetite and was used against the Woman and is recorded in **Genesis 3:6a When the woman saw that the tree was good for food. (NASB95)**

“Lust of the eyes” is a temptation appealing to personal gain and was used against the Woman and is recorded in **Genesis 3:6b that it was a delight to the eyes. (NASB95)**

“Boastful pride of life” is a temptation appealing to power and glory and was used against the Woman and is recorded in **Genesis 3:6c that the tree was desirable to make one wise.” (NASB95)**

Notice that Adam was with his wife the entire time that Satan tempted her and remained silent throughout the entire conversation. Adam knowingly ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because he chose his relationship with his wife over his relationship with God, which is illustrated by the fact that he listened to his wife rather than obeying God.

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. (NASB95)

“The eyes of both of them were opened” means that Adam and his wife had a knowledge of sin and evil through personal experience and did not make them like God as Satan claimed it would but rather produced guilt in their souls.

They became aware of their guilt and had nothing to hide their guilt so they attempted to hide themselves from God and cover their genitalia with loin coverings sewed from fig leaves.

The loin coverings not only were a manifestation of their alienation from God but also from each other. The sewing of fig leaves together in order to make loin coverings for themselves to cover and ease their guilt was an act of self-righteous arrogance since only God can solve the problem of guilt through the forgiveness of sins, which is available through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. Instead of seeking out God and confessing their guilt, they attempted to conceal their guilt from both God and themselves (1 John 1:8-10).

It is interesting that the only tree that our Lord cursed was the fig tree recorded in Matthew 21:18-19 and He did this not only to teach that Israel had rejected Him as Messiah but to relate God’s attitude towards the self-righteous actions of Adam and his wife.

Adam’s sin in the garden brought a curse not only on the entire human of which he is the “federal” head but it also brought a curse on the earth itself (Romans 5:12-21; cf. Romans 8:20).

The temptations of the Lord Jesus in the wilderness correspond to that which Eve was subject to in the Garden of Eden. Satan appealed to the physical appetite of Eve in Genesis 3:1 **“You may eat of any tree”** and the Lord Jesus in Matthew 4:3, **“You may eat by changing stones into bread.”**

He appealed to personal gain with Eve in Genesis 3:4 “**you shall not die**” and with the Lord Jesus in Matthew 4:6 “**You will not hurt Your foot.**” Satan appealed to power or glory with Eve in Genesis 3:5 “**You will be like God**” and with the Lord Jesus in Matthew 4:8-9 “**You will have all the world’s kingdoms.**”

Genesis 3:8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (NASB95)

The sound of the Lord God walking in the garden is a theophany, which is a theological term used to refer to either a visible or auditory manifestation of the Son of God before His incarnation in Bethlehem (Genesis 32:29-30; Exodus 3:2; 19:18-20; Josh. 5:13-15; Daniel 3:26). The manner in which it is stated that the Lord God came walking in the garden in the cool of the day indicates that this was a normal event, perhaps a daily appointment time at which the Lord met with Adam and his wife for fellowship.

“**Sound**” is the noun *qol*, which when used in relation to a living being means, “voice,” thus, Adam and his wife heard the Lord voice of the preincarnate Christ.

“**Walking**” is the verb *halakh*, which is in the hithpael (reflexive) form indicating that the preincarnate Christ was “walking about” the garden at the end of the day.

“**Cool of the day**” refers to the end of the day at sunset when temperatures fall.

Adam and his wife hid in fear since according to Genesis 2:17, the Lord had warned Adam that if he disobeyed His command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then he would surely die.

When the Lord said to Adam that he would “surely die” if he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the Lord meant that he would enter into “real spiritual death,” which is separation from God. When the Lord says you shall surely die He does “not” mean he would die physically since Adam lived to be 930 years old according to Genesis 5:5.

The fact that Adam and his wife died spiritually and were separated from the Lord is illustrated in Genesis 3:6-8. The fact that Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden demonstrates that sin not only results in loss of fellowship with the Lord but also guilt and fear.

Adam and his wife’s actions after disobeying the Lord are an implicit admission of guilt.

Genesis 3:9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” (NASB95)

The Lord knew that Adam and his wife had disobeyed Him since He is omniscient meaning He knows perfectly, eternally and simultaneously all that is knowable, both the actual and the possible and thus has all knowledge of every event in human and angel history.

The Lord asked Adam where He was because He wanted Adam to confess his guilt and to make Adam aware of his need for forgiveness and a Savior. The fact that the Lord asked Adam where he was even though He knew what Adam had done and could have thrown him into the lake of fire demonstrates that the Lord is manifesting His love and mercy and grace.

God permitted Adam to rebel and disobey Him, like He did with Satan in order that He might manifest His great grace and love for both men and angels. If Adam and Satan never rebelled against God, angels and men would never know the depths of God's grace and love for them since grace is for the undeserving and His love is able to love those who are His enemies.

The fall of Adam and the fall of Satan gave God an opportunity to treat both men and angels in grace and love so that they might have a reason to love and obey Him and not because they have to avoid being punished, even though a holy God has every right to demand obedience from His creatures and punish them for obedience.

God who is holy and cannot tolerate sin is justified in throwing His creatures into the lake of fire for rebelling against Him but also God, who as to His nature, is love, did everything He could to prevent any of His creatures from going to the lake of fire forever and ever for their rebellion against Him.

The fact that God did not immediately deposit Satan and Adam in the lake of fire for their disobedience is incontrovertible evidence that God loves His creatures and desires none of them to go to the lake of fire.

The fact that God the Father sent His Son into the world to become a human being to satisfy His righteous demands that the sin of angels and men be judged is also incontrovertible evidence that God loves His creatures.

Notice that the Lord initiated a reconciliation by seeking out Adam and his wife and not vice versa, which is a demonstration of God's love. The Lord not only sought out the first two sinners in the human race but He seeks out the entire human race without exception and distinction since He desires all men to be saved (John 3:16-18; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).

Genesis 3:10 He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." (NASB95)

Adam, like all sinners, is fearful being in the presence of God since he stands guilty and condemned before an infinitely holy God. Adam, like all sinners, is estranged from God and seeks to avoid contact with Him. This is the natural result of spiritual death.

Adam response that he hid himself because he was naked was a lie but rather he hid himself because he felt guilty that he disobeyed the Lord's prohibition. Therefore, Adam is not being honest with the Lord who because He is omniscient can see right through his lie.

The fact that Adam does not come clean with the Lord and confess that he disobeyed results in a guilty conscience. The application for us as believers is that we must confess our sins so that we might not be wracked with guilt that is the natural result of sin (Psalm 32:5).

Genesis 3:11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

The divine interrogation continues in order to bring Adam to an admission of guilt so that he might be restored to fellowship. The Lord’s first question is designed to draw attention to the fact that something must have happened to make Adam aware of his nakedness and that he must have done something to make him aware of his nakedness.

As soon as Adam’s thoughts have been led to see that this admission is inevitable, the Lord’s next question is a direct one designed to drive Adam to still a more inescapable admission of his guilt. The Lord’s is convicting Adam of his guilt in order that he might see his need of a Savior and forgiveness.

Genesis 3:12 The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.” (NASB95)

Adam’s fallen state due to his sin and disobedience further manifests itself in his making excuses and blaming the Lord for giving him his wife. By blaming the Lord for giving him his wife, Adam is accusing the Lord of tempting him to sin, which is impossible since God cannot be tempted by evil because He is holy (James 1:13-15). By blaming the Lord for giving him his wife, Adam is not taking responsibility for his actions. Adam cannot justify his sin by blaming the Lord for giving him his wife since Adam made the decision to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He could have said no to his wife but instead he went along with her in her sin. Once Adam recognized his wife as a great blessing but now, after disobeying the Lord, he considers her a curse. Adam’s excuse is so lame that the Lord doesn’t even dignified it with a response (Proverbs 26:4).

Genesis 3:13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” (NASB95)

Just like Adam, his wife failed to take responsibility for her actions and instead blamed the serpent for deceiving her. Just like Adam, his wife could have rejected eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but instead she chose to disobey. Unlike Adam though, his wife did not attempt to deny that she had sinned but in fact admitted her guilt to the Lord.

The Lord does not question the devil who used the serpent to disguise himself since according to Matthew 25:41, the devil has already been convicted of his rebellion. Furthermore, the Lord does not question Satan since this temptation of Adam and his wife was a part of his appeal trial where Satan was attempting to justify his rebellion and independence from God.

In his appeal trial, Satan is attempting to demonstrate that God does not love His creatures and that he is justified in living independently of God and that disobedience to God is a viable and justified alternative to being obedient to God. By getting Adam and his wife to sin against God, then Satan would have witnesses that support his argument.

Satan does not believe that God loves His creatures since God sentenced him to the lake of fire forever for his rebellion and by getting Adam and his wife to sin against God, Satan presumptuously and erroneously believes that he will have demonstrated this to be the case. But, Satan’s plan backfires on him since the fall of Adam and his wife provided God an opportunity to demonstrate a side of Himself

that would never be revealed if Satan and Adam had never sinned, namely, His love, which is able to love His enemies and do good to those who are unworthy and undeserving.

Genesis 3:14-19 records the consequences of Adam and his wife failure to obey the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 3:14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life." (NASB95)

The fact that the Lord pronounced a curse on the serpent does not indicate direct culpability on its part since the serpent is not a moral rational creature that can make decisions to obey or reject the will of God. Rather, the curse was pronounced upon the serpent as a perpetual reminder to the human race of the instrument of its fall and of the final destruction of Satan himself.

When the Lord said that the serpent would eat dust, He does not mean in a literal sense of course, except in the sense that its prey would have to be consumed directly off the ground in front of it. The expression is mainly a graphic figure of speech indicating its humiliating judgment and fall.

God was not unjust in pronouncing this curse upon an innocent animal since He is sovereign and has created each animal to fulfill a specific role in life (Romans 9:21). God had made the serpent a member of a species which are described in Genesis 1:21 as "**those, which crawl**" and "**creepers-crawlers**" in Genesis 1:24, which would be insects, small reptiles, most amphibians and small mammals and excludes the larger domestic and non-domestic wild animals.

The entire animal kingdom fell under a curse as a result of Adam's sin even though the animals had not sinned themselves and this was because they were under Adam's rulership and it was by his sin that death came into the world, infecting everything in that dominion.

Genesis 3:15 "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." (NASB95)

Genesis 3:15 records the first pronouncement of the gospel of God's grace as found in the Person and Work of the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. The seed of the serpent is not literal since we have already established that Satan disguised himself by indwelling the serpent. Neither is the seed of the serpent referring to fallen angels for such an interpretation does not fit the context and Satan does not father demons. The seed of the serpent does not refer to unregenerate humanity since the phrase "**your seed**" is used in contrast to the phrase "**her seed**," which refers to one individual, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the phrase "**your seed**" refers to one individual, namely, the Antichrist who will be the ruler of a ten-nation confederacy constituting a Revived Roman Empire, during Daniel's seventieth week, which is also called by theologians as the "Tribulation Period."

The Antichrist will be the man of sin and yet the son of perdition-literally, the "seed of the serpent" just as the Lord Jesus Christ was the Son of Man and the Son of God in one person.

"**Her Seed**" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ who is the "**Last Adam**" (1 Corinthians 15:45) and if so, then, "**your seed**" refers to a single individual as well.

“He (Jesus Christ) shall bruise you (Satan) on the head” is the first prophecy concerning the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ would defeat Satan at the cross by being obedient to the Father’s will with His voluntary substitutionary death on the cross on behalf of all mankind.

This first prophecy regarding the Lord Jesus Christ, as the future Deliverer from the bondage of sin and the devil is further developed throughout the rest of Scripture.

The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 is the “seed plot” of the Virgin Birth and Incarnation of the Son of God (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; John 1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16).

The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 is the “seed plot” of the Redemption and Salvation of mankind as well as the defeat of Satan, which is developed in further detail in the rest of the Bible (Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 John 3:8).

“You (Satan) shall bruise Him (Christ) on the heel” is a symbolic or figurative reference to the Lord’s suffering and death on the cross, which the Father used as the instrument to destroy the works of the devil.

A blow to the head is much more damaging than a blow to the heel. What Satan did to the Lord Jesus Christ at the cross was only temporary and did not defeat the Lord but what the Lord did to Satan at the cross was to achieve total and complete victory over Satan since the Lord’s death on the cross demonstrated the love of God for all men, which refutes Satan’s argument that God does not love His creatures.

Genesis 3:16 To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” (NASB95)

God’s judgment on Eve was to increase her pain in childbearing. Her desire or impulse would be toward her husband and he would rule over her, not as a tyrant but in the same sense as the sun rules the day (Genesis 1:16). This, of course, was not God’s original intention but now in Christ the negative aspects of this are removed and the husband and wife are restored to a healthy partnership where the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Ephesians 5:22-33) and the wife is to obey and respect her husband as to the Lord.

Also, in Christ there are no gender distinctions meaning there is neither male nor female but all are equal in Christ (Galatians 3:26-28). Because, Eve chose to disobey God and did not eat from the tree of life resulting in immortality, she would now have to bear children, which in one sense was a curse but in another sense opened the door to redemptive history.

The privilege of bearing and raising born-again children delivers women from their loss of leadership as the Fall (1 Timothy 2:12-15). Remember, both Adam and Eve were modeled and created in the image and likeness of God according to Genesis 1:26-27 and together were to rule over every living creature and to rule over the earth and subdue it according to Genesis 1:28.

Eve's disobedience changed that but the woman's position of rulership is restored through the baptism of the Spirit, which takes place at the moment she exercises faith alone in Christ alone and gives her equal privilege and equal opportunity to glorify God.

Genesis 3:17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.” (NASB95)

“**Cursed is the ground**” means the basic material of the physical creation. The elements themselves, the “**dust of the earth**,” out of which all things had been formed and produced were brought under the bondage of decay and disintegration.

Genesis 3:18 “Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (NASB95)

The earth would no longer cooperate with Adam because he sinned and will be insubordinate to Adam because he obeyed his wife.

“**By the sweat of your face you will eat bread**” means that Adam would have to perform hard labor in order to get the earth to produce food for him. Work was originally designed by the Lord to be a blessing for man but after the Fall, it became a curse (Genesis 3:17-19).

“**Till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; For you are dust and to dust you shall return**” refers to the eventual death of Adam's biological life meaning his physical body.

Remember the human soul whether saved or unsaved does “not” die but lives forever and a person's attitude towards Jesus Christ determines the soul's eternal destiny whether the lake of fire or heaven. This curse on Adam also included the entire human race, both male and female, of which Adam is the “federal” head of the old creation and is removed through faith in Christ who is the “federal” head of the “new” creation.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. (NASB95)

Just as the earth fell under judgment because of Satan's rebellion in the original pre-Adamic Garden of Eden so the earth fell under judgment because of Adam's rebellion in the restored Garden of Eden. So the Lord put a curse upon man and on his entire environment would not only force him to recognize the seriousness of his sin as well as his helplessness to deliver himself and his dominion from eventual destruction but also it would force him to recognize that Satan's tempting promises had been nothing but lies.

This curse on the First Adam will be lifted when the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ returns with church, the sons of God, at His 2nd Advent to deliver Israel from Antichrist and the Tribulational armies in order to establish His millennial reign (Romans 8:18-22).

In Genesis 3:20-21, Moses records that the Lord clothed Adam and Eve with animal skins that is picture of their salvation, which took place when they exercised faith in the promise of a Savior in Genesis 3:15.

In Genesis 3:22-24, we see the Lord driving Adam and his wife out of the Garden of Eden but although Adam and his wife had lost this “temporal” Paradise, they had gained through their faith in the promise of Genesis 3:15 of a Savior an “eternal” Paradise with God in the new heavens and new earth and new Jerusalem.

Though they were under a curse for their disobedience that curse would ultimately be lifted because of their faith in Christ. We saw in Genesis 2:3 that God completed His work of restoring the heavens and the earth by the seventh day, which typifies the millennium and eternal state.

In Genesis 3:15, we read of God beginning a new work on the day that Adam and his wife sinned, namely, the work of salvation, which began with the incarnation of the Son of God and His death, resurrection and session.

Genesis 3:15 is the first prophecy concerning the new creation. The old creation, the old heavens and the earth that have been marred by the sin and rebellion of both Satan and Adam will be destroyed and a new heavens and a new earth will be created by God that will be permeated by God’s holiness (Revelation 21-22).

This work of salvation and the new creation will culminate in the creation of the new heavens and new earth.

Genesis 3:20 Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. (NASB95)

In Genesis 2:23, Adam calls his wife, “**woman**,” which is the noun *’ishshah* but in Genesis 3:20, Adam gives his wife a new name, “**Eve**,” which is the Hebrew proper name *chawwah*, “life.”

Adam’s faith in the Lord’s promise of Genesis 3:15 to provide him a Savior was expressed in his designating the name “**Eve**” to his wife, which is the Hebrew proper name *chawwah*, “life.”

Adam not only had faith that he and his wife would have children but also through this means God would send “the seed of the woman,” the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ to provide salvation, eternal life.

The name *chawwah*, “life” looks forward in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ who is the eternal life of God incarnate.

Adam has passed out of real spiritual death and into eternal life through faith in the Lord’s promise of a Savior in Genesis 3:15. Adam trusted in God’s promise of a Savior in Genesis 3:15 even though his circumstances were adverse and was under a curse.

Genesis 3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. (NASB95)

The fact that the Lord made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them foreshadows the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. The Lord God clothed Adam and Eve with skins and in order to provide these skins, animals must have been slain, an animal's life must have been taken, and blood must have been shed. In this manner, the Lord provided garments to cover their nakedness and shame due to their sin.

Later, in Old Testament Israel, animal sacrifices were used as a teaching aid for Israel to teach them about the future sacrifice on the cross of the Lamb of God (John 1:29). The animal had to be without spot or blemish portraying the impeccability of the human nature of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The shedding of the animal's blood portrayed the death of the impeccable human nature of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19). The killing of the innocent animal portrayed the fact that the impeccable human nature of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was our "Substitute" meaning He did in our place (Romans 5:8). So as Adam and his wife watched the Lord shed the blood of innocent animals to provide garments to clothe their nakedness, they were being taught as to the manner in which their salvation would be provided through the promise "Seed of the woman."

Adam and his wife were taught that forgiveness of sins is provided through the shedding of the animal's blood, which portrays the voluntary death of the impeccable human nature of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as our Substitute (Leviticus 17:12; cf. Hebrews 9:22; Ephesians 1:7). The garments that clothed Adam and his wife's nakedness portray the believer's salvation and the righteousness of Christ that was imputed to him the moment he trusted in Christ as his Savior (Isaiah 61:10; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Now, if you recall in Genesis 3:7, Adam and the woman provided loin coverings for themselves apart from God, which portrays human self-righteousness. But here in Genesis 3:20, the Lord is providing clothing for Adam and his wife, which was procured through the sacrifice of an innocent animal, which portrays God's perfect Son and His death on the cross as our Substitute. This taught them about grace and that they could not earn their salvation or ease their problem of guilt and sin through their own devices but rather it would have to be provided through another, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7). Adam and his wife were given a graphic and horrifying picture through the shedding of the blood of an innocent animal that their salvation and deliverance from Satan and spiritual death would come at a great price, namely, the death of God's perfect Son.

In Genesis 3:22-24, Moses records for us the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." (NASB95)

"Us" is a reference to the Trinity who held a council and acknowledged that man knew good and evil.

Adam and his wife knew good and evil in the sense that they now were able to distinguish through experience the distinction between that which is good, obedience to God and evil, disobedience to God and independence from Him, whereas prior to their Fall, they knew by experience only God's goodness.

Unlike Adam, God does not know evil through experience but rather He is aware of it because He is omniscient.

Eating from the tree of life would not have given Adam eternal life, which is received as a gift of God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone (John 3:16-18; Ephesians 2:8-9). But rather eating from the tree of life would have perpetuated the life of his physical body since the soul is created to live forever and according to Genesis 3:22, eating from this tree results in living forever.

Eating from the tree of life would have prevented the deterioration and decay of their physical bodies, which God wanted to replace with resurrection bodies. Satan wanted Adam to eat from the tree of life after eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil since that would have perpetuated Adam's fallen nature. Therefore, God employed elect angels to ensure that Adam and his wife did not eat from the tree of life.

Genesis 3:23 “Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.” 24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (NASB95)

It seems harsh and cruel of God that He expelled Adam and his wife out of the Garden of Eden but in reality, God again was demonstrating His love, His care and concern for them. If God did not immediately drive Adam and his wife out of the Garden of Eden Satan would have tempted them or they would because of their sin nature be tempted to eat from the tree of life, which would have resulted in their living perpetually in their fallen state. God was protecting them and delivering them from temptation that would have catastrophic implications for them and which He could not resolve.

The Lord expelled Adam and his wife from the Garden of Eden to prevent access to the tree of life and to teach them that God's holiness cannot tolerate sinners in His presence, which both the tree of life and the Garden were symbols of. Sinner cannot have access to a holy God unless a way has been made possible and that way would be made possible through the death of the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:18; 3:12; Hebrews 10:19-20).

The “**cherubim**” are elect angels who assigned the task of guarding the divine unapproachable presence and holiness of God, which is symbolized by the tree of life in the Garden of Eden.

In Scripture, the cherubim vindicate the divine righteousness (Exodus 26:1; 36:8) the divine mercy (Exodus 25:22; 37:9) and divine government (1 Samuel 4:4; Psalm 80:1; Ezek. 1:22). In the holy of holies in the Tabernacle in Israel, the Shekinah Glory took residence above the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant between the two cherubim who sat on either side representing the righteousness and justice of God.

The “**flaming sword, which turned in every direction to guard the tree of life**” is a symbol of God's holiness and judgment.

The perfect character or holiness of God is the excellence of the divine nature. It is the very antithesis to sin, evil, moral blemish or defilement. The Word of God devotes many passages to the holiness or righteousness of God since it is the excellency of His divine nature and because it was

attacked by Satan in eternity past and continues to be attacked throughout human history, which is the appeal trial of Satan.

Holiness is used often to describe the Person of God (Psalm 97:12). The title “**His Holy Name**” refers to the perfect character of the Person of God. This absolute perfection of God’s character is celebrated throughout the Scriptures (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). God swears by the perfect character of His person (Psalm 89:35) because that is a complete expression of Himself than anything else. The holiness or perfect character of God is the perfection of the glory of God and every Person of the Trinity and is the rule of all His actions and relationships with both men and angels. The Lord Jesus Christ revealed the holiness or character of God during His First Advent (John 1:18)

The absolute perfection of God’s character was revealed perfectly at the Cross when the impeccable humanity nature of Christ received the imputation of every sin in human history-past, present and future as our Substitute and was judged for those sins by being separated in His perfect humanity from the Father for those last 3 hours on the Cross (Matthew 27:46).

The holiness of God was manifested at the Cross where the righteousness of God demanded that the sins of both mankind and angels be judged and the justice of God judged the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union as a substitute for these moral rational creatures of His.

So God’s abhorrence and intolerance of sin was manifested through the judgment of His impeccable Son. The love of God was also manifested at the Cross through the Father’s judgment of His as a Substitute for all mankind (Romans 5:6-8). While God’s holiness demanded the judgment of sin, the holiness of God provided a substitutionary sacrifice for all mankind. God’s holiness expresses His purity of His character or moral perfection and excellence.

Genesis 3:24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (NASB95)

The flaming sword symbolized to Adam and his wife and to their children that the absolute and innate holiness or perfect character of God can have nothing to do with sin or sinners unless a perfect sacrifice is provided to satisfy the perfect standards of God’s holiness.

God is totally separate from sin and sinners unless a way can be found to constitute them holy and that way has been provided based upon the merits of the impeccable Person and Finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross (1 John 2:12).

The flaming sword protecting access to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden is a symbol of God’s holiness indicating that God does not and will not, nor will He ever in the future tolerate sin unless can be found to constitute them holy. The sword is always used of war in the Bible, thus the flaming sword is a symbol that God’s holiness requires Him to be at war with sin and sinners.

God has made a peace treaty with the entire human race through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. The voluntary substitutionary death of the impeccable human nature of Jesus Christ has satisfied the demands of God’s holiness that sinners and sin be judged by receiving the imputation of every sin in human history-past, present and future and suffering death as the Substitute for sinners.

The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden symbolizes the total depravity of the human race, of which Adam is the federal head. It denotes that the entire human race, which Adam is the federal head, are under real spiritual death meaning that they have no capacity to have fellowship with God and be in His presence. The cherubim and the flaming sword protecting the presence and holiness of God was stationed in the east where the sun rises because the sun is used in Scripture for the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who would satisfy the demands of God's holiness that sinners be judged by dying for sin and in the place of sinners (John 1:9; Mal 4:2)

Various Interpretations of 1 Timothy 2:15

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint. (NASB95)

This verse is one of the most difficult verses in the Bible to interpret and as a result has produced several different interpretations.

The NET has the following comment on this, they write, "This verse is notoriously difficult to interpret, though there is general agreement about one point: Verse 15 is intended to lessen the impact of vv. 13–14. There are several interpretive possibilities here, though the first three can be readily dismissed (cf. D. Moo, '1 Timothy 2:11–15: Meaning and Significance,' TJ 1 [1980]: 70-73). (1) Christian women will be saved, but only if they bear children. This view is entirely unlikely for it lays a condition on Christian women that goes beyond grace, is unsupported elsewhere in scripture, and is explicitly against Paul's and Jesus' teaching on both marriage and salvation (cf. Matt 19:12; 1 Cor 7:8–9, 26–27, 34–35; 1 Tim 5:3–10). (2) Despite the curse, Christian women will be kept safe when bearing children. This view also is unlikely, both because it has little to do with the context and because it is not true to life (especially life in the ancient world with its high infant mortality rate). (3) Despite the sin of Eve and the results to her progeny, she would be saved through the childbirth - that is, through the birth of the Messiah, as promised in the protevangelium (Gen 3:15). This view sees the singular 'she' as referring first to Eve and then to all women (note the change from singular to plural in this verse). Further, it works well in the context. However, there are several problems with it: [a] The future tense (σωθήσεται, *sōthēsētai*) is unnatural if referring to the protevangelium or even to the historical fact of the Messiah's birth; [b] that only women are singled out as recipients of salvation seems odd since the birth of the Messiah was necessary for the salvation of both women and men; [c] as ingenious as this view is, its very ingenuity is its downfall, for it is overly subtle; and [d] the term τεκνογονία (*teknogonia*) refers to the process of childbirth rather than the product. And since it is the person of the Messiah (the product of the birth) that saves us, the term is unlikely to be used in the sense given it by those who hold this view. There are three other views that have greater plausibility: (4) This may be a somewhat veiled reference to the curse of Gen 3:16 in order to clarify that though the woman led the man into transgression (v. 14b), she will be saved spiritually despite this physical reminder of her sin. The phrase is literally 'through childbearing,' but this does not necessarily denote means or instrument here. Instead it may show attendant circumstance (probably with a concessive force): 'with, though accompanied by' (cf. BDAG 224 s.v. δια A.3.c; Rom 2:27; 2 Cor 2:4; 1 Tim 4:14). (5) 'It is not through active teaching and ruling activities that Christian women will be saved, but through faithfulness to their proper role, exemplified in motherhood' (Moo, 71). In this view τεκνογονία is seen as a synecdoche in which child-rearing and other activities of motherhood are involved. Thus, one evidence (though clearly not an essential evidence) of a woman's salvation may be seen in her decision to function in this role. (6) The verse may point to some sort of proverbial expression now lost, in which 'saved' means 'delivered'

and in which this deliverance was from some of the devastating effects of the role reversal that took place in Eden. The idea of childbearing, then, is a metonymy of part for the whole that encompasses the woman's submission again to the leadership of the man, though it has no specific soteriological import (but it certainly would have to do with the outworking of redemption)."

Moo presents a list of these various interpretations: (1) Despite the judgment pronounced upon woman (Gen 3:16), Christian women will be safely preserved through the experience of childbirth. (2) Christian women will experience salvation even though they must bear children (Gen 3:16). (3) By observing her proper role (τεκνογονία) and maintaining Christian virtues, the woman will be kept from the error just mentioned (lording it over the husband and being 'deceived'). (4) Christian women are saved through good works, figuratively represented by τεκνογονία. (5) Despite the disastrous results of Eve's deception, Christian women will be saved through the childbirth, the coming of the Messiah, just as was promised in the protoevangelium (Gen 3:15). (6) It is not through active teaching and ruling activities that Christian women will be saved, but through faithfulness to their proper role, exemplified in motherhood.¹⁰²

He selects the sixth option and gives his explanation, he writes "Options two, three and four can be quickly eliminated because they fail to do justice to the sense of the words: two gives an unnatural meaning to διὰ; three to σώζω and four to τεκνογονία. Option one can probably be excluded also; σώζω consistently indicates salvation from sin in Paul, and the conditional clause is hard to explain in this reading. It is more difficult to decide between five and six. In favor of the former is the context of Genesis 3, clearly in Paul's mind in v 14, the natural meaning given σώζω and διὰ and the article with τεκνογονία. Despite this, however, option six should probably be preferred. While τεκνογονία could possibly denote the birth of Christ, it is certainly not the most natural explanation; and Paul uses the verbal form of this word in 1 Tim 5:14 to mean the rearing of children. The article need not be specifying, but may be generic. Positively, the view that regards v 15 as a specification of the role through which women experience salvation admirably suits the context of vv 9–14, where the issue is obviously the proper sphere of women's activities. Moreover, such an interpretation finds support in the larger context for a frequently recurring motif in the Pastoral Epistles is the need for Christian women to devote themselves to the care of homes and the raising of children (1 Tim 5:9–10, 5:14; Titus 3:4–5). Such advice was clearly needed as an antidote to the false teachers, who counseled abstention from marriage (1 Tim 4:3) and generally, it seems, sought to denigrate those virtues and activities which Paul regarded as fitting for Christian women. Finally, this view satisfies the linguistic evidence better than any other. σώζω retains its natural Pauline sense, deliverance from sin and its condemning power, perhaps especially here in the ultimate, eschatological sense. διὰ will indicate not the ultimate cause, but the efficient cause: τεκνογονία is one of those 'good works' (v 10) through which the Christian woman preserves her place in the salvific scheme, in contrast to those women who have hearkened to the false teaching, and who have 'turned away to follow Satan' (1 Tim 5:13). Similarly, Paul admonishes Timothy in 4:16 to watch his life and doctrine closely and to persevere in them, 'because if you do, you will save (σώσεις) both yourself and your hearers.' A serious difficulty with this view still has to be faced, however. Does v 15 imply that women experience ultimate salvation only insofar as they beget children? Clearly such a conclusion is incompatible with clear Pauline teaching, but an explanation can be found which blunts the force of this objection. Τεκνογονία, which may indicate child-rearing as well as child-bearing, may represent, by synecdoche, the general scope of activities in which Christian women should be involved. That this is a legitimate interpretation is suggested by the text in 1 Tim 5:14, in which Paul expresses his wish that young women 'marry' and 'beget children' (τεκνογονοῦν) where,

¹⁰² 1 Timothy 2:11-15: Meaning and Significance; Trinity Journal volume 1, number 1, Spring 1980, page 71

again, it can hardly be the case that Paul wants all young women to marry. Finally, to remove any possibility of an *ex opera operato* understanding, Paul adds the condition that women must also maintain essential Christian virtues; legitimate activities, by themselves, are insufficient.”¹⁰³

The first view mentioned by Moo is supported by Moffat’s translation and the NASB as well as Simpson, Ironside and Moule.¹⁰⁴ But this can be rejected because we know through experience that Christian women whether faithful or unfaithful to the Lord in life, have died in childbirth.

The second view mentioned by Moo was taught by E.F. Scott.¹⁰⁵ This view can be rejected because Christian women have experienced their salvation even though they were childless. Bowman writes, “The implication here is that childbearing is not a consequence of the Fall and thus inherently sinful (contra the false teachers, 1 Tim 4:3); rather it is a worthy calling.

Ann Bowman writes that this view has three problems. (1) It requires a rare use of *διά* with the genitive: ‘even though,’ rather than either instrumentality or attendant circumstance. (2) Contextually the focus of the passage is not on bearing children but on the proper role of women in the worship assembly. (3) This view limits the meaning of *τεκνογονία* to the act of birth (see the discussion below on the meaning of *τεκνογονία*).”¹⁰⁶

The third view was put forth by Jebb.¹⁰⁷ This view can be rejected because the text simply does not support this interpretation. Furthermore, *sozo* is referring to salvation in a spiritual sense as indicated by the conditional clause that follows it.

The fourth view can be rejected because the Scriptures teach that Christian women are not saved by good works but by faith alone in Christ alone.

Moo rejects the fifth view, which is the view of this author and chooses the view that Christian women will be saved through faithfulness to their proper role, exemplified in motherhood. This view is also supported by the NET Bible, Bowman, Liftin, Kelly, Spicq, Chrysostom, Gealy, Hendriksen, Huther, Jeremias, Parry, Ribberbos, Robertson, Ward, Weiss and Vine. However, the sixth interpretation best fits the context rather than the fifth view. The fifth view is supported by Knight, Mounce, Ellicott, Lock, von Sodon, Kent and Liddon.

The interpretation that Christian women will be saved by childbearing or in other words that they will be saved by adhering to their ordained role can be rejected since it ignores the context. It ignores the progression of Paul’s argument, which culminates with his statement in verse 15. Also, Christian women are not saved from sin through the bearing of children but rather through the birth of Christ, who provided salvation. Again, in verse 15 Paul is using the Rabbinic method of summary notation and is alluding to Genesis 3:15. Furthermore, the meaning of the verb *sozo*, which refers to deliverance from sin demands that the prepositional phrase *διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας* refers to the act of giving birth with respect to a spiritual deliverance since childbearing does not bring about spiritual deliverance but only

¹⁰³ Ibid., pages 71-73

¹⁰⁴ C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, second edition; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959; 56; H. A. Ironside, *Addresses on the First and Second Epistles of Timothy* (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1947; 72; E. K. Simpson, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954; 24

¹⁰⁵ *The Pastoral Epistles*; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936; page 28

¹⁰⁶ *Bibliotheca Sacra*, volume 149, number 594, April 1992; page 207

¹⁰⁷ S. Jebb, “A Suggested Interpretation of 1 Ti 2:15,” *Expository Times* 81 (1969–70): 221-22; Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 222-23

Christ. Thus, this prepositional phrase must refer to the birth of Christ. If there was no incarnation, there would be no salvation.

To interpret 1 Timothy 2:15 as referring to salvation in a spiritual sense through the act of Mary giving birth of the Messiah whose death on the cross would provide salvation for the entire human race makes the most sense because it would fit with the flow of Paul's argument. Those who reject this view greatly diminish the significance of this fact.

First of all, in verse 13, Paul's presents the first reason for his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12 teaching that Adam was formed first and then Eve. This is a summary statement alluding to Genesis 2 when the Lord formed Adam's physical body from the dust of the ground and Eve's from Adam's biological life. Genesis 2 teaches that Eve was designed to be a corresponding helpmate for Adam, which implies she had no authority over Adam but vice versa.

Then, in verse 14, to present a second reason for his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12, Paul teaches that Adam was not deceived but rather because Eve was thoroughly and completely deceived by the devil, she fell into transgression. She fell into transgression because she assumed the leadership role of Adam and he failed to function in his role. This too is a summary statement but alluding to Genesis 3, which gives the account of the fall. Genesis 3:16 presented the consequences of Eve's disobedience in that Adam would rule over her and she would bring forth children in pain.

Now, verse 15 is alluding to the promise of a Savior in Genesis 3:15. 1 Timothy 2:15 is therefore building on the context of Genesis 3. In 1 Timothy 2:13-15, Paul is moving through the story in Genesis of Adam and Eve. In 1 Timothy 2:13 he is alluding to Genesis 2:4-25. Then in 1 Timothy 2:14, he is alluding to Genesis 3:1-7. Now, in 1 Timothy 2:15, he is referring to Genesis 3:15, which teaches that one of Eve's descendants would defeat Satan who deceived her. Thus, she and her progeny the human race would be delivered from sin and Satan through one of her descendants. 1 Timothy 2:15 is a summary statement alluding to Genesis 3:15.

Mounce writes, "Although Eve fell into transgression and this has had its effects on women throughout the centuries, women will still be saved through the birth of Jesus and the salvation that He would provide through His death and resurrection."¹⁰⁸

Knight writes, "By fulfilling her role, difficult as it may be as a result of sin (Genesis 3:16), she gives birth to the Messiah and thereby 'she' brings salvation into the world."¹⁰⁹

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the verb *sozo* is referring to salvation in a spiritual sense. Specifically, it speaks of Christian women experiencing their salvation as indicated by the conditional clause that follows. The conditional clause teaches how this salvation provided by the Messiah applies to the Ephesian women. They were saved through faith alone in Christ alone but the conditional clause teaches them how to continue to experience this salvation and its benefits.

The faith mentioned in the conditional clause does not speak of the moment of conversion since the Ephesian women are already saved but rather it speaks of their faith after conversion, which will enable them to experience their salvation and its benefits. If they continue to live by faith in the Word of God,

¹⁰⁸ Mounce page 145

¹⁰⁹ Knight, page 146

they will experience their salvation. The subject of *sozo* is not only the historical Eve but also refers to Christian women who have appropriated the salvation provided by the Messiah at the moment of conversion when they exercised faith in Jesus Christ.

This interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15 is also supported by the articular construction of *teknogonia*, which means “the childbirth” and not “childbearing.” Some consider the article generic and thus rendering the word “the bearing of children.” Some like Guthrie and Bernard consider this construction as an extremely obscure way of referring to the birth of Christ. However, this can be answered by the fact that if one follows how he is using Genesis here and the progression of his argument, and that he is using the Rabbinic method of summary citation, it is not obscure but makes perfect sense.

Schreiner echoes Guthrie and Bernard writing “Mary was not saved by virtue of giving birth to Jesus, nor does Paul elsewhere say that salvation is through the incarnation. The noun *teknogonia* emphasizes the actual giving birth to a child, not the result or effect of childbirth. Those who posit a reference to Jesus’ birth have subtly introduced the notion that salvation is secured as a result of giving birth to him, whereas the text speaks not of the result of birth but the actual birthing process.”¹¹⁰

In response to this statement, it is true that the noun *teknogonia* refers to the act of giving birth. However, this does not refute the interpretation that Eve and the Ephesian women are delivered in a spiritual sense from the birth of Christ since “Paul never says that salvation is by the Incarnation of by Mary.”¹¹¹

The apostle is not saying that the Ephesian women are saved by the birth of Christ. Rather, he is saying that they can experience their deliverance from sin and Satan that was provided by the Messiah, who Mary, a descendant of Eve, gave birth to, by appropriating this deliverance through faith in the Word of God.

This noun refers specifically to the act of Mary giving birth to the Messiah and not the birth itself.¹¹² It speaks of the act of Mary giving birth to the Messiah through whom deliverance from sin and Satan would be provided. This deliverance is experienced by the Christian women in Ephesus when they operate in faith in the Word of God resulting in loving one’s fellow Christian as well as experiencing the holiness of God, i.e. their sanctification.

Therefore, it is clear that in 1 Timothy 2:11-15, Paul is alluding to Genesis 2 and 3 and the creation of Adam and Eve and their fall and the consequences of that fall as well as the promise of the Messiah who provide deliverance from the consequences of that fall. He is teaching that there is an analogy or typological correspondence between Eve and the Ephesian women. This analogy is designed to protect the Ephesian women from falling into the same error as Eve. They would experience deliverance from sin and Satan by continuing to appropriate this deliverance by faith in the Word of God.

It is very important that we understand that the Scriptures teach that deliverance from sin and Satan is received in a positional sense at conversion and guarantees this deliverance permanently at the resurrection of the church. However, it is experienced by the Christian through faith in the Word of God.

¹¹⁰ Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15; page 148; Edited by Andreas J. Köstenberger; Thomas R. Schreiner, and H. Scott Baldwin; Baker Books; Grand Rapids, Michigan

¹¹¹ Mounce, page 145

¹¹² Mounce, page 145

This faith results in the Christian operating in God's love towards all men and especially other believers. It also results in experiencing the holiness of God, which speaks of experiencing sanctification that is accompanied by self-control.

Mounce writes, "Throughout the paragraph Paul has been shifting back and forth between the Ephesian women and Eve in the Garden, between the plural and the singular and between present, past and future tenses. Although this confusing at first, once the logic of Paul's argument is seen, the shifts make good sense. He begins addressing the men and women (plural; present tense) in Ephesus and how they are to pray (v. 8) and dress (verses 9-10). He then states a general principle, shifting into the singular for woman and man (verses 11-12). In order to give this principle scriptural backing, Paul shifts to talking about the singular Adam and Eve (verses 13-14); aorist tense). Finally in order that his last statement not be misunderstood, he shifts back to the present tense in making the necessary qualification (verse 15). But this final shift takes place in two steps. In the first half of the verse Paul is discussing the singular Eve (σωθήσεται, 'she will be saved'; future tense, from the time perspective of Eve). However he is discussing Eve not in isolation but as the representative of the Ephesian women. Therefore, Paul shifts to the plural (present tense) in the following clause ἐὰν μείνωσιν, 'if they remain,' in order to make this clear. Paul is also moving through the story in Genesis, from human creation (2:4-25) to Eve's and Adam's sin (3:1-7) and then to their promised salvation (3:15). Because the analogy between Eve and the Ephesian women is complex, the grammar of the argument becomes complex; but Paul is saying that there is an analogy or typological connection between Eve and the Ephesian women."¹¹³

Some object to the interpretation that Paul is referring to the birth of Christ as a fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 because only women are singled out as recipients of salvation and the birth of the Messiah was necessary for the salvation of both women and men. This can be refuted by the fact that Paul in context is not addressing the conduct of men but women. He is alluding to the fall of Eve and her relationship to the Christian women in Ephesus and throughout history who are her progeny.

Christian Women Will Be Delivered by Giving Birth to A Child

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint. (NASB95)

"**But women will be preserved through the bearing of children**" is composed of the conjunction *de* (δέ), "**but**" and the third person singular future passive indicative form of the verb *sozo* (σώζω), "**will be preserved**" and the preposition *dia* (διά), "**through**" and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *teknogonia* (τεκνογονία), "**the bearing of children**."

The conjunction *de* is used by Paul here in 1 Timothy 2:15 in an adversative sense meaning it is introducing a statement that stands in contrast with the adversative clause in verse 14, which teaches that because Eve was thoroughly and completely deceived, she entered into transgression. This transgression refers of course to her disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

As we noted earlier, in 1 Timothy 2:13 and 14, Paul is using a common rabbinic method of referring to the Old Testament, a method known as summary citation. That is, he used the summary statement in 1

¹¹³ Mounce, page 143

Timothy 2:13 to point the reader to Genesis 2. Specifically, he is referring to Genesis 2:7, 18 and 21. In 1 Timothy 2:14 he referred back to Genesis 3. Specifically, he is alluding to Genesis 3:16. Here in 1 Timothy 2:15 he is again alluding to Genesis 3 as well and in particular Genesis 3:15, which records the promise of the Messiah through one of Eve's descendants.

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 2:14 and 15, Paul does not cite Genesis 3:15-16 explicitly to support his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12. Rather, he alludes to Eve's being deceived which led to the Lord decreeing that Adam would rule over her and that she would give birth to children in pain as well as the promise of a deliverer from sin and Satan.

This parallels his use of Genesis 2 in which he does not explicitly mention Genesis 2:7 and 21, which when compared reveal that Adam was formed first and then Eve. He also does not explicitly mention Genesis 2:18, which reveals that Eve was designed to be a helpmate for Adam. Paul is simply presupposing that his readers know the events recorded in Genesis 2 and 3 and does not feel the need to mention these verses explicitly. Thus, in verse 13, Paul cites that Adam was formed first and then Eve (Genesis 2:7, 21), which presupposes that his readers know that this was because Eve was to be a helpmate for Adam (Genesis 2:18).

In verse 14, he teaches that Adam was not deceived but that Eve was totally deceived and thus entered into transgressing the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This presupposes that his readers know that this resulted in the Lord issuing the judgment that Adam would rule over her because she was deceived into disobeying His prohibition. So verses 13 and 14 are presenting two reasons why Christian women must not teach men the Word of God or exercise authority over them, namely, creation and the fall.

Now, here in verse 15, Paul is again employing this common rabbinic method called summary citation in the sense that he is alluding to Genesis 3:15. This presupposes that his readers know this verse. In verse 14, he alluded to one of the consequences, namely that her husband would rule over her and this has been the case for all women throughout the centuries. In verse 15, the apostle is alluding to another consequence of her sin that is recorded in Genesis 3:16, namely that the Lord would greatly multiply her pain in childbirth and in pain she would bring forth children. Also, this passage is alluding to the promise in Genesis 3:15 that Eve would be delivered from sin and Satan through one of her descendants.

In verse 15, the conjunction *de* introduces the statement that teaches that Christian women will be delivered in a spiritual sense through the act of Mary giving birth to the Messiah, if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control. This statement presupposes that Paul's readers know Genesis 3:15-16 and that it taught that Eve and her female progeny would bring forth children in pain but would be delivered from sin and Satan through the act of one of Eve's descendants giving birth to the Messiah who would provide this deliverance.

Therefore, the conjunction *de* is marking a contrast between with the adversative clause in verse 14. A comparison of verse 14 with verse 15 indicates that the contrast is between Eve and her female progeny in bondage to the consequences of Eve's sin with that of their being delivered from sin and Satan through the act of giving birth to a child who would provide them this deliverance through His death and resurrection.

Furthermore, Paul's use of the conjunction *de* rather than the stronger *alla* indicates that his statement in verse 15 is continuing his thought from verses 13-14 that are alluding to Genesis 2 and 3. It indicates that his statement in verse 15 is continuing his argument from Genesis that supports his command in verse 11 and prohibition in verse 12. We will translate *de*, "**however**."

The verb *sozo* has the basic meaning of rescuing or delivering someone one from great peril. Additional nuances include to protect, keep alive, preserve life, deliver, heal, and be made whole.

The verb *sozo* is found in the writings of Homer in the eighth century B.C. and was used in the sense of deliverance from danger, whether from enemies or the elements of weather. The word also conveys the idea of preservation from them, which the Greek mystery religions attributed to the gods.

In the Septuagint, the verb *sozo* translates 23 different Hebrew terms where it was used to express in the Old Testament the concept of deliverance from external and internal distress, captivity and enemies. Also, the word was used to express the results of this deliverance, namely, peace, relief, liberty, rest and safety.

Sozo often denotes an idea very similar to the Hebrew concept of *shalom*, "peace, unity, completeness, happiness." In the Septuagint, *shalom* is rendered by forms of the *sozo* word group 68 times. *Sozo* was used of God delivering people spiritually as well as in a physical from one's enemies or danger.

The verb is used extensively in the Greek New Testament. The verb *sozo* and its cognate noun *soteria* has a broad range of meanings and thus strict attention to the context is critical in arriving at a correct and accurate translation of the word.

In the Greek New Testament, *soteria* can mean deliverance in a "temporal" sense from one's enemies or adverse circumstances (Luke 1:71; Acts 7:25; Hebrews 11:7; Revelation 12:10; 19:1) and can refer to physical health and well-being (Acts 27:34).

Sozo can also refer to the acts of delivering someone in a temporal sense from their enemies or adverse circumstances (Matthew 8:25; 14:30; 27:42; Luke 23:35, 37; 23:39; John 12:27) and it too can refer to physical health and well-being (Matthew 9:21-22; Mark 5:23, 28; 6:56; 10:52; 15:30; Luke 8:36, 48, 50; 18:42).

The verb *sozo* is used of the act of God delivering the sinner from sin, Satan, his cosmic system and eternal condemnation, the moment they exercise faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior (John 3:17; 5:34; Acts 2:21; 16:30-31). The word is also used in the Greek New Testament of the believer's deliverance from eternal condemnation. It is also used of the believer's deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the verb *sozo* refers to the act of the Lord Jesus Christ delivering Eve and Christian women from personal sin, the sin nature, Satan, his cosmic system, condemnation from the Law, spiritual and physical death and eternal condemnation through His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross and resurrection.

The verb *sozo* is referring to salvation in a spiritual sense. Specifically, it speaks of Christian women experiencing their salvation as indicated by the conditional clause that follows. The conditional clause teaches how this salvation provided by the Messiah applies to the Ephesian women. They were saved through faith alone in Christ alone but the conditional clause teaches them how to continue to experience this salvation and its benefits.

The faith mentioned in the conditional clause does not speak of the moment of conversion since the Ephesian women are already saved but rather it speaks of their faith after conversion, which will enable them to continue to experience their salvation and its benefits. If they continue to live by faith in the Word of God, they will experience their salvation.

The subject of *sozo* is not only the historical Eve but also refers to Christian women who have appropriated the salvation provided by the Messiah at the moment of conversion when they exercised faith in Jesus Christ. The third person singular form refers to Eve and not only her but also Christian women. Thus, it speaks of Eve as the representative of Christian women.

The future tense of the verb is a predictive future indicating that something will take place or come to pass. It summarizes the action that it will take place. The predictive future of *sozo* in 1 Timothy 2:15 indicates that from the perspective of the historical Eve, deliverance from sin and Satan will come to pass or will happen in the future for Eve's female progeny through the act of Mary, one of Eve's descendants, giving birth to the Messiah who will provide this deliverance through His death and resurrection. This deliverance is accomplished positionally at conversion, experientially through fellowship and will be perfected at the rapture.

The passive voice of the verb *sozo* means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject is Eve and Christian women. The agency is expressed by the prepositional phrase διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, which refers to the act of Mary giving birth to the Messiah who would provide salvation for all people.

Therefore, the passive voice indicates that Eve and Christian women as the subject will be delivered in a spiritual sense from sin and Satan, spiritual and physical death, condemnation from the Law and eternal condemnation through Mary giving birth to the Messiah who would provide this deliverance through His death and resurrection.

As we noted, the justified sinner's deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system is accomplished in three stages: (1) Positional (2) Experiential (3) Perfective.

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the verb *sozo* is used with reference to all three stages. Christian women are delivered in a positional sense at conversion. They experience this deliverance by exercising faith in the Spirit's teaching with regards to their union and identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. This deliverance will be perfected at the rapture of the church.

The noun *teknogonia* means "giving birth to a child" and refers to the act of giving birth to a child. Specifically, it speaks of Mary giving birth to Jesus Christ. This is indicated by the articular construction of the word which indicates that the noun refers to something that is well-known to the reader. This is also indicated by the progression of Paul's argument from Genesis.

The apostle is not saying that the Ephesian women are saved by the birth of Christ. Rather, he is saying that they can experience their deliverance from sin and Satan that was provided by the Messiah, who Mary, a descendant of Eve, gave birth to, by appropriating this deliverance through faith in the Word of God.

This noun refers specifically to the act of Mary giving birth to the Messiah and not the birth itself.¹¹⁴ It speaks of the act of Mary giving birth to the Messiah through whom deliverance from sin and Satan would be provided. This deliverance is experienced by the Christian women in Ephesus when they operate in faith in the Word of God resulting in loving one's fellow Christian as well as experiencing the holiness of God, i.e. their sanctification.

The noun *teknogonia* is the object of the preposition *dia*, which functions as a marker of means indicating the means or instrumentality by which the verbal action explicit in the verb *sozo*. This indicates that Eve and all Christian women would be delivered from sin and Satan “by means of” the act of giving birth to the Messiah who would provide this deliverance.

Deliverance from sin and Satan was provided for the entire world “by means of” the birth of Christ who would provide this deliverance through His death and resurrection. Paul is not saying that the birth of Christ itself delivered Eve and Christian women from sin and Satan. Rather, he is saying that this deliverance became possible by means of the birth of Christ who would provide this deliverance through His death and resurrection.

Christian Women Must Continue in Faith

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.” (NASB95)

“**If they continue in faith**” is composed of the conditional particle *ean* (ἐάν), “**if**” and the third person plural aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *meno* (μένω), “**they continue**” and the preposition *en* (ἐν), “**in**” and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun *pistis* (πίστις), “**faith**.”

The conditional particle *ean* is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *meno*, “**they**” to form the protasis of a fifth class conditional statement that teaches a spiritual principle that Christian women will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan that was provided by the Messiah if they continue to exercise faith in the Word of God. This results in operating in God's love for one another, and experiencing the holiness of God accompanied by self-control.

In 1 Timothy 2:15, we have a third class condition, which offers a condition the fulfillment of which is realized in the present time. Paul employs a third class conditional statement, which semantically presents a logical connection in the present time that is sometimes called a present general condition, and indicates nothing as to the fulfillment of the protasis.

¹¹⁴ Mounce, page 145

In the protasis, we have the present subjunctive form of the verb *meno*, “**they continue**” whereas in the apodosis we have the present indicative form of the verb *sozo*. Thus, this particular type of construction is known as a present general condition and is called a fifth class condition.

In 1 Timothy 2:15, we have an example of the present general condition since there is no hint of uncertainty about this event occurring, nor is it something presented as an eventuality. Paul is simply teaching spiritual principle with the fifth class condition.

The third class condition depicts what is likely to occur in the future, what could possibly occur or even what is only hypothetical and will not occur whereas the fifth class condition gives no indication about the likelihood of its fulfillment. It is neutral meaning “If A, then B.” In 1 Timothy 2:15, Paul is offering no indication about the likelihood of fulfillment. The fifth class condition expresses the spiritual principle that Christian women will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan that was provided by the Messiah if they continue to exercise faith in the Word of God. This results in operating in God’s love for one another, and experiencing the holiness of God accompanied by self-control.

The subjunctive of *chraomai*, “**uses**” is used because the subject is undefined, not because the time is future. It is undefined because Paul is communicating a principle that is true of every Christian women and is not speaking of any one specific individual Christian women.

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the relationship between the protasis and the apodosis is “cause and effect” meaning that the fulfilled protasis is the cause that will produce the effect mentioned in the apodosis. The protasis is “**if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint**” and the apodosis is “**women will be delivered by means of giving birth to a child.**”

So in 1 Timothy 2:15, Paul employs a fifth class condition in order to teach a spiritual principle that is applicable to every Christian woman. This principle teaches that Christian women will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan that was provided by the Messiah if they continue to exercise faith in the Word of God. This results in operating in God’s love for one another, and experiencing the holiness of God accompanied by self-control. We will translate *ean*, “**if.**”

The verb *meno* in 1 Timothy 2:15 means “to continue to exist in a particular state.” This indicates that Christian women will experience the deliverance from sin and Satan provided by the Messiah if they “continue to exist in the state of” exercising faith in the Word of God. Thus, the word speaks of experiencing fellowship with God since it is based upon exercising faith in the Word of God. Therefore, experiencing deliverance from sin and Satan is through experiencing fellowship with God.

The third person plural form of the verb refers to Christian women. The aorist tense is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion Christian women continuing to exercise faith in the Word of God after conversion. The active voice indicates that Christian women as the subject will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan if they fulfill the condition of staying in fellowship with God by exercising faith in the Word of God.

The subjunctive mood is employed with the conditional particle *ean* to form the protasis of a fifth class conditional statement that teaches a spiritual principle that Christian women will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan that was provided by the Messiah if they continue to exercise faith in the

Word of God. This results in operating in God's love for one another, and experiencing the holiness of God accompanied by self-control. We will translate *meno*, "**they continue.**"

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the noun *pistis* speaks of the post-conversion faith in the Word of God of Christian women. In other words, it refers to their faith in the Spirit's teaching that is revealed through the communication of the Word of God. It does not refer to saving faith or faith in Jesus Christ for eternal salvation but rather the Christian's faith in the Word of God after their conversion since in context Paul is addressing the conduct of Christian women.

Also, in context, *pistis* is used in relation to Christian women obeying the command to love their fellow believer as Christ loves, which is accomplished by exercising faith in the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God and specifically, the command to love one another as Christ loves. Only believers can have this love reproduced in them by the Spirit. Obedience to the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God to love one another as Christ loved is the direct result of the believer exercising faith in the Spirit's teaching since obedience to the commands of the Word of God are the direct result of exercising faith in the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God. The word is also used in relation to Christian women experiencing the holiness of God. Only believers can have the holiness of God reproduced in them by the Spirit. Therefore, *pistis* is referring to Christian women exercising faith in the Word of God after their conversion, which will enable them to experience deliverance from sin and Satan, which Christ provided through His death and resurrection.

The noun *pistis* is the object of the preposition *en*, which functions as a marker of a state or condition. This is indicated by the fact that the verb *meno* denotes continuing in a particular state or condition. Thus, the preposition marks exercising faith in the Word of God after conversion as the condition that Christian women must be experiencing if they are to experience deliverance from sin and Satan, which Jesus Christ provided with His death and resurrection.

Operating in God's Love Toward Others

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint." (NASB95)

"**And love**" is composed of the conjunction *kai* (καί), "**and**" which is followed by the dative feminine singular form of the noun *agape* (ἀγάπη), "**love.**"

The noun *agape* in 1 Timothy 2:15 means "love" since it refers to the love of God reproduced in the life of the Christian by the Holy Spirit when the believer exercises faith in the Word of God and specifically faith in their union and identification with Christ. It refers to Christian women obeying the Lord Jesus' command to love one another as He loves, which is the direct result of exercising faith in the Word of God (John 13:34). The word refers to God's love practiced by Christian women toward the Lord, their fellow Christian and fellow human being since this is the direct result of them exercising faith in the Word of God and in particular the command in John 13:34.

The word is the object of the preposition *en*, which is a marker of a state or condition. This indicates that Christian women will exist in the state of obeying the Lord's command to love one another as He loves as a result of exercising faith in the Word of God.

The conjunction *kai* is not only joining the concept expressed by *pistis*, “**faith**” and that which is expressed by the noun *agape*, “**love**” but also it expresses result. The word expresses two ideas that are directly related to each other in that love flows from faith. In other words, faith in the Word of God will result in the believer loving his fellow believer and all men as the Lord loves all men.

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision carries any weight – the only thing that matters is faith working through love. (NET)

Therefore, the conjunction *kai* is expressing a result meaning that exercising love for one’s fellow Christian is the direct result of exercising faith in the Word of God. We will translate the word “**resulting in.**”

Experiencing Sanctification

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.” (NASB95)

“**And sanctity**” is composed of the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” which is followed by the dative masculine singular form of the noun *hagiasmos* (ἁγιασμός), “**sanctity.**”

The conjunction *kai* is adjunctive presenting an additional thing that Christian women will experience as a result of exercising faith in the Word of God.

Hagiasmos is related to *hagios*, “**holy**” and denotes “consecration, sanctification, holiness.” It is absent in classical writings. However, the word does appear in both the canonical and apocryphal material. The lack of any precise Hebrew counterpart is clear: five texts with Hebrew originals render five different Hebrew words behind *hagiasmos*. Furthermore, at times there are variant opinions in the manuscripts as to whether *hagiasmos* is even correct (e.g. Judges 17:3; Ezekiel 22:8). In the Greek New Testament, the noun appears ten times (Romans 6:19, 22; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, 7; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:2).

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the noun *hagiasmos* refers to Christian women experiencing sanctification as a result of exercising faith in the Word of God. It refers to Christian women experiencing the holiness of God in their lives if they exercise faith in the Spirit’s teaching in the Word of God that they’ve died with Christ and have been raised with Him.

In 1 Timothy 2:15, the noun *hagiasmos* is the object of the preposition *en*, which is a marker of a state or condition. This indicates that Christian women will experience their sanctification as a result of continuing to exist in the state of exercising faith in the Word of God.

Self-Control

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.” (NASB95)

“**With self-restraint**” is composed of the preposition *meta* (μετά), “**with**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *sophrosune* (σωφροσύνη), “**self-restraint.**”

The apostle Paul applies this noun *sophrosune* to the women in the Christian community at Ephesus and means “self-control” with respect to one’s sexual desires and impulses which is the direct result of thinking in a godly fashion. It is the result of understanding and applying the Word of God and appropriating by faith one’s union and identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:11-13).

Here in 1 Timothy 2:15, Paul uses this noun *sophrosune* with reference to the women in the Christian community. It means “self-control” with respect to one’s sexual desires and impulses which is the direct result of thinking in a godly fashion. It is the result of understanding and applying the Word of God and appropriating by faith one’s union and identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:11-13).

The noun *sophrosune*, “self-control” is the object of the preposition *meta*, which functions as a marker of accompaniment indicating that Christian women will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan if they continue to exercise faith in the Word of God resulting obeying the command to love as well as experiencing sanctification “accompanied by” self-control.

1 Timothy 2:15 However, she will be delivered by means of giving birth to a child, if they continue in the state of exercising faith resulting in divine-love as well as holiness accompanied by self-control. (Author’s translation)

Qualifications That Must Be Met by Men with the Spiritual Gift of Pastor-Teacher in Order for Them to Assume the Office of Overseer

In 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, Paul discusses the qualifications of the man who aspires to the office of overseer, i.e. the gift of pastor-teacher.

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. 2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. 4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity 5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), 6 and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. 7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, 9 but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. 11 Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. 13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. 14 I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; 15 but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. 16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in

the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASB95)

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, **6** namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. **7** For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, **8** but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, **9** holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 3:1-7 contains what scholars call a "duty code" or we could call it simply a "code of conduct." This pericope corresponds and parallels the duty code in Titus 1:6-9. That they correspond to each other is indicated in that a specific introductory line appears in each passage which is **"it is necessary for the overseer to be above reproach"** (*anepilempton*, 1 Timothy 3:2), **"it is necessary for the overseer to be beyond reproach"** (*anenkleton*, Titus 1:7). In both lists, both positive and negative characteristics appear. The positive characteristics are to be manifested by the overseer and the negative ones must not.

There are fifteen qualifications listed by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and 17 in Titus 1:6-9. Many of the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 appear in Titus 1:6-9, therefore, when we don't count the duplicates we have twenty-five qualifications listed by the apostle Paul. The number twenty-five is significant in Scripture because being the square of five; the number twenty-five expresses the essence of the signification of five, i.e. grace. Of these twenty-five qualifications listed by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9, seventeen are positive and eight are negative.

J. Hampton Keathley III has an excellent comment regarding the nature of these two duty lists and the attitude the Christian must adopt towards them, he writes, "An important question that needs to be asked and answered pertains to the exact nature of these qualifications. What exactly are these qualifications? (1) They are moral qualities or qualities of high moral character. But they are more. (2) They are the marks of leadership, marks which demonstrate a man's capacity to lead others in the Christian life. (3) As those qualities that mark a man for leadership, they are primarily the marks of spiritual maturity, the marks of one who has grown in Christ and has experienced the life-changing power of the Lord through the ministry of the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Primarily they are marks of maturity. This certainly fits the context which warns against choosing a 'new convert' (1 Timothy 3:6). But by way of further definition there are three more things about these qualifications as marks of maturity that are important in grasping the nature of these qualifications. (1) They are goals and they provide us with a target, something we should all set our sights on. Since all believers should grow and mature in the Lord, these qualifications should be the goal of every believer, not just elders and deacons. These are goals we will all strive for if we mean business with Jesus Christ. In essence this should be our aim because as these marks are realized, we will also be accomplishing the other goals God has for our lives (cf. Philippians 3:12-15; cf. also 1 Timothy 1:5-6). In a context concerned with having the right goals in ministry, Paul warns Timothy about those men who wanted to be teachers, but who had strayed from the goal of 1 Timothy 1:5-6. In verse 6, the Greek word for 'straying,' *astocheo*, means 'to fail to aim carefully, and thus to miss the mark.' They were disqualified because they were aiming at the wrong goals. (2) Next, these qualifications are marks of identification and confirmation. They make the person

who possesses these qualities a marked person with the brand of Jesus Christ emblazoned across their lives. Today, the church has lost its distinctiveness because, far too often, you can't tell believers from unbelievers—and I am not talking about manner of dress. Rather, I am referring to values, priorities, pursuits, and godly character. (3) Finally, as marks of identification and confirmation, they also make the possessors of these qualities examples, patterns to follow. They demonstrate the reality of Christ in our lives which enables us to be influential in the right way. In keeping with these thoughts, especially the concept that these qualities are targets we should all set our sights on, let's look at 1 Timothy 3:1 and the phrase, 'aspire to the office of overseer.'.... If a man is honest about his life on the inside, when he reads these qualifications his response may be, "who can ever truly be qualified? Who can completely fulfill all these qualifications?" And these kinds of feelings will often cause a man to shrink back from what could be God's will when he very well may be qualified. The principle is simply this: No one is perfect. No one, other than the Lord Jesus, ever hits the direct center of the bull's eye. In fact, I am convinced no one ever really gets close enough to hit the bull's eye. You see, one of the most fundamental principles of Scripture is that we all fall short of God's glory and perfection. While godly maturity and Christlikeness should be the goal or target of every believer and while one of the goals of every ministry and its leadership should be to bring its people into higher and higher stages of godly maturity (cf. Colossians 1:28), still, no matter how mature or how godly one becomes, none of us even comes close to perfection. Do you remember David's plea in Psalm 143:3? David, a man after God's own heart and a leader of God's people, when praying for God's help said: 'And do not enter into judgment with Thy servant, For in Thy sight no man living is righteous.' Paul also brought out this truth in Philippians 3:10-16. The goal, indeed, the mark we are all to pursue as did Paul is spiritual maturity, being conformed to the character of the Lord Jesus, but no matter how much we have attained that goal, there will always be plenty of room and need for more growth and change. No person has ever attained full maturity except the Lord Jesus Himself! So, what does this truth and fact mean – the fact that no man is perfect or fully measures up all the time? (1) It means there will always be room for improvement and growth in the qualities mentioned in these passages. Being "above reproach" is not a demand for perfection before selection. If that were so, no man would ever be qualified. (2) However, it teaches us that being above reproach in relation to these qualities means that a man's life-style is such that, generally speaking, no one can legitimately accuse him of conduct which is unbefitting a mature believer. (3) It means that these qualities should exist in a man's life to such a degree that they stand out as prominent and consistent characteristics. They are clearly distinguishable, but there will be room for growth and times when he may fall short. (4) It means that, because none of us is perfect, we should not expect our leaders to walk on water. They all have feet of clay. (5) However, being above reproach does mean we should look for those men who are mature and examples of Christlikeness, and we should expect them to continue to grow."¹¹⁵

The list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 indicate that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher had to demonstrate that he possessed these qualifications must stand out as prominent and consistent in his life before he can be assigned to oversee a local assembly. In other words, even though he had the gift of pastor-teacher, he was not promoted until these characteristics were prominent and consistently being manifested in his life. This is the reason for Peter's statement in 1 Peter 5:5-6 where in the context addressing pastors, he teaches the younger men with the gift to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God in order that He might promote them at the proper time.

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of

¹¹⁵ Qualifications for the Evaluation of Elders and Deacons, pages 1-4; Bible Studies Press, 1996; www.bible.org

God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. 5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 3 is a continuation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in which Paul prohibited Christian women from assuming a leadership role in the body of Christ and gave his reasons for this prohibition. Now, in chapter 3 he continues his discussion regarding the qualifications for those in leadership positions in the body of Christ, namely those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, which is referred to by the term “overseer” and leadership, which is referred to by the term “deacon.” This two-fold aspect of church leadership began with the early first century apostolic church, which is indicated by Acts 6. This passage reveals that there was a group that taught, namely the apostles and then those who were designated as deacons who did not teach but helped the apostles administrate the church so that they could be occupied with the ministry of the Word and prayer.

Acts 6 records a crisis that arose in the early days of the church during the 1st century A.D. The apostles dealt with this crisis by exercising their delegated authority by creating the office of deacon. Remember the Lord delegated authority to the apostles (Matthew 16:17-19).

The Lord gave the apostles authority and in Acts 6 we see the apostles exercising this delegated authority that they received from the Lord. Out of this crisis arose the office of deacon.

Acts 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. (NASB95)

“**Hellenistic Jews**” refer to Greek speaking Jews, who could not speak the native Aramaic language and were descendants of those Jews dispersed during the Babylonian captivity and were immersed in the Greek culture, including language, of the countries in which they were born in the dispersion and were considered inferior by the Hebrews, or Palestinian Jews, who were the majority in the church.

“**Native Hebrews**” refers to Aramaic-speaking Jews who lived in Israel.

Acts 6:2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.” (NASB95)

“**Select**” is the second person plural aorist middle imperative form of the compound verb *episkeptomai*, which denotes choosing or selecting someone for a position of service in the local church on the basis of having investigated them carefully, thus the word means, “to select carefully, to choose after careful investigation.”

The deacons were men elected by their fellow believers. This election gave a precedent for the office of deacon, which is mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and Philippians 1:1.

The prepositional phrase “**from among**” is important in that this is the first law of Christian service meaning that those employed in serving the church should be members of the church. This condemns the practice of placing unbelievers in positions of administration in the local assembly.

“**Good reputation**” indicates that a deacon must be respected by and have credibility with those he serves.

“**Full of the Spirit and of wisdom**” contains the figure of speech called hendiadys and is composed of the accusative masculine plural form of the adjective *pleres*, “**full**” and the genitive (of means) neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, “**of the Spirit**” and the conjunction *kai*, “**and**” and the genitive (of product) neuter singular form of the noun *sophia*, “**of wisdom**.”

The adjective *pleres* in Acts 6:3 does not mean “full” in the literal sense but rather is figurative in meaning describing someone who is “totally and completely under the influence of” God the Holy Spirit. The believer is influenced by means of the Spirit when he makes it a habit of obeying the Holy Spirit’s voice, whose voice is heard through the communication of the Word of God.

The noun *pneuma* in Acts 6:3 does “not” refer to the Person of the Holy Spirit but rather it refers to the wisdom that the Spirit imparts to the believer who obeys His voice, whose voice is heard through the communication of the Word of God.

The anarthrous (without the article) construction emphasizes the quality of the noun *pneuma*, thus emphasizing an operation (producing wisdom in the believer) of the Spirit here rather than His personality.

The noun *pneuma* in Acts 6:3 is a genitive of means indicating a deacon must be totally and completely influenced “by means of” the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author’s translation)

The noun *sophia* in Acts 6:3 means, “wisdom” that is acquired from obeying the voice of the Spirit, whose voice is heard through the communication of the Word of God. It is a genitive of product indicating that being totally and completely influenced by means of the Spirit “produces” wisdom in the believer.

Therefore, we could translate the expression *plereis pneumatōs kai sophias*, “totally and completely influenced by means of the Spirit, who produces wisdom.”

This expression contains the figure of hendiadys, which takes place when two nouns are used to express one idea or concept and it literally means “one by means of two.” This figure of speech takes place when the author uses two words but only one idea is intended. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns, and are always joined together by the conjunction “and.” The two nouns

are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic.

Here in Acts 6:3 the nouns *pneuma* and *sophia* are both in the genitive case, and are separated by the conjunction *kai*, “and” therefore, if we take into account the figure of hendiadys we could translate this expression *plereis pneumatos kai sophias*, “totally and completely influenced by means of the Spirit, yes-by means of the Spirit who produces wisdom.”

Acts 6:3 “Therefore, brethren, carefully select from among you seven men of good reputation, totally and completely influenced by means of the Spirit, yes, by means of the Spirit, who produces wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.” (Author’s translation)

Acts 6:4 “But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. (NASB95)

The names of these men elected by the congregation to be deacons are all Greek, thus clearly indicating that they were Greek-speaking Jews. This is significant because the majority in the congregation were Aramaic speaking rather than Hellenistic or Greek-speaking Jews. This demonstrates the Holy Spirit’s work in the lives of these believers. The deacons were all chosen out of a minority group. They would be in charge of the distribution of food to the entire church including the Hebrew speaking Jews, thus no possible complaint could be lodged by the Greek-speaking Jews for they were now in charge. Language was not a barrier in the early church.

Acts 6:6 And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. 7 The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith. (NASB95)

The office of deacon came into existence as a result of a need. The twelve apostles were administering the “helps” ministry. They were engaged in an essential ministry, but it was taking them away from their primary responsibility, namely, the ministry of the Word. From this came the origin of the office. The apostles brought the need before the church. They pointed out that an undesirable situation had arisen. They gave them a directive to select seven men to cover this ministry. This, they noted, would free them to devote themselves to praying, studying, and teaching. They outlined the qualifications the seven deacons should possess. The church responded to the leadership of the apostles. They saw the spiritual issue at stake and responded immediately. They sought out men who fulfilled the qualifications. They picked seven men who were Greek speaking Jews to diffuse the complaint of the Greek-speaking believers. They then brought the seven to the twelve for final approval. The seven were then ordained and the result is stated in verse 7.

1 Timothy 3 can be divided into five sections: (1) Commendation of the Overseer (verse 1). (2) Qualifications of the Overseer (verses 3-7). (3) Qualifications of the Deacon (verses 8-13). (4) Paul’s Purpose of Pointing Out These Qualifications (verses 14-15). (5) Poem About the Incarnation that Supports the Uniqueness of Christianity (verse 16).

This chapter is addressing the situation in Ephesus at the time of writing, which Paul describes in chapter 1, which reveals that certain pastors in Ephesus were teaching false doctrine as a result of adhering to the teaching of the Judaizers. Consequently, these pastors were occupied with Jewish myths which were the result of misinterpreting the genealogies of Genesis. They were misapplying the Law, which was hindering the spiritual growth of the Ephesian church.

Mounce commenting on this situation with respect to 1 Timothy 3, writes, “Almost every quality Paul specifies here has its negative counterpart in the Ephesian opponents. They are bringing the church into disrepute, so at the head of the list Paul says that a church leader must be above reproach. They are teaching only for financial gain; Paul says that an overseer must not be greedy or a lover of money. They are promiscuous; Paul says the overseer must be a ‘one-woman’ man. Once a full picture of the opponents is developed, chapter 3 becomes one of the strongest arguments that the Pastoral Epistles are directed toward a specific historical problem and should be understood in light of that situation.”¹¹⁶

The Second of Four Trustworthy Statements

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. (NASB95)

“**It is a trustworthy statement**” is composed of the nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *pistos* (πιστός), “**a trustworthy**” and the articular nominative masculine singular form of the noun *logos* (λόγος), “**statement.**”

This expression πιστὸς ὁ λόγος appears five times in the Pastorals, three in 1 Timothy (1:15; 3:1; 4:9), once in 2 Timothy (2:11) and once in Titus (3:8). The direction and extent of the “sayings” referred to by the formula in 1 Timothy 3:1 and 4:9 are disputed. Though in the opinion of this author, 3:1 precedes the saying and 4:9 follows it. However, most expositors agree that in 1 Timothy 1:15 and 2 Timothy 2:11 the formula precedes the saying and that in Titus 3:8 it follows.

The expanded phrase καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, “**and deserves full acceptance**” that appears in 1 Timothy 1:15 and 4:9 “serves as reinforcement stressing the need to affirm as true the cited material when (perhaps) the material did not elicit this affirmation clearly on its own.”¹¹⁷

Towner writes, “In the Hellenistic world, the phrase is attested in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Roman Antiquities 3.23.17; 7.66.2) and Dio Chrysostom (Oration 45.3) and serves the same basic purpose of affirming its referent, but it does not appear to be formulaic as such. The only Jewish parallel reported (‘The Book of Mysteries’=1Q27 1:8; see the discussion in Nauck, ‘Herkunft’ 50) is no more than a parallel. This leaves the occurrences in the letters to coworkers as the first ‘formulaic’ use (Marshall 327). For some the origin of the phrase has been thought to rest in the similar description of God as faithful: *pistos ho theos* (1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13; 2 Corinthians 1:18; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Hebrews 10:23; cf. Fee, 52). While the trustworthiness of the ‘saying’ in each context surely owes to its divine origin, that factor would seem to be somewhat farther back in Paul’s

¹¹⁶ Mounce, page 153

¹¹⁷ Knight, Faithful Sayings, 29, 144

thinking and the desire to continue to draw the line between the sound teaching encapsulated by the sayings and the false teaching by means of the πιστὸς word group more to the fore.”¹¹⁸

These faithful sayings are an articulation of the gospel and an expression of Paul’s apostolic authority and are designed by way of implication to oppose those pastors in Ephesus who sought to be teachers of the Law and taught false doctrine.

In 1 Timothy 1:15, this faithful saying “**that Christ came into the world to save sinners**” is the heart of the gospel and is an articulation of the gospel as well as an expression of Paul’s apostolic authority. It is designed to rebuke and refute those pastors in Ephesus who sought to be teachers of the Law and taught false doctrine. It implicitly rejects the Law as the basis for eternal salvation and as the means of transforming the sinner into an obedient child and servant of God. This faithful saying in 1 Timothy 1:15 epitomizes what Paul has been saying in verses 12-14. It expresses perfectly the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles. This faithful statement also echoes the Lord Jesus’ teaching as recorded in the gospels.

Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. (NET)

John 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world should be saved through him. (NET)

In 1 Timothy 3:1, the trustworthy statement is “**If someone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work.**” (NET)

This statement is a commendation of the office of overseer designed to refute those who reject the authority of the overseer as a result of those overseers in Ephesus who were abusing their authority and teaching false doctrine. It is a Spirit inspired evaluation of the office of overseer, affirming its value and implying its importance to the body of Christ.

Some contend that the trustworthy statement does not refer to this conditional clause but rather that it refers to Paul’s statement in verse 15. In response to this, this conditional clause in 1 Timothy 3:1 would be appear much too abrupt without the formula πιστὸς ὁ λόγος and seems very appropriate with the conditional clause in 1 Timothy 3:1. (Knight, page 153)

Also, the function of overseer, i.e. pastor-teacher and its value in the church is taught throughout the New Testament (John 21:15-17; Acts 6:1-6; Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 12:28; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 4:11, 13, 16; 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:24; 3:16; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Peter 5:1-7).

In 1 Timothy 3:1, the adjective *pistos* means “faithful, trustworthy” and is again modifying the noun *logos* as it did in 1 Timothy 1:15. *Logos* means “statement” and refers to the statement that “**if any one aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.**” (NASB95)

Pistos expresses the idea that this statement is an accurate and faithful commendation of the office of overseer as a good work. It also is a commendation of the value of the office of overseer. The adjective

¹¹⁸ Towner, Towner, Philip H., The Letters to Timothy and Titus; page 144; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids, MI, 2006

pertains to the fact that this statement is worthy of trust or belief and is dependable and implies that it originates from God and is inspired by Him.

This adjective ascribed to this statement is an expression of Paul's apostolic authority. It is designed to rebuke and refute those pastors in Ephesus who rejected the authority of the overseer after the failure of many of the overseers in Ephesus who sought to be teachers of the Law and taught false doctrine. It is designed therefore to reaffirm the value of the office of overseer and the spiritual authority delegated to the overseer by the Lord. It expresses Paul's Spirit inspired evaluation of this office.

The adjective *pistos*, "**faithful**" functions as a predicate nominative as indicated by the articular construction of the nominative form of the noun *logos*, "statement" which indicates that it is the subject. It is therefore making the assertion about the statement Εἰ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ, "**if any one aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do,**" namely that it is trustworthy in the sense of reaffirming the value of the office of overseer and commending this office as a good work. Therefore, we will translate *pistos*, "**trustworthy.**"

In 1 Timothy 3:1, the noun *logos* means "statement" or "saying" and denotes a declaration or an assertion, which is identified for the reader by the conditional clause It is therefore making the assertion about the statement Εἰ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ, "**if any one aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.**" This statement is trustworthy in the sense that it reaffirms the value of the office of overseer and commend this office as a good work. Therefore, we will translate *pistos*, "**trustworthy.**"

The noun is a nominative subject as indicated by its articular construction which distinguishes it as the subject and *pistos* as the predicate nominative. The article has a demonstrative force since it is pointing to this following statement. It is also kataphoric meaning that it is pointing to the statement that follows it.

Aspiring to the Office of Overseer

1 Timothy 3:1, "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. (NASB95)

"**If any man aspires to the office of overseer**" is composed of the conditional particle *ei* (εἰ), "**if**" and the nominative masculine singular form of the indefinite pronoun *tis* (τις), "**any man**" and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *episkope* (ἐπισκοπή), "**the office of overseer**" and the third person present middle indicative form of the verb *orego* (ὀρέγω), "**aspires to.**"

The conditional particle *ei* introduces a protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. It is employed with the indicative mood of the verb *orego*, "**aspires to**" to explicitly convey a protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. However, the apodosis is introduced implicitly meaning without a structural marker, thus we will insert the word "**then**" into our translation before the apodosis statement in order to account for this.

The idea behind the first class condition is not "since" but rather, "if-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that, then..." This would encourage Paul's audience to respond and come to the

conclusion of the apodosis since they already agreed with him on the protasis. Therefore, Paul is employing the first class condition as a tool of persuasion with his audience. Paul's audience would respond to his protasis.

Here the protasis is "if and let assume that it is true for the sake argument that any man who aspires to the office of overseer." The audience would respond that there are men who do aspire to this office. The apodosis is "(then) he desires a good work."

The basic relation that the protasis has to the apodosis is "equivalence." This means that the office of overseer is a good work and a good work is that of overseeing the body of Christ.

The indefinite pronoun *tis* introduces a member of the body of Christ without further identification. It speaks of any member of the human race without exception and distinction. Paul's use of *tis* here indicates that this conditional clause is presenting an eternal spiritual truth.

The masculine form of the word indicates that only men can hold this office and possess the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, which is supported by the fact that in 1 Timothy 3:2, Paul says that the overseer must be a one-woman man. If women could be pastors, then why didn't he address their qualifications for ministry? Also, Paul just got through teaching the women in the Christian community in Ephesus that they could not teach men the Word of God in public in the local assembly or exercise authority over them.

The verb *orego* means "to stretch yourself out, to personally reach out for," and so it came to mean "to aspire." The word does not appear in the Septuagint and only three times in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:1; 6:10; Hebrews 11:16).

Wuest writes, "The word 'desire' is *oregō* (ὀρεῖω), 'to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something.' Thus the word means more than 'to desire.' It includes the idea of reaching after or seeking."¹¹⁹

Vincent writes, "The word implies eagerness, but not of an immoderate or unchristian character."¹²⁰

J. Hampton Keathley III commenting on this word writes that *orego* "refers to ambition, to that which drives or motivates a person. Ambition comes from a Latin word meaning 'canvassing for promotion.' In our day, ambition is usually connected with some form of self-seeking motivated by selfish desires. It generally refers to a person with some very self-centered, hidden agendas. Such ambition in leaders and in any Christian is a curse to be avoided because leaders with such agendas will always end up manipulating and using others for selfish ends. Leaders must follow the warning the prophet Jeremiah gave to Baruch in Jeremiah 45:5, 'Are you seeking great things for yourself? Do not seek them.' But there is a biblical and sanctified ambition and one that is essential to good leadership, one that is a mark of maturity, a mark that should be a part of each of our lives. So, what is biblical ambition? (1) It is an ambition that has been cleansed of self-seeking, one that seeks only the glory of God and the well being of others. (2) It is an ambition that seeks not position, praise, power, prestige, or popularity, but service to God and ministry to men. (3) It is an ambition that has at its center the three important Es which define the purpose of the church: the Exaltation of God, the Edification of the body

¹¹⁹ Wuest, K. S.; 1997; Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English reader (1 Ti 3:1). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

¹²⁰ (120 Vincent, M. R. (2002). Word studies in the New Testament (1 Ti 3:1). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc

of Christ, and the Evangelization of the lost. Why? How? Because if we are truly maturing in Christ, we should be learning to seek our security, significance, and satisfaction from the Lord rather than from people, position, power, and praise, etc. For a beautiful commentary on this study read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20.”¹²¹

In 1 Timothy 6:10, the verb *orego* speaks of a negative ambition or desire and in Hebrews 11:16, the word speaks of a positive or virtuous desire. Here in 1 Timothy 3:1, it denotes a positive ambition that is virtuous since it is produced by the Holy Spirit and is thus according to the will of the Father. That it is a positive ambition is clearly indicated by the fact that Paul is commending the position sought after.

Oswald Sanders, in his classic book on leadership entitled *Spiritual Leadership*, writes, “The true spiritual leader is concerned infinitely more with the service he can render God and his fellowmen than with the benefits and pleasures he can extract from life. He aims to put more into life than he takes out of it.”¹²²

Chuck Swindoll writes, “Ambition seeks to gain and wield power for the sake of self. Aspiration, by contrast, cares less about the position as becoming worthy of it.”¹²³

As we noted, the subjunctive mood of the verb is employed with the conditional particle *ei* to form a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument.

The present tense of the verb is a “gnomic present,” which is used to describe something that is true “any” time and “does” take place. Therefore, the “gnomic” present says that if, any man in the body of Christ “does at any time” aspire to the office of overseer, then he desires a good work.

The middle voice of the verb is an indirect middle indicating that the subject acts for himself or in their own interest. It indicates that if any man in the body of Christ aspires to the office of overseer, they are acting in their own interests since the apodosis states that it is a good work. In other words, they are benefiting themselves.

The noun *episkope* is related to the noun *episkopos*, which means “overseer” emphasizing the pastor-teacher’s role as the protector of the souls of his congregation from the false doctrine that permeates the cosmic system of Satan (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25).

Luke Timothy Johnson commenting on the word writes, “As the etymology suggests, the verb *episkopein* means simply ‘to oversee, supervise’ (e.g. Plato, Republic 506A; Philo, On the Decalogue 98). One who fulfills that role for a group, be it club or cult or community, is an *episkopos*, a ‘supervisor/superintendent/overseer’ (Josephus, Antiquities 10.4). The office of the supervisor, therefore, is *episkope* (LXX Num 4:16: ‘the episkopos is to have the office of *episkope*). In 1 Timothy 3:1, it is the office of *episkope* (position of supervisor) that one seeks and in 3:2, the *episkopos* is to be blameless.”¹²⁴

¹²¹ Qualifications for the Evaluation of Elders and Deacons, pages 1-4; Bible Studies Press, 1996; www.bible.org

¹²² *Spiritual Leadership*, page 20

¹²³ Swindoll, Charles R., *Swindoll’s New Testament Insights: Insights on 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, page 55; Zondervan; 2010

¹²⁴ L.T. Johnson 212

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 3:1, the noun *episkope* means “office of overseer” or “position of overseer” and emphasizes the pastor-teacher’s role as the protector of the souls of his congregation by teaching them sound doctrine and refuting false doctrine that originates from the cosmic system of Satan. *Episkope* is distinguished from *episkopos* in that the former refers to the position that the latter holds. As Mounce writes, “This would help explain the use of the singular form when elsewhere church leadership is spoken of in the plural. There is one office held by many people.”¹²⁵ This man holds this office possesses the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.

The Scriptures teach that the pastor-teacher, i.e. the overseer fulfills this office by fulfilling four responsibilities that are the means by which he tends and shepherds the flock of God: (1) Study (2 Timothy 2:15) (2) Teach (1 Timothy 4:13) (3) Pray (Acts 6:1-4). (4) Exemplify the Christian way of life.

The Office of Overseer is a Good Work

1 Timothy 3:1, “It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. (NASB95)

“**It is a fine work he desires to do**” is composed of the genitive neuter singular form of the adjective *kalos* (καλός), “**a fine**” and the genitive neuter singular form of the noun *ergon* (ἔργον), “**work**” and the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *epithumeo* (ἐπιθυμέω), “**he desires.**”

In 1 Timothy 3:1, the verb *epithumeo* means “desire” and is used in a positive sense as indicated by its object καλοῦ ἔργου, “**a fine work.**” It means “to greatly desire to do or have something” (Louw and Nida, 25.12). The word describes a strong positive desire.

The present tense of the verb is a “gnomic present,” which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth. This indicates that if any man in the body of Christ aspires to the office of overseer, he “as an eternal spiritual truth” desires a noble work. The active voice indicates that the man in the body of Christ who aspires to the office of overseer as the subject of the verb performs the action of desiring a good work. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

In 1 Timothy 3:1, the adjective *kalos* means “noble” in the sense of possessing outstanding qualities and great importance. It describes something whose importance is superior to all others. Here it describes the office of overseer and describes this office as “noble” in the sense that this position in the body of Christ is of the utmost importance in life possessing outstanding qualities because it is on behalf of a superior sovereign king, Jesus Christ and the body of Christ. The word speaks of this office as of the utmost importance or the most important thing that a Christian man could do in life since the function of this office promotes spiritual growth of the body of Christ and glorifies God. It is of the utmost importance because its function protects the flock of God from false doctrine.

¹²⁵ Mounce page 168

The noun *ergon* means “occupation” since it speaks of the function of the office of overseer or in other words, the function of the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher. The word is a genitive direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *epithumeo*.

Be Above Reproach

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

“**An overseer, then, must be above reproach**” is composed of the inferential conjunction *oun* (οὐν), “**then**” and the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *episkopos* (ἐπίσκοπος), “**an overseer**” and the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *dei* (δεῖ), “**must**” and the and the present active infinitive form of the verb *eimi* (εἶμι), “**be**” and the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *anepileptos* (ἀνεπίληπτos), “**above reproach**.”

The inferential conjunction *oun* is introducing a statement that is the result of an inference from Paul’s statement in verse 1, which taught that if any man aspires to the office of overseer, then he desires a noble occupation. That the office of overseer is a “noble occupation” emphasizes that is of the utmost importance in life possessing outstanding qualities because it is on behalf of a superior sovereign king, Jesus Christ and the body of Christ. It speaks of the office of overseer as of the utmost importance or the most important thing that a Christian man could do in life since the function of this office promotes spiritual growth of the body of Christ and glorifies God. It is of the utmost importance because its function protects the flock of God from false doctrine.

Now, in 1 Timothy 3:2, the conjunction *oun* introduces a statement that draws an inference from verse 1, which affirms the importance of the office of overseer to the body of Christ. Therefore, Paul is saying with this word that based upon the importance of the office of overseer to the body of Christ, the man who aspires to this office must possess meet certain qualifications in order to hold this office.

So the conjunction *oun* in verse 2 emphasizes the connection between the list of qualifications in verses 2-7 with the office. These qualifications are commensurate with the importance of the office. Since the office is so important to the spiritual growth and protection of the flock of God, demands a particular type of Christian man, namely it demands a man whose lifestyle generally speaking is such that no one can legitimately accuse him (and make it stick) of conduct that is not befitting a mature believer. These characteristics must stand out as prominent and consistent in the man. They must be clearly distinguishable, even though there is room and times that he will fall short. He must be spiritually mature and an example of Christ-like character. Therefore, because of the stature and importance of the office, the man who aspires to the office of overseer must possess certain qualities that characterize a mature believer. We will translate *oun*, “**therefore**.”

Episkopos is a compound word composed of the preposition *epi*, “over, upon” and the noun *skopos*, “one who watches,” hence, “one who watches over someone.” The term means “guardian, overseer, supervisor, superintendent.”

In classical Greek, the term was originally a religious expression which referred to gods who “guarded” or “protected” individuals or cities. Later it was used of persons who had a trusted position in the polis, “city.” The word in the plural was used of persons in authority.

It is found only 15 times in the Septuagint where it corresponds to different derivations of the Hebrew root *pā·qāḏ*, which means “to take care of, to have supervision over.” The word appears only five times in the New Testament (Acts 20:28, Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 2:25). In the New Testament, it should never be translated “bishop” because this gives rise to an ecclesiastical system never authorized by the Word of God.

Peter uses it to describe Jesus Christ as the “protector” or “overseer” of the Christian’s soul (1 Peter 2:25). It is used to describe those with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher in the remaining passages in which it appears in the New Testament. The word emphasizes the pastor-teacher’s role as the protector of the souls of his congregation by teaching them sound doctrine and refuting false doctrine that originates from the cosmic system of Satan. *Episkope*, which appeared in verse 1, is distinguished from *episkopos* in that the former refers to the position that the latter holds. Both terms “imply a fixed office with a definite function.”¹²⁶

As Mounce writes, “This would help explain the use of the singular form when elsewhere church leadership is spoken of in the plural. There is one office held by many people.”¹²⁷ This man holds this office possesses the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.

The Scriptures teach that the pastor-teacher, i.e. the overseer fulfills this office by fulfilling four responsibilities that are the means by which he tends and shepherds the flock of God: (1) Study (2 Timothy 2:15) (2) Teach (1 Timothy 4:13) (3) Pray (Acts 6:1-4). (4) Exemplify the Christian way of life.

The *episkopos* is responsible for the protective care of the spiritual life of his congregation. The pastor-teacher is responsible for the protective care of the souls of his congregation. He is to keep watch over their souls through the consistent daily communication of the Word of God, which roots out any false doctrine that has invaded the souls of his congregation from contact with the cosmic system.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. (NASB95)

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the articular construction of the noun *episkopos* is generic distinguishing a particular group of Christian men from the rest of the body of Christ. It is also functioning as the subject of the infinitive form of the verb *eimi*, “be.”

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the verb *dei* “denotes compulsion in the sense of what is necessary or one must do.”¹²⁸ The term expresses necessity that the man who aspires to the office of overseer possess certain characteristics in order for him to function in the office. It denotes an absolute must indicating that “it is absolutely imperative” that the man who aspires to the office of overseer possess certain characteristics which are listed in verses 2-7.

The present tense of the verb is “gnomic” used of a general timeless fact indicating an eternal spiritual truth or spiritual axiom. This indicates that it “is as an eternal spiritual truth” necessary or

¹²⁶ Knight, page 155; cf. BDAG

¹²⁷ Mounce page 168

¹²⁸ Knight, page 155

imperative that the man who aspires to the office of overseer possess certain qualifications that are listed in verses 2-7. The active voice is also “stative” indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb *dei*. Therefore, the “stative” active voice indicates that the nature of the office of overseer as the subject “exist in the state of” demanding that the man who aspires to this office be of a certain quality. The indicative mood is “potential,” which is used with verbs of obligation, wish or desire followed by an infinitive. In our passage, we have the verb *dei*, which is a verb of obligation and is followed by the infinitive form of the verb *eimi*, “be.”

The verb *eimi* means “to be” in the sense of possessing a particular characteristic. It indicates that it is absolutely imperative that the man who aspires to the office of overseer “possess the characteristic of being” beyond reproach, the husband, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money, one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity, not a new convert, having a good reputation with those outside the church. The present tense and the active voice of the verb *eimi* stative indicating that the man who aspires to the office of overseer must “exist in the state of” possessing these qualifications. The verb *eimi* also functions as a subject infinitive meaning that it is functioning as the subject of the verb *dei*.

The adjective *anepilemtos* was found in the writings of Thucydides, Euripides, Xenophon in an adverbial sense. It often had the specific definition of “not open to attack, blameless.” (Liddell-Scott, page 134) The term does not occur in the Septuagint and only three times in the New Testament, all of which are found in 1 Timothy (3:2; 5:7; 6:14).

Towner writes that the word “has in mind mainly aspects of behavior (inward and outward) that have observable results, and as a measurement it signifies that no grounds for reproach or blame have been found. Its placement within the opening phrase and its wide scope suggest that this is the essential requirement for candidacy. Within the overseer code it is equivalent to the requirement of a ‘good reputation with outsiders’ with which the instructions conclude (verse 7). Together these bracketing requirements frame and magnify the concern for the leader’s public image. This high ideal parallels the concerns of secular lists that enumerated similar qualities to be found in leaders, which reveals something of Paul’s sensitivity to the expectations of wider society. The leader’s reputation must be able to withstand assaults from opponents inside or outside the church (verse 7).”¹²⁹

Mounce writes that the term “cannot mean that an overseer must be free from any sin, internal or visible but the emphasis here is on the type of external personal reputation that would be a credit to the church.”¹³⁰

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 3:2, the adjective *anepilemtos* is a summary statement that means “irreproachable character.” The term refers to a general assessment of a man’s maturity and reputation (Swindoll, page 56). It describes a person who “afford nothing that an *adversary* could use as the basis for an accusation, one against whom it is impossible to bring any charge of wrong doing such as could stand *impartial* examination, one who cannot be laid hold of, irreproachable.”

The man who aspires to the office of overseer must not afford anything that an adversary could use as the basis for an accusation. It must be impossible to bring any charge of wrongdoing that could

¹²⁹ Towner, pages 249-250

¹³⁰ Mounce, page 170

withstand *impartial* examination. The word does not imply sinless perfection on the part of the man who aspires to the gift of pastor-teacher. The term refers to a man who has integrity of character so that no one can lay hold upon anything in his life, which would be of such a nature as to cast reproach upon the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the adjective *anepileptos* functions as a predicate accusative meaning that it stands in predicate relation to the accusative form of the noun *episkopos*.

The Husband of One Wife

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

“**Husband of one wife**” is composed of the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *aner* (άνήρ), “**the husband**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the adjective *heis* (εἷς), “**one**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *gune* (γυνή), “**wife**.”

The noun *aner* “**To her husband**” refers to a male as opposed to a female and in context, denotes a husband since it is used in relation to *gune*, which denotes a “wife.” The cardinal number *heis* functions as an adjective modifying the noun *gune*, “wife” and means “one” in contrast to more than one. This word indicates that the man who aspires to the office of overseer must be a one woman man and not a polygamist. This phrase does not mean that if a man is not married he cannot assume this office since Paul and Timothy were both unmarried. So, the expression does not emphasize the man’s marital status but rather his character.

Monogamy is God’s requirement for the pastor-teacher. Polygamy is not condoned in the Word of God. Polygamy, easy divorce and remarriage were prevalent in the ancient world. The fact that Paul has to list polygamy as a requirement reflects the social condition in the Roman Empire. This does not imply that he cannot remarry as a widower.

The apostle Paul is addressing bigamy and polygamy here. The man who aspires to the office of overseer must be a one-woman man. This phrase speaks of a life-long commitment to one woman. It does not forbid remarriage after a death or divorce since Moses divorced and remarried. This expression “husband of one wife” emphasizes the avoidance of any sexual immorality on the part of the overseer. It denotes that if he is married he must be faithful to his wife. This word is used with respect to the relationship between the man who aspires to the office of overseer and his family.

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the noun *aner* functions as a predicate accusative meaning that it stands in predicate relation to the accusative form of the noun *episkopos*. The noun *gune* is an attributive genitive meaning that it specifies an attribute or innate quality of the head noun *aner*. It is similar to a simple adjective in its semantic force but more emphatic. It expresses quality like an adjective but with more sharpness and distinctness. Thus, this construction emphasizes that the man who aspires to the office of overseer must be a “one-woman man.” We will translate the expression μιᾷς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, “**one-woman man**.”

Ed Glascock makes the following excellent comment, he writes, “This view holds that the translation ‘husband of one wife’ is not the best understanding of the Greek phrase *mias gunaikos andra*, but that it

should be translated ‘a man of one woman’ or a ‘one-woman man.’ This understanding emphasizes the character of the man rather than his marital status. Thus even a single man or a man who has been married only once must demonstrate that he is not a ‘playboy’ or flirtatious, but that he is stable and mature in character toward his wife or other females. A man who demonstrates a character of loyalty and trustworthiness in such personal relationships is qualified in this area. He, being a one-woman type of man, can be placed in this high position and trusted to deal in maturity and with discretion in a situation involving female members. This view shifts the emphasis away from an event that took place in a man’s life before his conversion and properly concentrates on the character and quality of his life at the time of his consideration for this high office.”¹³¹

J. Hampton Keathley III makes the following comment on this expression, he writes, “This is not saying a man must be married to be an elder. Most men were and are, so this becomes a very important quality that must be considered. Being married, however, is not a qualification which would seem to go contrary to Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 7:6-9, 25-28 where he encourages the benefits of singleness for the sake of ministry. The whole passage is dealing with subjective qualities of Christian character, i.e., qualities in which no man is 100% perfect and in which there will always be room for growth and maturity. If the clause means married only once, then it would be the only absolute quality in this list of qualifications. The qualities that follow have to do with temperance and self-control. The point is that a man needs self-control here as in all areas. There must be no sexual promiscuity or laxity with other women. A further support for this position is the similar qualification placed on widows to be enrolled in the list of widows who could receive support in 1 Timothy 5:9. Concerning this Saucy makes an important point: ‘The Scriptures nowhere forbid or even suggest as morally questionable remarriage after the death of a spouse. Paul explicitly advises the younger widows to remarry (1 Timothy 5:14). If the qualification in 1 Timothy 3:2 prohibits elders from second marriages, then the requirement for a widow to be ‘a one-man woman’ in order to be enrolled for aid (1 Timothy 5:9) also precludes a second marriage and thus excludes from aid in their later years the younger women who followed Paul’s counsel for remarriage.’”¹³²

Temperate

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

“**Temperate**” is the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *nephalios* (νηφάλιος), which is used 3 times in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:2, 11, Titus 2:2). It is related to the adjective *nephaleos*, and is related to the verb *nepho*, which in the *literal* sense means, “to be sober with reference to alcohol, not excessive with alcohol.”

The noun *nephalios* means to be free from spiritual drunkenness, free from excess, passion, rashness, and confusion, to be level headed, to be clear and rational in one’s thinking, to be sober in one’s thinking, to be self-possessed under all circumstances, to be self-controlled.”

The word in 1 Timothy 3:2 indicates that one of the qualifications of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher that aspires to the office of overseer is that he must be level-headed, temperate, shows

¹³¹ Ed Glascock, “The Husband of One Wife Requirement in 1 Timothy 3:2,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July-September 1983, page 249

¹³² Robert Saucy, “The Husband of One Wife,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1974; page 230) (Qualifications for the Evaluation of Elders and Deacons, pages 9-10; Bible Studies Press, 1996; www.bible.org)

moderation in all things, and is sober in his thinking. Thus, he is one who employs doctrinal rationales to solve problems and whose soul is influenced by God the Holy Spirit, therefore, it is used here as a synonym for the filling of the Spirit. Paul's genius makes clever use of this word *nephaleos*. It does *not* have a reference to alcohol here because Paul addresses that issue in verse 3. *Nephaleos* describes the man who is "sober and rational in their thinking, level-headed and temperate" because they are influenced by the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

This word is used with respect to the relationship between the pastor-teacher and himself.

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the noun *nephalios* functions as a predicate accusative meaning that it stands in predicate relation to the accusative form of the noun *episkopos*. We will translate the word "**level-headed.**"

Prudent

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

"**Prudent**" is the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *sophron* (σώφρων), which can be found all the way back to Homer in classical Greek. Later Aristotle in the fourth century B.C. used this word to contrast the man who is temperate with one who is self-indulgent. The term thus can mean "chaste, discreet, moderate, sober, temperate" and could take on the meaning of "sane." This usage appeared in Josephus and Philo in the first century A.D.

The adjective *sophron* occurs only 9 times in the Septuagint and is used of a quality of mind which enables one to "restrain one's emotions and desires." It was the quality of reason which enables one who is persecuted the strength to suffer. It occurs only 4 times in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; 2:2, 5).

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the adjective *sophron* pertains to being sensible and moderate in one's behavior (Louw and Nida, 88.94). It refers to "having a sound or healthy mind; as having ability to curb desires and impulses so as to produce a measured and orderly life." (ANLEX, page 373) The term refers to one who is of sound mind, one who has control over their emotions and desires and is wise from application of the Word of God. It denotes one who uses discretion, and has self-control, and discipline, thus one who is wise because one is under the influence of the Spirit. This word is used with respect to the relationship between the pastor and himself.

It too functions as a predicate accusative meaning that it stands in predicate relation to the accusative form of the noun *episkopos*. We will translate the word "**wise.**"

Respectable

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

“**Respectable**” is the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *kosmios* (κόσμιος), which in classical Greek is often used in formal address and in inscriptions to call someone “respectable” or “honorable.” Commenting on this word, Sasse writes, “It describes one who disciplines himself and who may thus be regarded as genuinely moral and respectable.”¹³³

Kosmios does not appear in the Septuagint and only twice in the New Testament (1 Timothy 2:9; 3:2).

In 1 Timothy 3:2, the adjective is used of those men in the Christian community who possess the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher and aspire to the office of overseer. It indicates that this individual must be a man who fulfills his duties incumbent on his place and order (operates in his spiritual gift) as a member of the royal family of God. It speaks of the pastor as one who must be disciplined through enforced and genuine humility resulting from right priorities in life, thus one who has virtue. This word is used with respect to the relationship between the pastor and himself as well as himself.

Hospitable

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

“**Hospitable**” is the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *philoxenos* (φιλόξενος), which means “hospitable towards foreigners, strangers and all members of the royal family of God without expectation of reward.” It is a compound word made up of the stem *phil*, “to love, to have a fondness for, to have an affection for,” and *xenos*, “hospitality shown to a stranger or guest.”

The word does not appear in the Septuagint and is used only three times in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9). The man possessing the spiritual of pastor-teacher must be willing to open his home to strangers and foreigners and other displaced members of the body of Christ.

During the first and second centuries, many members of the royal family of God were displaced from their homes because of various persecutions in the Roman Empire. Hospitality was to be shown to these individuals. Our Lord spoke of hospitality towards strangers and in particular toward Jewish believers during the Tribulation in Matthew 25:35. The apostle Paul mentions it in Romans 12:13 as a function of the royal family honor code.

The writer of Hebrews 13:2 commands members of the royal family of God to be *philoxenia*, “**hospitable**.” By doing so, some believers such as Lot and Abraham entertained the angels. Abraham entertained the pre-incarnate Christ in Genesis 18:1-22 and Lot entertained only the two angels in Genesis 19:1.

¹³³ Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 3, page 895; Gerhard Kittel, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1964

Philoxenos in 1 Timothy 3:2 expresses the fact that the man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must be an individual who tries to meet the needs of displaced members of the royal family of God through his own financial means or even opening his home to them. It describes the man who has the gift of pastor-teacher who is willing to open his home to other members of the Royal Family of God in order to teach them. This term is used of course with respect to the relationship between the pastor and others.

In the first century, born-again believers met in homes and not in large buildings as they do today, therefore, the pastor-teacher had to be willing to open his home to strangers, who were unbelievers and needed the gospel, and to believers who needed the Word of God taught to them.

Able to Teach

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach. (NASB95)

“**Able to Teach**” is composed of the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *didaktikos* (διδασκτικός), which means “skillful in teaching, able and apt to teach or instruct.” This word goes back to the first century A.D. and is found only twice in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:24).

The word is found only in Philo outside of the New Testament. The word’s usage in the Pastoral Epistles suggests or implies that the man who with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher and aspires to the office of overseer must be willing and able to not only teach but also to refute errors or accurately answer questions (cf. Titus 1:9). This word also describes the relationship between the pastor and others. This adjective in 1 Timothy 3:2 indicates that only those with spiritual gift of pastor-teacher can hold the office of overseer because the word denotes one who is skillful in teaching, which only those with the gift of teaching can fulfill.

Commenting on this word in 1 Timothy 3:2, Vine writes that this word denotes “not merely a readiness to teach is implied, but the spiritual power to do so as the outcome of prayerful meditation in the Word of God and the practical application of its truth to oneself.” (Page 51). Thus, overseers were supposed to possess the gift of teaching so that they could be skillful in teaching others.

Not an Alcoholic

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. 2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. (NASB95)

“**Not addicted to wine**” is composed of the negative particle *me* (μή) (me), “**not**” and the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *paroinos* (παροινος), “**addicted to wine.**”

Paroinos is made up of the words *para*, “beside,” and *oinos*, “wine” describes a person who “sits long over his wine.” Thus, the adjective refers to a person who is an alcoholic. It speaks of a person who is “overindulgent with alcohol and argumentative under its influence, argumentative alcoholic, argumentative over wine.” The term occurs only twice in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).

In each instance, it is used in a list of qualifications that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher must consistently manifest in his life over a significant period of time before he can be promoted to the position of overseer in a local assembly.

In 1 Timothy 3:3, the adjective *paroinos* means “alcoholic” and its meaning is negated by the negative particle *me*, which denies any idea of a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher being promoted to the office of overseer if he is an alcoholic. He cannot be promoted to the office of overseer if he is an alcoholic.

The adjective is a predicate accusative, which means that it stands in predicate relation to the accusative form of the noun *episkopos*.

This expression is the first negative characteristic that appears in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, which means that this characteristic must not be manifested in the life of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher if he is to assume the office of overseer. It is also one of two characteristics that address the pastor’s relationship to things. The other is being free from the love of money, which is listed at the end of verse 3.

There was a problem with drunkenness in the ancient world just as there is a problem with drunkenness today in the 21st century. In fact, there were actually believers that were getting drunk at the Lord’s Table!

1 Corinthians 11:20 Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. (NASB95)

The Scriptures warn against drunkenness many times.

Proverbs 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise. (NASB95)

Proverbs 23:20 Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine, {or} with gluttonous eaters of meat; 21 For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe {one} with rags. (NASB95)

Proverbs 23:29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long over wine, those who go to taste mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things and your mind will utter perverse things. 34 And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. 35 They struck me, {but} I did not become ill; they beat me, {but} I did not know {it.} When shall I awake? I will seek another drink. (NASB95)

The Bible has a lot to say about alcohol and its abuse and proper use. A number of passages warn against the dangers of drunkenness since it causes people to stagger (Psalm 107:27; Prov. 23:34), it makes them sick (Isaiah 28:8; Jeremiah 25:27), it makes the eyes red (Prov. 23:29), it puts a person into

a stupor (Jeremiah 51:39, 57), it makes a person poor (Prov. 23:21), it interferes with a leader's work (Prov. 31:4f).

The foolishness of drunkenness is shown by the examples of Noah (Genesis 9:21), Lot (Genesis 19:31-38), Nabal (1 Samuel 25:36-39), David (2 Samuel 11:13), Absalom (2 Samuel 13:28) and Belshazzar (Daniel 5:2).

The Bible does "not" prohibit drinking alcohol but it "does" prohibit drunkenness.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author's Translation)

Believers are not to associate with believers who are alcoholics (1 Corinthians 5:9-11).

1 Corinthians 5:11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one. (NASB95)

Drunkenness is a manifestation of the old Adamic sin nature (Galatians 5:19-21).

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, depravity, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and similar things. I am warning you, as I had warned you before: Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God! (NET)

The apostle Paul in Romans 13:13 exhorts the Roman believers to unite with him in conducting their lives properly as those who exist in the day, not by means of drunken parties, licentious promiscuity and jealous contention.

Romans 13:13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. (NASB95)

"**Not in carousing**" is composed of the negative particle *me*, "**not**" and the dative masculine plural form of the noun *komos*, "**in carousing**."

The noun *komos* is used in classical Greek to refer to the decadent processions and feasts connected to the worship of Bacchus and other pagan deities, which are the result of drunkenness. The Christians of the early church lived in the Roman Empire and spoke *Koine* or the common Greek and were raised as pagans worshipping the Greek and Roman pantheon of gods.

One of these gods was called Dionysus. He was also called Bacchus or in Rome, Liber. Dionysus was the god of fruitfulness and vegetation, especially known as a god of wine and ecstasy. The worship of Dionysus flourished long in Asia Minor. The worship of Dionysus flourished particularly well in Phrygia and Lydia. The cult of Dionysus was closely associated with that of numerous Asiatic deities. The followers of Dionysus included spirits of fertility, such as the satyrs and in his ritual the male

phallus was prominent. As the god of the vine, Dionysus or Bacchus was thought to communicate his power to his devotees through the intoxicating influence of wine, stimulating them to orgiastic excesses, wild dancing and music, and sexual promiscuity. They worshipped booze and sex.

The Gentile Roman Christians were very much exposed to this cult and it was a part of their pagan background. The worship of booze and sex is still around here in the 21st century. It is a part of our hedonistic western culture.

Louw and Nida define the word “drinking parties involving unrestrained indulgence in alcoholic beverages and accompanying immoral behavior—‘orgy, revelling, carousing.’”¹³⁴

Kenneth Wuest writes that *komos* was “a revel, a carousal, in the Greek writers, a nocturnal and riotous procession of half-drunken and frolicsome fellows, who after supper, parade through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity, and sing and play before the houses of their male and female friends; hence used generally of feasts and drinking-parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry.”¹³⁵

Komos appears only twice in the Septuagint (2 Maccabees 6:4; Wisdom of Solomon 14:23) and only three times in the Greek New Testament (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3).

In Romans 13:13, the noun *komos* refers to a “drinking party.”

“**Drunkeness**” is the dative feminine plural form of the noun *methe*. This word denotes a “strong or potent drink” and corresponds to *methu*, “wine.” The noun *methe* also can indicate the state of “drunkeness” or “chronic intoxication.” The word appears 13 times in the Septuagint, eight of which are canonical (Proverbs 20:1; 31:6; Joel 1:5; Haggai 1:6; Isaiah 28:7; Jeremiah 28:57; Ezekiel 23:33; 39:19). It occurs only three times in the Greek New Testament (Luke 21:34; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21). In Galatians 5:21 and Romans 13:13, the noun *methe* appears alongside *komos*. In the former, *methe* appears before *komos* whereas in the latter *komos* appears before *methe*.

Now, the nouns *komos* and *methe* contain the figure of speech called “hendiadys,” which takes place when two nouns are used to express one idea or concept. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns, and are always joined together by the conjunction “and.” The two nouns are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic. In Romans 13:13 the nouns *komos* and *methe* are separated by the conjunction *kai*, “**and**,” and are both in the dative case and in the plural form. *Methe* intensifies the noun *komos*. Also indicating that these two nouns are connected is that *methe*, “drunkeness” resulted in *komos*, “loud partying, revelry.” Furthermore, *komos* denotes a drinking party involving unrestrained indulgence in alcoholic beverages.

The negative particle *me* is used to deny the idea of Paul and his readers conducting their lives by means of drunken parties as many of them did as pagans prior to their conversion to Christianity.

These two nouns *komos* and *methe* function as a dative instrumental of means used to indicate the means or instrument by which the verbal action is accomplished. This indicates that these two words are

¹³⁴ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based Upon Semantic Domains, volume 2, page 773

¹³⁵ Word studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English reader. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; 1997

used to indicate the means or the instrument by which the Roman believers were not to conduct their lives. They were not to conduct their lives by means of drunken parties.

In 1 Timothy 3:3, Paul *paroinos* rather than *methe* since the former is a stronger word than the latter. Some contend that this prohibition indicates that the pastors in Ephesus who fell victim to the teaching of the Judaizers were involved in excessive drinking but this is not the case since the Judaizers were prone to asceticism rather than immoral degeneracy and drunkenness. 1 Timothy 4:3 indicates that those pastors in Ephesus who were teaching false doctrine and attempting to become teachers of the Law as a result of the influence of the Judaizers were involved in asceticism. This injunction has in mind of avoiding the influence of the Dionysus cult that was prominent in Asia Minor and Ephesus.

Not Violent

“**Not pugnacious**” is composed of the negative particle *me* (μή), “**not**” and the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *plektes* (πλήκτης), “**pugnacious**.”

In classical Greek, the noun *plektes* was used to describe a man who was “a violent, a brawler, a fighter” and speaks of the man who bullies others into getting his own way by whatever means. He lacks feeling and is inconsiderate and intolerant of others and their opinions.

In 1 Timothy 3:3, the noun *plektes* means “violent” and its meaning is negated by the negative particle *me*, which denies any idea of a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher being promoted to the office of overseer if he is violent. He cannot be promoted to the office of overseer if he is a violent person. This expression emphasizes that a pastor can not succumb to anger and expresses that anger with violence.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 and 2 Timothy 2:23-24 indicate that those pastors in Ephesus who were teaching false doctrine and attempting to be teachers of the Law rather than the gospel were involved in angry disputes and abusive language.

There is a close connection with the first prohibition in verse 3 in that excessive alcohol consumption often leads to violent behavior. This of course is demonstrated in our day and age at football games and in Europe at soccer games where crowds get drunk and then violence often breaks out.

Magnanimous

“**But gentle**” is composed of the adversative conjunction *alla* (ἀλλά), “**but**” and the adjective *epieikes* (ἐπιεικής), “**gentle**.”

The adversative conjunction *alla* is a marker of an emphatic contrast. It introduces a statement that stands in direct contrast with the previous prohibition. Therefore, Paul is emphatically contrasting the overseer being violent with that of his being magnanimous.

The adjective *epieikes* in the Greek New Testament expresses the concept of magnanimity and is a compound word composed of the preposition *epi*, “upon” and the adjective *eikos*, “reasonable, probable.”

The adjective *epieikes* and the noun *epieikeia* are both derived from *eikos*, “becoming, decent,” or from *eiko*, “to yield, give way,” and mean from Homer onwards “the proper way of life,” or from Thucydides onwards “forbearance, indulgence, mildness.”

Epieikes, together with its derivatives, was originally an expression for the balanced, intelligent, decent in outlook in contrast to licentiousness. Then it was used for a considerate, thoughtful attitude in legal relationships, which was prepared to mitigate the rigors of justice, with its laws and claims, in contrast to the attitude, which demands that rights, including one’s own, should be upheld at all costs. It is opposed to unbridled anger, harshness, brutality and self-expression. It represents character traits of the noble-minded, the wise man who remains meek in the face of insults, the judge who is lenient in judgment, and the king who is kind in his rule. Hence, it appears often in pictures of the ideal ruler and in eulogies on men in high positions.

Epieikes expresses moderation or kindness towards men. *Praotes*, which is also translated “**gentleness**” in the English translations pertains more to the attitude of the individual, whereas *epieikeia* is related to the outward conduct of the individual. *Praotes* is unrestricted divine whereas *epieikeia* is directed towards others.

The adjective *epieikes* appears only four times in the Septuagint. Each time it translates *sallach*. The adjective *epieikes* is found five times in the New Testament (Philippians 4:5; 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Peter 2:18). Its cognate noun *epieikeia* is found twice in Acts 24:4; 2 Corinthians 10:1.

Commenting on the word E.K. Simpson wrote “*Epieikes* defies exact translation...Gracious, kindly, forbearing, considerate, magnanimous, genial, all approximate to its idea”.¹³⁶

Hawthorne says that this word is “one of the truly great Greek words that is almost untranslatable” and suggests that the word means “magnanimity, sweet reasonableness.”¹³⁷

The adjective *epieikes* in the New Testament denotes one who is magnanimous in their behavior since the word speaks of a wise man who remains meek in the face of insults and of a judge who is lenient in judgment, and the king who is kind in his rule. It means magnanimous because the word speaks of someone who is considerate, thoughtful attitude in legal relationships and did not demand his own rights at all costs.

The New Universal Unabridged Dictionary lists the following definitions for the adjective magnanimous: (1) Generous in forgiving an insult or injury; free from petty resentment or vindictiveness: to be magnanimous towards one’s enemies. (2) High-minded; noble: a magnanimous king (3) Proceeding from or revealing nobility of mind, character, etc.: a magnanimous love of justice.

If we paraphrase this definition and apply it to the Christian and in particular a pastor who is the overseer, we would say that he must be: (1) Generous in forgiving an insult or injury; free from petty resentment or vindictiveness especially towards one’s enemies. (2) High-minded; noble (3) Possessing nobility of mind, character, having a magnanimous love of justice.

¹³⁶ Page 51

¹³⁷ Philippians, page 182

Magnanimous behavior is one of the expressions of divine-love, which as we have noted has two directions: (1) Vertical: Directed toward God. (2) Horizontal: Directed toward mankind.

The vertical, motivational divine love of a believer produces the horizontal, functional divine love directed toward all mankind.

The Lord Jesus Christ is magnanimous and the apostle Paul wants the overseers in Ephesus to follow suit.

Paul uses *epieikes* in Philippians 4:5. Magnanimous behavior among the Philippian believers will resolve the personality conflict between Euodia and Syntyche. If they were magnanimous with each other in the first place, there would not have been a problem between the two.

Philippians 4:5 Permit your magnanimity to become manifest to everyone. The Lord is immanently near. (Author's translation)

Magnanimity is related to forgiveness (Colossians 3:13-14). God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are inherently magnanimous. It is one of their attributes. The Lord Jesus Christ during His First Advent revealed this magnanimous character of the Trinity. The greatest manifestation of God's magnanimity was at the Cross when every sin in human history, past, present and future was imputed to Christ on the Cross and He was judged as our substitute. Our Lord's magnanimous behavior was demonstrated during His First Advent by the manner in which He demonstrated the quality of being generous in forgiving insults and injury without being pettily resentful or vindictive.

Luke 23:34 Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive all of them, for they know not what they are doing." (NASB95)

He was noble in character, loving justice but not insisting upon the letter of the law in order to preserve the spirit of the law. The Lord was generous in forgiving insults and injuries without being vindictive and becoming involved in petty resentfulness. He was generous, tolerant, patient, moderate, courageous, and noble. He did not insist upon his own rights to the fullest but rectifies and redresses the injustices of justice. The pastor is to be the same way like His Lord and Savior.

Not Contentious

"Peaceable" is the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *amachos* (ἄμαχος).

The word *mache* means "a fight, combat," and is used of those in arms, "a battle," and the prefix *a* negates it, thus the word means, "not a fighter." Wuest states "the word describes a person who does not go about with a chip on his shoulder." Louw and Nida define the term "pertaining to a lack of conflict and contention-'not contentious, peaceful'".¹³⁸

In 1 Timothy 3:3, the noun *amachos* means "not a fighter, not contentious, not combative, not argumentative. It indicates that the overseer must not be a contentious person. 1 Timothy 6:3-5 and 2 Timothy 2:22-26 indicates that the pastors who in Ephesus who were teaching false doctrine as a result

¹³⁸ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, 39.24

of falling victim to the Judaizers' teaching were often involved with quarrels and arguments and were contentious.

Mounce writes that this word "is a strong term describing active and serious bickering; it can even refer to physical combat."¹³⁹

J. Hampton Keathley commenting on this word in 1 Timothy 3:3, writes that the word speaks of the man who "is not a quarrelsome person who struggles against others for self-seeking reasons such as jealousy or selfish ambition. He may strongly disagree, but he will state his case without being contentious."¹⁴⁰

Swindoll writes that the word describes a man who "walks away from physical altercations. While he may have the strength and skill to fight, he is known as a peacemaker, a man willing to keep a loose grip on his rights."¹⁴¹

Not A Lover of Money

"**Free from the love of money**" is the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *philarguros* (φιλάργυρος).

This term is a double compound word composed of the alpha privative and the noun *philos*, "love" and the noun *arguros*, "silver," thus the word literally means "not a lover of silver." It is attested in inscriptions and certain papyri dating to the second century B.C.

Louw and Nida define the term "pertaining to not being desirous or greedy for money-‘not loving wealth, one who does not love money.’"¹⁴²

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition defines the word "not loving money, not greedy".¹⁴³

This term does not occur in the Septuagint and only twice in the new Testament (1 Timothy 3:3; Hebrews 13:5).

Hebrews 13:5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," 6 so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?" (NASB95)

In 1 Timothy 3:3, the adjective *philarguros* means "not a lover of money." It speaks of the love of money and materialism. It indicates that the pastor can never be in the ministry for the money or because it pays well. It also denotes that he is to serve in the ministry regardless even if he is not making a great salary. Some don't serve because the ministry does not pay well.

¹³⁹ Mounce, William D., The Word Biblical Commentary, volume 46, Pastoral Epistles, page 176; Thomas Nelson, 2000

¹⁴⁰ Qualifications for the Evaluation of Elders and Deacons, page 8; Bible Studies Press, 1996; www.bible.org

¹⁴¹ Swindoll, Charles R., Swindoll's New Testament Insights: Insights on 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus; Zondervan; page 58; 2010

¹⁴² Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, 25.109

¹⁴³ Page 157

The adjective *aphilarguros* teaches that the pastor must be known for the love of his work for its own sake and not for the material wealth that his work can provide him. This term indicates that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher must possess an attitude toward material wealth that is one of healthy detachment but of course not irresponsibility. It refers to the fact that the man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must not be involved in always making “deals” outside of the church since these activities erode his character and hinder his ministry. Also, many times pastors are woefully underpaid and at times at poverty level, thus there is a great temptation to attempt to supplement one’s salary by outside means or endeavors which take the pastor away from his duties of studying and teaching and prayer. The sin of loving money is thus not relegated to the rich but the poor who don’t have it.

Commenting on this word in 1 Timothy 3:3 J. Hampton Keathley III writes, “Does he have his priorities straight? Is he seeking his significance, security, and primary satisfaction from material wealth? Is he involved in dishonest business practices? Is the amount of salary he receives the most important thing about his occupation? Is he seeking the office of elder for personal gain?”¹⁴⁴

Paul warns of the consequences of loving money in 1 Timothy 6:7-11.

1 Timothy 6:7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.”

Peter also warns pastors about sordid gain.

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness. (NASB95)

The Overseer Must Manage His Own Household Well

1 Timothy 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. (NASB95)

“**He must be one who manages his own household well**” is composed of the accusative masculine singular present middle participle form of the verb *proistemi* (προΐστημι), “**one who manages**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the adjective *idios* (ἴδιος), “**his own**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the noun *oikos* (οἶκος), “**household**” and the adverb *kalos* (καλῶς), “**well**.”

This verb is a compound word composed of the preposition *pro*, “before” and the verb *histemi*, “to stand,” thus the word literally means “to stand before.” Its primary meaning is “to lead, govern.” In classical Greek, this verb was used of those who “stood before” an army in order to lead or of those who

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., page 8

“stood over” the affairs of government. It also indicated the support, help and care offered by those in permanent positions. The idea of going before evolved into the notion of “to protect, care.” This verb does not appear in the Septuagint and only eight times in the Greek New Testament, all of which are in Paul’s writings.

The verb *proistemi* appears in 1 Timothy 3:4-5 and in each instance the word means “to exercise a position of authority” and is used with reference to the man with the spiritual gift of pastor who aspires to the office of overseer. It is used with reference to the pastor’s authority over his own household. In 1 Timothy 3:12, the term is used in the same manner but with respect to those who aspire to hold the office of deacon.

The word conveys a leadership style characterized by loving care. The word expresses the idea that the man’s children submit to his leadership out of respect for him and not out of fear. The pastor’s wife and children must love, respect and follow his leadership and his children should have respect for authority in every area of life.

Fee correctly concludes that this word has a double nuance of caring and protecting. He writes that the word “carries the sense of either ‘to rule, govern,’ or ‘to be concerned about, care for.’ The clue to its meaning here lies with understanding the companion verb about the church in verse 5, ‘to take care of,’ which carries the full force of that idiom in English. That is, ‘to take care of’ implies both leadership (guidance) and caring concern. In the home and church neither has validity without the other.”¹⁴⁵ So the word conveys a leadership style characterized by loving care.

Mounce writes that this word “provides a commentary on the nature of a Christian father’s role within his family: his leadership should not be dictatorial but caring and protecting.”¹⁴⁶

In 1 Timothy 3:4, the verb *proistemi* functions as a “substantive” participle and as a predicate accusative meaning that it stands in predicate relation to the accusative form of the noun *episkopos*.

The present tense is also a “customary” or “stative” present used to signal an ongoing state. This indicates that those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspire to the office of overseer must “exist in a state of” managing their own households correctly. The middle voice of the verb *proistemi* is an indirect or benefactive middle meaning that the subject acts for himself or in his own interest. This indicates that it is in the pastor’s own interests that he manages his own household well.

The adjective *idios* pertains to “being the exclusive property of someone – ‘one’s own, one’s property’”.¹⁴⁷ The word functions as a possessive personal pronoun and means, “his” referring to the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer.

Idios functions as an attributive adjective meaning that it is modifying the noun *oikos*. The word functions as a genitive of possession emphasizing the object possessed which is the family of the man who aspires to the office of overseer.

¹⁴⁵ Fee, Gordon, D., New International Biblical Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus; page 82; Hendrickson Publishers; Peabody, Massachusetts, 1984, 1988

¹⁴⁶ The Word Biblical Commentary, volume 46, Pastoral Epistles; page 178; Thomas Nelson, 2000

¹⁴⁷ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, 57.4

The noun *oikos* means “household” consisting of those related by blood and marriage as well as slaves and servants living in the same house or homestead (Louw and Nida, 10.8). Towner writes, “Although the phrase to follow this requirement resolves itself into family leadership (TNIV), and ‘family’ is the modern equivalent in Western culture to the ancient household concept (*oikos*), the stipulation here initially exceeds issues of parenting and husbanding to include management of slaves, property, business interests and even maintenance of important relationships with benefactors/patrons or clients.”¹⁴⁸

Mounce writes “*Oikos* is a significant metaphor in this chapter and ties the argument together. The church is the household of God and the church must protect the truth of the gospel (1 Timothy 3:15). Yet the opponents were leading whole households away from the truth (Titus 1:11).” (Ibid., page 178)

In 1 Timothy 3:4, *oikos* is a genitive direct object meaning that it is receiving the action explicit in the verb *proistemi*, which is a verb of governing or ruling that commonly have a genitive direct object. We will translate the word “**household**.”

The affirmative adverb *kalos* means “correctly” since it pertains to meeting relatively high standards of excellence, which would be managing one’s own household in accordance with the teaching of the Word of God. The emphasis with the word is not so much the quality of the performance of some task but rather whether one does it correctly. The word conveys the idea that the man who aspires to the office of overseer must be governing his own household according to the standards of God’s Word and specifically with regards to operating in God’s love by the power of the Spirit. Running one’s household according to the world’s standards will not cut it. Towner writes that the word “establishes the high standard of proficiency Paul expects in candidates for church leadership.”¹⁴⁹ The term is modifying the substantive participle *proistemi*.

The Overseer Must Keep His Children Under Control with All Dignity

1 Timothy 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. (NASB95)

“**Keeping his children under control**” is composed of the accusative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *echo* (ἔχω), “**keeping**” and the accusative neuter plural form of the noun *teknon* (τέκνον), “**his children**” and the preposition *en* (ἐν), “**under**” and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun *hupotage* (ὑποταγή), “**control**.”

The verb *echo* denotes the “possession of persons to whom one has a close relationship with.” Here it refers to the children that the man who aspires to the office of overseer “possesses.” The present tense of the verb is a stative present and the active voice is stative as well indicating that the man who aspires to the office of overseer must “exist in the state of” possessing submissive children. The word also is a participle of means, which indicates that it is defining what Paul means in the previous clause the pastor, i.e. the overseer must be managing his own household correctly. He is to do so “by” possessing submissive children. The participle of means indicates the means by which the action of the finite verb is accomplished. This indicates that *echo* is indicating the means by which the action of the verb *proistemi*

¹⁴⁸ Towner, Philip H., The Letters to Timothy and Titus; page 254; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids, MI, 2006

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., page 254

is accomplished. The participle of means *echo* is defining the action of *proistemi* and makes more explicit what Paul means that the overseer must be managing his own household correctly.

The noun *teknon* means “children” and speaks of one’s own immediate offspring but without specific reference to sex or age (Louw and Nida, 10.36). The word speaks of offspring of human parents. Here in 1 Timothy 3:4, the word is used in a literal sense speaking of the offspring or children of the overseer. The word is an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *echo*.

This noun refers to “the state of submissiveness, subjection, subordination, as opposed to setting oneself up as controller.”¹⁵⁰

The term does not appear in the Septuagint and only 4 times in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 9:13; Galatians 2:5; 1 Timothy 2:11; 3:4). In 2 Corinthians 9:13, the word is used of the Corinthians’ “submission” to the gospel as evidenced by their testimony and generosity. Paul uses it again in Galatians 2:5 saying that he did “submit” to the Judaizers and their teaching. He uses it in 1 Timothy 3:4 of the children “submitting” to the authority of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher.

In 1 Timothy 2:11, the noun *hupotage* means “submission” and refers to Christian women submitting to the spiritual authority of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher by receiving silently his instruction while in a public setting in the local assembly.

In 1 Timothy 3:4, the noun *hupotage* means “submission” but this time it refers to the children of the overseer submitting to his parental authority. The word is the object of the preposition *en*, which functions as a marker of a state or condition. This indicates that the children of the overseer must be in a submissive state towards him. We will translate the prepositional phrase ἐν ὑποταγῇ, “**in a state of submission.**”

The Scriptures teach that there are several categories of authority: (1) Christ’s Authority (Philippians 2:8; John 5:26-27; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:10; Ephesians 1:22) (2) Biblical Authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). (3) Angelic Authority (Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:16). (4) Apostolic Authority (Luke 9:1; 2 Corinthians 10:8). (5) Pastoral Authority (Peter 5:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 2:11-15). (6) Spousal Authority (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18). (7) Parental Authority (Deuteronomy 21:18-21; Prov. 1:7-9; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20). (8) Governmental Authority (Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13).

With All Dignity

1 Timothy 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. (NASB95)

“**With all dignity**” is composed of the preposition *meta* (μετά), “**with**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), “**all**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *semnotes* (σεμνότης), “**dignity.**”

¹⁵⁰ Danker, Frederick William, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature; Third Edition; page 1041; University of Chicago Press; Chicago and London

The noun *semmotes* means “dignity” and is used with respect to the overseer rather than the children. This is indicated by the fact that the word is used later in 1 Timothy 3:8 to describe deacons, their wives (1 Timothy 3:11) and older men (Titus 2:2) and the noun is used to describe believers in 1 Timothy 2:2 and in Titus 2:7. The word refers to conduct that is worthy of honor, reverence and respect by others. The term speaks of the overseer’s conduct as worthy of honor, reverence and respect by the Christian community in which he lives as a result of caring for his children and disciplining them to be submissive to him.

In 1 Timothy 3:4, *semmotes* is the object of the preposition *meta*, which is a marker of manner denoting the manner in which the aspiring overseer was to manage his own household correctly, namely “with all dignity.”

The adjective *pas* means “absolute” in the sense of perfectly embodying godliness and dignity. Thus, Paul wants the aspiring overseer to perfectly embody dignity while managing their households.

This word is modifying the noun *semmotes*, “**dignity.**” We have an anarthrous adjective-noun construction thus the adjective *pas* functions in attributive relation to this noun.

Parenthetical Rhetorical Question

The apostle Paul in verse 5 poses a rhetorical question that is a strong argument for the qualification mentioned by him in verse 4. This verse is parenthetical since it does not depend on the δεῖ εἶναι that appears in verse 2 but intrinsically it is not parenthetical (Knight, page 162).

1 Timothy 3:5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?) (NASB95)

“**But if a man does not know how to manage his own household**” is composed of the conjunction *de* (δέ), “**but**” and the conditional particle *ei* (εἰ), “**if**” and the nominative masculine singular form of the indefinite pronoun *tis* (τις), “**a man**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the adjective *idios* (ἴδιος), “**his own**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the noun *oikos* (οἶκος), “**household**” and the present active infinitive form of the verb *proistemi* (προϊστημι), “**how to manage**” and the emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὐ), “**not**” and the third person singular perfect active indicative form of the verb *oida* (οἶδα), “**does know.**”

The conjunction *de* is employed by Paul in a mildly adversative sense meaning that it is introducing a statement that a first class conditional that contains a rhetorical question in the apodosis that stands in contrast with his statement in verse 4.

1 Timothy 3:4 It is, as an eternal spiritual truth absolutely imperative the overseer be managing his own household correctly for his own benefit by possessing submissive children with absolute dignity. (Author’s translation)

This verse teaches that if the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher desires to be promoted to the office of overseer in a local assembly, then he must manage it correctly according to the Word of God and he is to do this by possessing submissive children with absolute dignity. Now, in verse 5, Paul

employs the conjunction *de* to introduce a first class condition that contains a rhetorical question in the apodosis and is a strong argument for this qualification in verse 4.

As Mounce writes “With this rhetorical question Paul makes explicit what is implicit in verse 4: there is a direct connection between a person’s ability to manage his family and his ability to manage the church.”¹⁵¹

In verse 5, the first class condition presents the assumption of the truth for the sake of argument and in the apodosis there is a rhetorical question that demands a negative answer. In the protasis, Paul states for the sake of argument a hypothetical situation where a man does not know how to manage his own household. Then, in the apodosis, he asks rhetorically how can that man take care of the church of God? The answer is he cannot.

Therefore, we can see that the contrast that *de* is marking is between the qualification in verse 4 with the protasis of the first class condition in verse 5. The contrast is between the qualification in verse 4 with that of the man who does not manage his own household correctly. The contrast is between managing one’s own household correctly according to God’s Word by possessing submissive children with all dignity due to disciplining them to act properly with that of a man who does not know how to manage his own household.

The apostle Paul does not use the strong adversative conjunction *alla* here but *de* since he is not contrasting two fundamentally different individuals but rather the same type of individual, namely a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer. He is contrasting the positive function of this man in his own household with that of the negative function.

The conditional particle *ei* introduces a protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. It is employed with the indicative mood of the verb *oida*, “**does know**” to explicitly convey a protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. However, the apodosis is introduced implicitly meaning without a structural marker, thus we will insert the word “**then**” into our translation before the apodosis statement in order to account for this.

The idea behind the first class condition is not “since” but rather, “if-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that, then...” This would encourage Paul’s audience to respond and come to the conclusion of the apodosis since they already agreed with him on the protasis. Therefore, Paul is employing the first class condition as a tool of persuasion with his audience. Paul’s audience would respond to his protasis.

Here the protasis is “if and let assume that it is true for the sake argument that someone does not know how to manage his own household.” The apodosis is “(then) how will he care for God’s church?” The audience would respond that there is absolutely no possibility of this man being able to care for God’s church.

The basic relation that the protasis has to the apodosis is “cause and effect.” If a man does not know how to manage his own household is the cause and the effect is that he will not be able to care for God’s church.

¹⁵¹ The Word Biblical Commentary, volume 46, Pastoral Epistles; page 179-180; Thomas Nelson, 2000

The indefinite pronoun *tis* introduces a member of the body of Christ without further identification. It speaks of any member of the human race without exception and distinction. Specifically, it speaks of any man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer. Paul's use of *tis* here indicates that this conditional clause is presenting an eternal spiritual truth.

The masculine form of the word indicates that only men can hold the office of overseer and possess the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, which is supported by the fact that in 1 Timothy 3:2, Paul says that the overseer must be a one-woman man. If women could be pastors, then why didn't he address their qualifications for ministry? Also, in 1 Timothy 2:11-15, Paul just got through teaching the women in the Christian community in Ephesus that they could not teach men the Word of God in public in the local assembly or exercise authority over them.

The verb *oida* means "to have the knowledge as to how to perform a particular activity." Here the activity is a man managing his own household correctly according to God's Word.

The word is emphatically negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, which means "absolutely no idea." It is used to deny the reality of an alleged fact of this occurring and is the clear cut, point-blank negative, objective and final. It therefore emphatically negates the idea of a man having knowledge as to how to manage his own household correctly according to God's Word. Thus, these two words denote that a man "having absolutely no idea how to" manage his own household correctly according to God's Word.

The perfect tense of the verb *oida* is a "perfect with a present force" demonstrating little distinction between the act and its results since the verb is a "stative" verb emphasizing a state.

Dan Wallace commenting on this type of perfect, writes, "For example the result of knowing is knowing. This usage of the perfect occurs especially with verbs where the act slides over into the results. They are resultative perfects to the point that the act itself has virtually died; the results have become the act".¹⁵²

Therefore, the perfect tense of the verb *oida* emphasizes the state of a man having absolutely no idea how to manage his own household correctly according to the instructions found in God's Word.

The active voice of the verb is "stative" meaning that the subject exists in the state indicating by the verb. Therefore, this emphasizes that a hypothetical man in the body of Christ with the gift of pastor-teacher aspiring to the office of overseer "existing in the state of" having absolutely no idea how to manage his own household correctly according to the Word of God.

The indicative mood of the verb is "conditional" meaning that it is employed with the conditional particle *ei*, "**if, in fact and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument**" in order to form the protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument.

As it did in verse 4, the verb *proistemi* in verse 5 means "to exercise a position of authority" and is used with reference to the man with the spiritual gift of pastor who aspires to the office of overseer. It is used with reference to the pastor's authority over his own household.

¹⁵² Dan Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, page 581

The word conveys a leadership style characterized by loving care. The word expresses the idea that the man's children submit to his leadership out of respect for him and not out of fear. The pastor's wife and children must love, respect and follow his leadership and his children should have respect for authority in every area of life.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion a hypothetical man who aspires to the office of overseer having absolutely no idea how to manage his own household. The active voice refers to this individual as the subject performing the action of this verb. The infinitive is a complementary infinitive meaning that it is completing the thought of *oida*, which makes no sense without it.

The adjective *idios* pertains to “being the exclusive property of someone – ‘one’s own, one’s property’”.¹⁵³ It is used of the man who aspires to the office of overseer in relation to his household.

The word functions as a possessive personal pronoun and means, “**his**” referring to the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer.

Idios functions as an attributive adjective meaning that it is modifying the noun *oikos*. The word functions as a genitive of possession emphasizing the object possessed which is the family of the man who aspires to the office of overseer.

The noun *oikos* means “household” consisting of those related by blood and marriage as well as slaves and servants living in the same house or homestead.¹⁵⁴ In 1 Timothy 3:4, *oikos* is a genitive direct object meaning that it is receiving the action explicit in the verb *proistemi*, which is a verb of governing or ruling that commonly have a genitive direct object.

Apodosis of a First-Class Condition

1 Timothy 3:5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?) (NASB95)

“**How will he take care of the church of God?**” is composed of the interrogative pronoun *pos* (πῶς), “how” and the third person singular future middle indicative form of the verb *epimeleomai* (ἐπιμελέομαι), “**will he take care of**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία), “**of the church**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), “**of God.**”

The interrogative particle *pos* is used to ask a rhetorical question, which demands a negative answer. This rhetorical question rejects the idea that a man who has absolutely no idea how to manage his own household being qualified to take care of God's church and demands a negative answer.

Therefore, the interrogative particle *pos* should be translated “how” or “how is it possible” since there is no possibility of a man being able to care for God's church if he has no idea how to manage his own household.

¹⁵³ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, 57.4

¹⁵⁴ Louw and Nida, 10.8

The verb *epimeleomai* means “to be diligent in showing concern and care for” the body of Christ, the flock of God. This word denotes that the pastor’s “managing is to be characterized by a sensitive caring and not a dictatorial exercise of authority”.¹⁵⁵ The word denotes a compassionate care and concern for the flock of God.

The future tense is a deliberative future which asks a question that implies some doubt about the response. The force of the question is whether it is possible that a man could manage God’s church when he has not idea whatsoever how to manage his own household. Therefore, the deliberative future of this verb in this rhetorical question indicates that it absolutely impossible that a man could do so. The middle voice of *epimeleomai* is an intensive middle focusing attention on the subject, as if the intensive pronoun *autos* has been used with the subject. It focuses attention upon a hypothetical Christian man having no capacity whatsoever to care for God’s church when he has no idea whatsoever how to manage his own household. The indicative mood is an interrogative indicative used to ask a rhetorical question that demands a negative answer.

In 1 Timothy 3:5, the noun *ekklesia* refers to the Christian community and specifically a local assembly of Christians who meet in a particular location whether a house or school room. It views this local assembly as the household of God. This is indicated by the noun *oikonomia*, which appears in 1 Timothy 1:4 and means “administrate a household” and is used in relation to those pastors in Ephesus who were failing in their duties “administrating the household” of God.

The word functions as a genitive direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *epimeleomai*. We will translate *ekklesia*, “**church**.”

The noun *theos* means “God” and refers to the Father and is a genitive of possession indicating that the church “belongs to” the Father or is “His possession.”

Not a New Convert

1 Timothy 3:6 and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. (NASB95)

“**Not a new convert**” is composed of the negative particle *me* (μή), “**not**” and the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *neophutos* (νεόφυτος), “**a new convert**.”

This adjective is composed of νέος, “new” and φυτόν, “a plant,” thus the word literally means “new plant.” The word means “newly planted” and in classical Greek it is used commonly in speaking of newly planted vineyards or trees. It occurs only 5 times in the Septuagint where it is used in a metaphorical sense.

A.T. Robertson commenting on the word, writes, “Vernacular word from Aristophanes on, in LXX, and in papyri in the original sense of “newly-planted” (νεος, φυω [*neos, phuō*]).¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ Mounce, page 180

¹⁵⁶ Word Pictures in the New Testament (1 Ti 3:6); 1997; Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems

Simpson writes, “The word νεόφυτος pertains properly to nurseries of plants, and its metaphorical sense, whence comes our term *neophyte*, unexampled except tentatively in the LXX version of Psalm 143:12, may have suggested the image to the apostle.”¹⁵⁷

The term appears only once in the New Testament, 1 Timothy 3:6 where it is also used in a metaphorical sense where it describes a person who has been recently converted to Christianity. Just as a newly planted tree or vine requires time to grow and to become well rooted and strong so a new believer needs time to grow up spiritually and become firmly rooted in the teaching of the Word of God and have time to grow strong spiritually. The English word “neophyte” is transliteration of this word and it is where we get the word “novice.”

The word’s meaning is negated by the negative particle *me*, “**not**,” which denies any idea of a new converted Christian being given authority of an overseer. Therefore, Paul wants mature Christian men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher to assume the office of overseer in the local assembly and does not want new believers in this position. A new believer is very vulnerable and susceptible to false teaching, thus it is dangerous to place them in a position of authority over the flock of God. He goes on to teach here in verse 6 that they are susceptible to pride, which brought the devil to ruin.

This is why Paul issues the following prohibition in 1 Timothy 5:22.

1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure. (ESV)

Both, new or immature believers in spiritual childhood and mature believers are susceptible to arrogance. The difference between the two is that the believer in spiritual adulthood has more doctrine in his soul to combat the arrogance than does the believer still in spiritual childhood. In other words, a believer in spiritual adulthood has a greater understanding and awareness of the deception of his sin nature and the devil and his position in Christ and his dependence upon the Spirit and the Word to deal with these two enemies.

Therefore, 1 Timothy 3:6 and 5:22 emphasize that the overseer should be at some level of spiritual maturity since if he is not he will become arrogant. It also indicates that the church in Ephesus has been in existence for some time.

Arrogance

1 Timothy 3:6 and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. (NASB95)

“**So that he will not become conceited**” is composed of the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), “**so that**” and the nominative masculine singular aorist passive participle form of the verb *tuphoo* (τυφώω), “**he will not become conceited**” and the negative particle *me* (μή), “**not**.”

The conjunction *hina* is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *empipto*, “**fall**” in order to form a purpose clause that emphasizes the “intention” of the action of the verb *eimi*, “**be**” and *dei*, “**it is**,”

¹⁵⁷ Simpson, E.K., The Pastoral Epistles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary; page 53; The Tyndale Press, First Edition, September 1954

as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely imperative,” which are both omitted due to the figure of ellipsis but clearly implied. This indicates that the conjunction *hina* is introducing a clause that presents Paul’s purpose for prohibiting new believers being promoted to the office of overseer.

The verb *tuphoo* appears in both classical Greek and post-Christian writings however, it does not appear in the Septuagint. In these extra Biblical texts the word has a literal as well as a figurative sense. The former means “to delude” and in the perfect passive sense it means “to be crazy, demented.”¹⁵⁸ Figuratively, the term takes on the sense of “to be puffed up, conceited” or “to be blinded, become foolish.”

The word is only found 3 times in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:6; 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:4).

In 1 Timothy 6:4, it means “conceited, arrogant” and is used to describe those believers and those pastors in Ephesus teaching false doctrine and who rejected communicated Paul’s gospel or teaching. It means the same thing in 2 Timothy 3:4 but in this verse it is used to describe human beings in the last days.

Luke Timothy Johnson commenting on this word in our passage writes that this was a “term that is used frequently in moral discourse figuratively for the sort of arrogance that derives from a sense of superior station, whether political or moral.”¹⁵⁹

In 1 Timothy 3:6, the verb *tuphoo* means “to become arrogant” and is used to describe the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher but who is a new believer being installed in the office of overseer. The word indicates that a new believer will “become arrogant” if he is installed in the office of overseer in the local assembly. The term speaks of the arrogance that comes about in a person when they feel they are superior because of their position of authority.

The meaning of the verb *tuphoo* is not being negated by the negative particle *me* but rather it is actually negating the meaning of the verb *empipto*, “fall.” The reason is that the former functions as a participle of cause indicating the cause or reason or basis of the action of the finite verb *empipto*, “fall.” It normally precedes the verb it modifies as it does here in 1 Timothy 3:6 and thus the form follows function or in other words cause of an action precedes the action. (Wallace, page 631) Therefore, as a participle of cause the verb *tuphoo* indicates that a man who has been placed in the office of overseer will fall into the condemnation of the devil “because” he has become arrogant due to assuming this position. Therefore, it indicates that arrogance precedes a fall.

Proverbs 11:2 When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom. (ESV)

Proverbs 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. (ESV)

Thus, Paul is saying that it is absolutely imperative that the man who aspires to the office of overseer must not be a new convert in order that he will not fall into the condemnation that the devil incurred “because” he became arrogant.

¹⁵⁸ Liddell-Scott, page 1838

¹⁵⁹ Strabo, Geography 15.1.5; Plutarch, How to Tell a Flatterer 16 [Mor. 59A]; Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers 6:7; Dio Chrysostom, Oration 6:21; Josephus, Life 53).” (Johnson, Luke Timothy, The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary; The Anchor Yale Bible; page 216; Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2001

The aorist tense of the verb is ingressive used to stress the beginning or an action or the entrance into a state. Here it indicates the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher “entering into the state of arrogance” as a result of being unwisely promoted to the office of overseer.

The passive voice of the verb *tuphoo* means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject is the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer. The agency is unexpressed and refers to God. Now, the noun *diabolos*, “**devil**” is an objective genitive and speaks of the judgment that the devil received from God because of his pride and arrogance. Therefore, the passive voice indicates that Paul does not want a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher to be placed in the office of overseer because he will receive condemnation from God due to the fact that he is susceptible to pride and arrogance because he does not have the capacity to assume such a position. Thus, just as the devil received condemnation from God because of his pride and arrogance, an immature believer will receive the same from God due to pride and arrogance.

Condemnation of the Devil

1 Timothy 3:6 and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. (NASB95)

“**And fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil**” is composed of the third person singular aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *empipto* (ἐμπίπτω), “**fall**” and the preposition *eis* (εἰς), “**into**” and the accusative neuter singular form of the noun *krima* (κρίμα), “**condemnation**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *diabolos* (διάβολος), “**the devil**.”

This verb is a compound word composed of the preposition *en*, “in” and the verb *pipto*, “to fall,” thus the word literally means “to fall into.” Classical writings understood the verb to mean “to fall into.” It could also mean “to fall upon, to attack.”¹⁶⁰ Figuratively in Hellenistic texts the verb could mean “to fall among” (as “in the hands of”) such as “to fall among thieves.” In an absolute sense it can mean “to set in, arise,” such jealousy arising in a person (1 Clement 43:2). The term occurs 51 times in the Septuagint where it follows the classical usage.

Empipto occurs only 7 times in the New Testament. It is used of “falling into” a pit (Matthew 12:11; Luke 6:39) and “falling into” the hands of thieves (Luke 10:36). The term is used in Hebrews 10:31 of “falling into” the hands of God. In 1 Timothy 6:9 it is used of wealthy Christians “falling into” temptations. It is used in 1 Timothy 3:7 of “falling into” reproach.

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains list the following: (1) to fall into a particular point or location—‘to fall in(to).’¹⁶¹ (2) to experience somewhat suddenly that which is difficult or bad—‘to come to experience, to experience, to encounter, to be beset by’.¹⁶²

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition list the following New Testament usages: (1) to fall into a particular physical area, fall (in, into) (2) to

¹⁶⁰ Moulton-Milligan, page 207

¹⁶¹ 15.121

¹⁶² 90.71

experience a state or condition, fall (into/among) (3) to originate and so come to attention, set in, arise.¹⁶³

In 1 Timothy 3:6, the verb *empipto* means “to fall into” in the sense of experiencing a particular state or condition. Here it speaks of a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher experiencing divine discipline from the Lord because he became arrogant as a result of becoming an overseer when he did not have the spiritual maturity to handle such a position.

Obviously, Paul is speaking of a believer here thus his condemnation due to arrogance is not the same as the devil who rejects Jesus Christ. A believer receives divine discipline from God as a child would receive from his parents. Only unbelievers receive eternal condemnation like the devil.

Thus, this condemnation that the believer receives for arrogance is not the same as the condemnation that the devil received. They are similar in the sense that they both received punishment from God. They are also similar because this punishment in both instances is due to pride and arrogance. However, the devil’s punishment is permanent and the believer’s is not temporary.

As we noted earlier, the negative particle *me* is not negating the meaning of the verb *tuphoo* but rather *empipto*. The particle denies any idea of a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who assumes the office of overseer prematurely, falling into the condemnation of the devil because he became arrogant due to not having the capacity to be an overseer.

The subjunctive mood of the verb *empipto* is employed with the conjunction *hina* as we noted to form a purpose clause. The active voice indicates that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who is unwisely installed as an overseer over a local assembly performs the action of falling into the condemnation that the devil incurred because he became arrogant as a result of having no capacity to handle such a position. The aorist tense is an ingressive aorist indicating entrance into a particular state or condition, which is identified by Paul as the condemnation incurred by the devil.

The noun *krima* means “condemnation” and refers to the guilty verdict that the devil received for rebelling against the Lord and not repenting of it. It is the object of the preposition *eis*, which functions as a marker of entrance into a particular state or condition indicating that a man who does not have the capacity to be an overseer will enter into the state or condition of being punished by the Lord. *Krima* functions as an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *empipto*.

The noun *diabolos* means “devil” referring to God’s greatest enemy among the angels. The articular construction of the word indicates that this noun and who it refers to is well-known to Paul’s readers. This word occurs infrequently in classical Greek where it is used as a substantive meaning “slanderer.” It comes from the verb *diaballo*, “to set against” and is related to the noun *diabole*, “false accusation, slander.”

Diabolos is found 22 times in the Septuagint and served as an equivalent to two Hebrew terms, most often *satan*, from which comes the name “Satan.” Where *diabolos* translates this Hebrew term it usually refers to God’s greatest adversary among the angels (Job 1:6, 7, 9, 12 etc.). It can be used in a less precise sense to mean “evil man” (Psalm 109:6 [LXX 108:6]). The articular construction of the word

¹⁶³ Page 324

does not guarantee that the word refers to Satan. Interestingly, the angel of Yahweh in Numbers 22:22-23 is described as a *satan* when opposing Balaam.

In the New Testament, the word *diabolos* is used the majority of the time to refer to Satan, the fallen angel. The only exceptions appear in 1 Timothy 3:11, 2 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 2:3 where it refers to “malicious gossips.” In each of these instances, the word is anarthrous and in the plural. The only two instances where this word appears in the Pastoral Epistles is 1 Timothy 3:6, 7 and 2 Timothy 2:26. In each of these instances, the word is in the singular and is articular. Also, with one exception, the noun in the New Testament is articular singular and always means “the devil.” The exception is in John 6:70 where the word is anarthrous singular but still refers to the devil. Therefore, based upon this evidence, the noun *diabolos* means “the devil” and refers to God’s greatest enemy among the fallen angels.

The word can be interpreted either as an objective or subjective genitive. The former functions semantically as the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun. The latter functions semantically as the direct object of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun. The former would indicate that devil himself would be the agent used by God to inflict punishment upon the believer who falls into arrogance as an overseer. The latter would indicate that the believer who falls into arrogance as an overseer would be punished by God like the devil was punished for his arrogance.

In support of the subjective genitive is the phrase *παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου*, “**the snare of the devil**” that appears in verse 8 and has the devil as the subject of the action. However, parallel structure does not necessarily solve the issue since it would make verse 8 redundant. Also, further support for the subjective genitive is found in 1 Timothy 1:20, which teaches that Paul disciplined Hymenaeus and Alexander by handing them over to Satan indicating that Satan would be used by God as God’s agent in disciplining these two wayward pastors.

The answer lies in the fact that the Bible teaches us that God judged Satan because he became arrogant. The judgment of Satan is emphasized throughout the New Testament. Thus, Paul is comparing the arrogance of the overseer with that of the devil. Satan once led the angels in ministering to God but fell from his position because of arrogance and was punished by God. Paul is comparing an immature overseer with Satan and does not want an immature overseer falling from his position of ministering to God like Satan fell. So, Paul’s emphasis is that arrogance in a leadership position results in God’s punishing the one in that position. Therefore, it is better to interpret *diabolos* as an objective genitive indicating that the believer who falls into arrogance as an overseer would be punished by God like the devil was punished for his arrogance.

Good Reputation

The apostle Paul in verse 7 presents the fifteenth qualification that must be met by those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspire to the office of overseer in order for them to be promoted to this office. This qualification demands that the man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must be an individual whose life consists of actions, which serve as testimony to a man’s character and integrity. The life of the pastor-teacher must reflect his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. He should have a reputation for character and integrity even with the unbeliever (See 1 Peter 2:12).

1 Timothy 3:7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (NASB95)

“**And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church**” is composed of the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *dei* (δεῖ), “**he must**” and the conjunction *de* (δέ), “**and**” that is followed by the conjunction *kai* (καί) and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *marturia* (μαρτυρία), “**a reputation**” and the accusative feminine singular form of the adjective *kalos* (καλός), “**good**” and the present active infinitive form of the verb *echo* (ἔχω), “**have**” preposition *apo* (ἀπό), “**with**” and its object is the articular genitive masculine plural form of the adverb *exother* (ἐξωθεν), “**those outside.**”

De kai appeared together in 1 Timothy 1:9 to mark an emphatic contrast. Here in 1 Timothy 3:7 they present an emphatic addition. The conjunction *de* is used in an adjunctive sense meaning that it is introducing a qualification that is in addition to the previous fourteen qualifications listed in verses 2-6. The conjunction *kai* is emphatic meaning that the word is emphasizing this fifteenth and final qualification that appears in the pericope. It is emphasizing that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who desires to be promoted to the office of overseer must have a good reputation with unbelievers is extremely important in order that they might not fall into disgrace and not be caught in the devil’s trap. The pastor must have a reputation among the unsaved in his community because he possesses a lifestyle of unquestioned integrity.

The verb *dei* expresses the necessity that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, who aspires to the office of overseer must possess a good reputation with the unsaved in the community if he is to be promoted to this position. The present tense of the verb is “gnomic” used of a general timeless fact indicating an eternal spiritual truth or spiritual axiom. This indicates that it “is as an eternal spiritual truth” necessary or imperative that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, who aspires to the office of overseer must possess a good reputation with the unsaved in his community. The active voice is also “stative” indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb *dei*. Therefore, the “stative” active voice indicates that the nature of the office of overseer as the subject “exist in the state of” demanding that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, who aspires to this office must possess a good reputation with the unsaved in his community. The indicative mood is “potential,” which is used with verbs of obligation, wish or desire followed by an infinitive. In our passage, we have the verb *dei*, which is a verb of obligation and is followed by the infinitive form of the verb *echo*, “**have.**”

The verb *echo* means “to possess a particular characteristic,” which is identified by the expression μαρτυρίαν καλὴν, “good reputation.” This indicates that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who desires to be promoted to the office of overseer must “possess” a good reputation with the unsaved in his community.

The present tense of the verb *echo* is a customary present signaling an ongoing state indicating that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer must “exist in the state of” possessing a good reputation with the unsaved in his community if he is to be promoted to that position. The active voice is stative indicating that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer must as the subject “exist in the state of” possessing a good reputation with the unsaved in his community if he is to be promoted to that position. The verb is a complementary infinitive meaning that it is completing the thought of *dei*, which makes no sense without it.

The noun *marturia* means “reputation” and is used of the opinion of the unsaved with regards to the character and integrity of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of

overseer. It refers to the unsaved's evaluation or assessment of the conduct and character of the man with the spiritual gift pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer.

The noun denotes the truthful evidence given by the unsaved in assessment of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who desires to be promoted to the office of overseer. It is the "testimony" of the unsaved with regards to the moral character and worthy of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer. The word speaks of the recognition by the unsaved that the aspiring overseer has a lifestyle that is marked by good moral character and integrity.

The appearance of the adjective *kalos* in 1 Timothy 3:7 marks the fourth time that the word has occurred in the epistle. It is used to modify the noun *marturia*, which as we noted speaks of the "**reputation**" of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer. The adjective means "excellent" and describes this reputation as being of a high moral quality or character with the implication that this person is a great benefit to the community in which he lives.

The adverb *exother* is a compound word composed of the adverb *exo*, "outside" and the suffix *then*. Greek words with this suffix answer the question "from where?" However, it is stereotyped and meaningless for the most in *exother*.¹⁶⁴

The term occurs 45 times in the Septuagint where it is used most often to translate various forms of the same Hebrew word *chuts*, "outside, abroad." Like *exo*, the adverb *exother* is used as an adverb of place (LXX 4 Kings 6:6) and as a preposition (Exodus 26:35). *Exother* occurs 13 times in the New Testament.

In 1 Timothy 3:7, the adverb *exother* is in the plural and functions as a substantive, which is indicated by its articular construction. The word means "those outside" and refers to those who are not saved through faith alone in Christ alone and are thus not part of the Christian community from God's perspective. Paul uses the shorter form of *exother*, which *exo* in order to refer to unbelievers in 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, Colossians 4:5 and 1 Thessalonians 4:12.

Exother is used here in 1 Timothy 3:7 as the object of the preposition *apo*, which functions as a marker of source. This indicates the source of the excellent reputation of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer. It indicates that this excellent reputation must "originate from" those outside the Christian community.

Reproach

1 Timothy 3:7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (NASB95)

"**So that he will not fall into reproach**" is composed of the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), "**so that**" and the negative particle *me* (μή), "**not**" that is followed by the preposition *eis* (εἰς), "**into**" and the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *oneidismos* (ὀνειδισμός), "**reproach**" and the third person singular aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *emipto* (ἐμπίπτω), "**he will fall.**"

¹⁶⁴ Blass, F. and Debrunner, A., A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, A Translation and Revision of the ninth-tenth German Edition incorporating supplementary notes of A. Debrunner by Robert W. Funk, page 56; The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1961

The conjunction *hina* is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *empipto*, “**fall**” in order to form a purpose clause that emphasizes the “intention” of the action of the verb *dei* and *echo*. This indicates that the conjunction *hina* is introducing a clause that presents Paul’s purpose for demanding that men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher and who desire to be promoted to the office of overseer must have an excellent reputation with the unbelievers in the community.

The verb *empipto* means “to fall into” in the sense of experiencing a particular state or condition. Here it speaks of a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer “falling into” reproach. The verb’s meaning is negated by the negative particle *me*, which denies any idea of a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to be promoted to the office of overseer falling into reproach because he has a bad reputation with the unsaved in his community.

The subjunctive mood of the verb *empipto* is employed with the conjunction *hina* as we noted to form a purpose clause. The active voice indicates that the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who is unwisely installed as an overseer over a local assembly performs the action of falling into the condemnation that the devil incurred because he became arrogant as a result of having no capacity to handle such a position. The aorist tense is an ingressive aorist indicating entrance into a particular state or condition, which is identified by Paul as reproach.

This noun means “reproach, disgrace” or “insult” and is derived from the verb *oneidizo*, which means “to revile” or “to insult” and is used here as well in Romans 15:3. This word appears quite late in extant Greek literature since its earliest known instances are from the Koine period.

It appears 73 times in the Septuagint but only five times in the Greek New Testament (Romans 15:3; 1 Timothy 3:7; Hebrews 10:33; 11:26; 13:13). The most notable of the many occurrences of *oneidismos* in the Septuagint is that the word is used several times in Psalm 69 (LXX 68) (verses 7, 9, 10, 19, 20). In Psalm 69:9, King David laments his unjust treatment from men because of his devotion to God. Of course, as we noted Paul quotes from King David in Romans 15:3 and applies this Psalm to the Lord Jesus Christ to describe His humiliation at the cross when enduring insults from sinners for doing the Father’s will.

In 1 Timothy 3:7, *oneidismos* means “disgrace” and speaks of justifiable reproach or rejection by the unbelievers due to immorality or improper behavior. It refers to a total loss of credibility as a result of immoral or improper conduct. The word is the object of the preposition *eis*, which functions as a marker of entrance into a particular state or condition. This indicates that a man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, who aspires to be an overseer will enter into the state or condition of being disgraced if he has a bad reputation with the unbelievers in his community.

Snare of the Devil

1 Timothy 3:7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (NASB95)

“**And snare of the devil**” is composed of the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” which is followed by the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *pagis* (παγίς), “**snare**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *diabolos* (διάβολος), “**of the devil**.”

The conjunction *kai* is consecutive meaning that it is introducing a clause that presents the result of the falling into disgrace with the unsaved in the community or in other words, falling into disgrace “is the direct result of” the devils’ trap. This word in classical Greek primarily denotes a “trap” or a “snare.” It represents devices that bring danger or death with an often unexpected suddenness. The term is found in the Septuagint where it appears 62 times to denote a “trap.” The noun occurs only 5 times in the New Testament where it is used to describe the trap or snare in terms that make the results grim and lethal because of the unexpected aspect of the situation (Luke 21:35; Romans 11:9; 1 Timothy 3:7; 6:9; 2 Timothy 2:26).

In 1 Timothy 3:7, the noun *pagis* means “snare” and refers to the various temptations such as pride, money, women and ambition that lead one into sin, which pastor-teachers are warned about throughout the Pastoral Epistles. The word is the object of the preposition *eis*, which we noted functions as a marker of entrance into a particular state or condition. This indicates the entrance into the state or condition of trapped by the devil.

The noun *diabolos* means “devil” referring to God’s greatest enemy among the angels. The articular construction of the word is anaphoric indicating that the word is used in verse 6 and that in verse 7 it has the same referent.

The word can be interpreted either as an objective or subjective genitive. The former functions semantically, as the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun. The latter functions semantically, as the direct object of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun. The former would indicate that devil is the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the noun *pagis*, “trap.” The latter would indicate that Paul wants pastors to have an excellent reputation with the unsaved in the community in order that they would not fall into disgrace just as the devil fell into disgrace through pride.

In support of the subjective genitive is that in verse 7 the word was used as an objective genitive, which would be redundant if it occurred again here in verse 8. Furthermore, *kai* is consecutive indicating that falling into disgrace is the direct result of the devil’s trap or temptation to sin. Also, Paul’s statement in 2 Timothy 2:26 also indicate a subjective genitive here in 1 Timothy 3:7.

Royal Ambassadorship of the Pastor-Teacher

1 Timothy 3:7 speaks of the royal ambassadorship of the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher who aspires to the office of overseer.

At the moment of conversion, God gives the church-age believer two royal commissions: (1) a royal ambassadorship (2 Corinthians 5:20), which represents Christ before the unbeliever and (2) a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:5, 9), which represents himself before God.

At the moment of his conversion, the church age believer was given a royal ambassadorship in which he is to represent the absent Christ who sits as the right hand of the Father and presents the gospel message of peace with God to the unsaved through faith alone in Christ alone (2 Corinthians 5:20a).

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in

Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (NASB95)

The believer's responsibility is to clearly present the gospel message to the unbeliever and the rest depends upon the convincing ministry of God the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-11). He is also to conduct himself with respect to the unsaved in an excellent and praiseworthy manner, bringing no reproach to the name of Christ.

1 Peter 2:12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. (NASB95)

The church age believer as a member of the royal family of God represents his King, the Lord Jesus Christ, on official business. This official business is the communication of the gospel or the good news that Jesus Christ died for every sin committed in the human race-past, present and future and has reconciled us to God the Father with His death.

An ambassador is a high-ranking minister or member of royalty sent to represent his nation in a foreign country. As spiritual ambassadors, the church age believer represents the Lord Jesus Christ in the devil's kingdom. The church age believer represents the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Lord Jesus Christ who is now absent from the earth because He sits at the right hand of God representing us before God the Father as our High Priest.

As royal ambassadors, believers are responsible for "witnessing" to the unbeliever, which is communicating God's plan of salvation to unbelievers on a personal basis in two ways: (1) The example of your life (2 Corinthians 3:3; 6:3). (2) Your words (2 Corinthians 5:18-21; 6:2).

Just like an ambassador in the natural realm has his instructions in written form so the church age believer's written instructions are found in the Bible. Just like an ambassador in the natural realm does not belong to the country to which he is sent so church age believers are citizens of heaven, and do not belong to the devil's world (Philippians 3:20). Every church age believer as a royal ambassador for Christ has the responsibility to proclaim the gospel to the unbeliever and to conduct himself an excellent fashion with respect to them so as to lead them to the Savior.

Titus 1:6-9

The apostle Paul wrote not only to Timothy regarding the qualifications for the man who aspires to the office of overseer but also to a man named Titus. The name Titus means, "pleasant." He was a trusted companion of the apostle Paul who had been left as superintendent of the churches on the island of Crete. Like the first epistle to Timothy, this letter had as its purpose to give the young pastor instructions to aid him in his work.

Paul first mentions Titus in Galatians 2:1-3. As an uncircumcised Gentile, Titus accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem as a living example of a great theological truth: Gentiles do not need to be circumcised in order to be saved.

Titus next appears in connection with Paul's mission to Corinth. While Paul was in Ephesus during his third missionary journey, he received disturbing news from the church at Corinth. After writing two letters and paying one visit to Corinth, Paul sent Titus to Corinth with a third letter (2 Corinthians 7:6-9). When Titus failed to return with news of the situation, Paul left Ephesus and, with a troubled spirit (2 Corinthians 7:5), traveled north to Troas (2 Corinthians 2:12-13). Finally, in Macedonia, Titus met the anxious apostle with the good news that the church at Corinth had repented. In relief and joy, Paul wrote yet another letter to Corinth (2 Corinthians), perhaps from Philippi, sending it again through Titus (2 Corinthians 7:5-16).

In addition, Titus was given responsibility for completing the collection for the poor of Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:6,16-24; 12:18). Titus appears in another important role on the island of Crete (Titus 1:4). Beset by a rise in false teaching and declining morality, Titus was told by Paul to strengthen the churches by teaching sound doctrine and good works, and by appointing elders in every city (Titus 1:5). Paul then urged Titus to join him in Nicopolis (on the west coast of Greece) for winter (Titus 3:12). Not surprisingly, Titus was remembered in church tradition as the first pastor of Crete. A final reference to Titus comes from 2 Timothy 4:10, where Paul remarks in passing that Titus has departed for mission work in Dalmatia (modern Yugoslavia).

Titus was a man for the tough tasks. According to Paul, he was dependable (2 Cor 8:17), reliable (2 Cor 7:6), and diligent (2 Cor 8:17); and he had a great capacity for human affection (2 Cor 7:13-15). Titus possessed both strength, tact, and calmed a desperate situation on more than one occasion. He is a good model for Christians who are called to live out their witness in trying circumstances.

Paul gave Timothy 15 qualifications but he gives Titus 17. Of course, many of these qualifications that Paul gives Titus he also gave to Timothy, therefore, we will only note here in Titus 1 those qualifications that were not given to Timothy.

Titus 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, 3 but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior, 4 to Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. 5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you. (NASB95)

“Elders” is the adjective *presbuteros*, which as we noted in our vocabulary study emphasizes the pastor’s role as chief policy maker of the church since he is the one delegated by the Holy Spirit with authority to communicate the Word of God (Acts 20:17, 1 Timothy 5:1, 17, 19; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1).

Titus 1:6 namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. (NASB95)

We have here an elliptical first class condition statement where the protasis is absent but implied from the context (namely, verse 5) and the particle *oun* that usually introduces the apodosis in first class condition statements is absent as well since it is implied too. The protasis is the premise and apodosis is the conclusion.

Titus 1:6 If-and let us assume for the sake of argument you appoint elders, and we agree that you need to appoint elders, then they must be of irreproachable character, the husband of one wife, having believing children, who are not under accusation of loose living, or rebellious. (Author's translation)

“**Above reproach**” is the adjective *anenketos* refers to the fact that in order to be ordained the man with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher must have a good reputation in the local assembly in the sense that he has led an exemplary life that there is no occasion to call him to account or bring a charge against him.

We have already noted in 1 Timothy 3 the second qualification listed here in Titus 1:6, “**the husband of one wife**,” therefore we will move on to the third and fourth qualifications.

“**Having children who believe**” refers to the fact that the man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must also be able to lead his own children to the Lord.

“**Not accused of dissipation or rebellion**” refers to the fact that the children or teenagers of the man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must not be under the accusation of rebellion against legitimate authority.

Titus 1:7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain. (NASB95)

“**Not self-willed**” is composed of the negative particle *me* and the adjective *authades*, “one who pleases himself, self-pleasing, self-satisfied, self-willed, stubborn, obstinate, arrogant, one who pleases himself without regard for the rights, feelings and interests of others, selfish.”

Trench defines the word, “the person who is so pleased with himself and his own actions that nothing else pleases him. He is the person who regards nothing as correct except what he himself does. He so overestimates any determination of his own that he will not be moved from it. Such a person obstinately maintains his own opinion and asserts his own rights, regardless of the rights, feelings, and interests of others. With no motive at all, he is quick to act contrary to the feelings of others, rather than to fall in with them”.¹⁶⁵

“**Not quick-tempered**” is composed of the negative particle *me* and the adjective *orgilos*, “quick-tempered, inclined to anger, irritable, easily provoked to anger.” It is related to the noun *orge*, “anger, wrath.” This adjective describes a person who cannot control his anger. Anger is a sin (Prov. 22:24; 29:22; Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:8).

¹⁶⁵ Trench Synonyms of the New Testament pages 367-368

The next four qualifications that appear in Titus 1:7 also appear in 1 Timothy 3:2-3, thus we will not study them.

Titus 1:8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled. (NASB95)

“**Loving what is good**” is the adjective *philagathos*, “a lover of divine good, a lover of good of intrinsic value.”

We have already noted the next qualification “**sensible**” in 1 Timothy 3:2.

“**Just**” is the adjective *dikaios*, “just, righteous, virtuous, one who fulfills his obligations to God and man, well-balanced in his relationships with both God and man.”

In the Greco-Roman world, *dikaios* applied to the model citizen. In the classical period, *dikaios* described individuals who were “well-balanced, fair, impartial, lawful, and just in their dealings with men.” They were individuals who fulfilled their legal obligations in life. Our Lord used *dikaios* to describe the Father (John 17:25). It is also used to describe Abel (Matthew 23:5), and God’s judgment on an unbelieving world (Revelation 19:2). It is used with reference to those believers in Christ who have received the imputation of divine righteousness at the moment of conversion (Romans 5:19; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38; 1 Peter 3:12; 4:18).

Dikaios in Titus 1:8 describes the man who has personal love for God the Father, thus fulfilling his obligation to God and operates in the love of God toward all men, thus, fulfilling his obligation to man. It describes the model citizen according to the Word of God.

“**Devout**” is the adjective *hosios*, which means “holy, one who has integrity, one who is faithful or loyal in his relationships with both God and man.”

“**Self-controlled**” is the adjective *enkrates*, which describes someone who is “disciplined, self-control, organized life, one who has right priorities” which are based upon the Word of God.

Enkrates comes from the verb stem *krat*, “power, lordship,” and the prefix *en*, thus it expresses the power or lordship, which one has either over oneself or over something. In classical literature, it could mean, “to have power or dominion over all things and over oneself, to be inwardly strong, one who has endurance.” According to Galatians 5:23, God the Holy Spirit will produce this Christ-like characteristic in a believer (Galatians 5:23).

The adjective *enkrates* indicates that the man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must be disciplined meaning that he makes the study of the Word of God and applying it his number one priority in life.

Titus 1:9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. (NASB95)

Titus 1:9 states that the man who aspires to the spiritual gift of overseer must hold fast cling to, be devoted, occupied with the Word of God in the midst of stiff opposition.

The Greek word translated “**holding fast**” speaks of occupation and devotion to something. The man who aspires to the office of overseer must continually devote or occupy himself with the Word of God in the midst of stiff opposition in accordance to that which his pastor-teacher has taught him.

Paul uses the phrase “**sound doctrine**,” which means “healthy doctrine” that promotes spiritual growth and protects the believer’s soul from the lies of the cosmic system of Satan. The man who aspires to the office of pastor-teacher must be able to do two things according to Titus 1:9: (1) Teach the Word of God (2) Refute the heretics.

Concluding Thoughts on the Pastor-Teacher

This subject of the pastor-teacher is extremely important since the spiritual growth and protection of the church from false doctrine is directly related to the function of this spiritual gift. Therefore, it is critical for the spiritual health of the individual believer and the church to recognize the delegated authority of the man with this spiritual gift. The authority of this position is being attacked by the kingdom of darkness resulting in spiritual disaster for many believers and churches.

Furthermore, this study is extremely important for pastors since many are not being taught in churches and seminaries the responsibilities of the pastor as stipulated in the Word of God. Thus, because of ignorance of these responsibilities, many pastors are having responsibilities heaped upon them that are taking them away from what the Lord wants them to do. Or, this ignorance has led to placing men in the position of a pastor when they are simply not qualified or in many cases they, don’t even have the gift to start with.

The issue of women pastors has been dealt with in this study and we have found that women do not have the gift and should never be pastors because of creation and the fall. Women pastors are therefore a blatant rejection of the Word of God. This too has led to disastrous results in the church and a poor testimony for the church in the world since the church is to reflect the divine order and women pastors reject this order!

We have also seen in this study that though a man might possess the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher, he should by no means be installed as the head of a local assembly until he has met certain qualifications. The man who aspires to the office of overseer must consistently over a period of years demonstrate certain characteristics to the congregation he serves before he can assume this most lofty position. The failure to understand this in the church has also led to disastrous results with respect to the church and its testimony to the unsaved.

We are in dangerous times. Satan and his kingdom know that they do not have much time left. Time is running out for him and his kingdom, thus they have intensified their attack upon the church. In particular, they are waging an intense war against those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher since it is the function of this gift that feeds the Word of God to the flock of God. Satan, the roaring lion, knows that he can consume the flock of God easily without a shepherd to lead them. Pray for the church and the men who lead it. Pray that the Lord will continue to raise up faithful men in the future to lead His people

Chapter Twelve: Church Discipline

One of the most controversial subjects in the Word of God is that of church discipline. Too often, it has not been practiced in many churches which has resulted in disastrous consequences in the sense that it has destroyed the testimony of these churches before the world. Unfortunately, many churches describe their legalistic bullying of other Christians, who did not fit their non-Biblical requirements for a Christian, as church discipline. This too has produced disastrous consequences resulting in damaged souls who have been abused by these hypocritical, self-righteous people. Because of this abuse, many churches don't even attempt to practice it.

Wiersbe writes "Church discipline usually goes to one of two extremes. Either there is no discipline at all, and the church languishes because of disobedience and sin. Or the church officers become evangelical policemen who hold a kangaroo court and violate many of the Bible's spiritual principles."¹⁶⁶

However, the teaching of the Word of God says it must and should be administered by the church when appropriate circumstances call for it. The Bible teaches when and who we are to discipline. The Lord has ordered the church to administer discipline to those who are living ungodly lifestyles and who are habitually living in rejection of the Word of God. It is to be administered for the spiritual well-being of these individuals who are living in apostasy.

Church discipline is based upon God's holiness and is patterned after God's discipline of the church. Failure to administer church discipline when it is called for demonstrates a church's lack of awareness or concern for God's holiness. Church discipline is taught in Matthew 18:15-18, Romans 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:6-11; Galatians 6:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-16; 2 Timothy 2:23-26; Titus 3:10; 2 John 9-11.

The purpose of church discipline is always restoration and not revenge. The purpose of this discipline is to deliver the offender from sinful patterns of behavior and not to drive him or her away from the fellowship of the church. The church's attitude is to be one of love and gentleness (Galatians 6:1-3).

J. Hampton Keathley III commenting on church discipline writes, "(1) The discipline of the church is first patterned after the fact that the Lord Himself disciplines His children (Hebrews 12:6) and, as a father delegates part of the discipline of the children to the mother, so the Lord has delegated the discipline of the church family to the church itself (1 Corinthians 5:12-13; 2 Corinthians 2:6). (2) Discipline is further based on the holy character of God (1 Peter 1:16; Hebrews 12:11). The pattern of God's holiness—His desire for the church to be holy, set apart unto Him—is an important reason for the necessity of church discipline. The church is therefore to clean out the leaven of malice and wickedness from its ranks (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). A failure to exercise discipline in the church evidences a lack of awareness of and concern for the holiness of God. (3) Church discipline is to be patterned after and based on the divine commands of Scripture (1 Corinthians 4:6). We have numerous passages of Scripture which both command and give us God's directives on the how, why, when, and where of church discipline. Again, a failure to exercise this responsibility demonstrates a lack of obedience and belief in the authority of the Bible (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Matthew 18:17-18; Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians

¹⁶⁶ Wiersbe, W. W.; *The Bible Exposition Commentary*; Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books; 1996

3:6-15; 1 Timothy 5:20; Galatians 6:1). (4) Another basis for the necessity of church discipline is the testimony of the church in the world (1 Peter 4:13-19). The world observes the behavior and life of the church. When the church acts no differently than the world, it loses its credibility and authenticity (1 Peter 2:11-18; 3:8-16; 4:1-4).”¹⁶⁷

Keathley lists the purposes for administering church discipline “(1) To bring glory to God and enhance the testimony of the flock. (2) To restore, heal, and build up sinning believers (Matthew 18:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Hebrews 12:10-13; Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:20). (3) To produce a healthy faith, one sound in doctrine (Tit. 1:13; 1 Timothy 1:19-20). (4) To win a soul to Christ, if the sinning person is only a professing Christian (2 Timothy 2:24-26). (5) To silence false teachers and their influence in the church (Tit. 1:10-11). (6) To set an example for the rest of the body and promote godly fear (1 Timothy 5:20). (7) To protect the church against the destructive consequences that occur when churches fail to carry out church discipline. A church that fails to exercise discipline experiences four losses: The Loss of Purity: Church discipline is vital to the purity of the local body and its protection from moral decay and impure doctrinal influences. Why? Because a little leaven leavens the entire lump (1 Corinthians 5:6-7). This is the “rotten apple” problem or the “snowball” effect. An illustration of this is the Corinthian church which showed a lack of concern for purity. They neglected the responsibility to discipline and suffered as a result. Their insensitivity to one moral issue may have led to their compromise on other issues. Laney writes, ‘The Corinthians engaged in lawsuits, misused their liberty, profaned the Lord’s Supper, neglected the primacy of love, failed to regulate the use of their gifts, and questioned the resurrection.’ Failure in church discipline in Corinth could be compared to a snowball tumbling downhill. The Loss of Power: Sin in the life of the church grieves the person of the Holy Spirit and quenches His power. If sin remains unchecked by the loving application of church discipline in a body of believers, the Holy Spirit must abandon such a church to its own carnal resources. The unavoidable result will be the loss of the Lord’s blessing until the sin is dealt with. The defeat of Israel because of the sin of Achan in Joshua 7 illustrates the principle. This is just as true for the church today, especially when we know certain things exist but ignore them or simply look the other way because it is difficult to deal with or because it involves one of our friends and we do not want to risk causing problems in the relationship. The Loss of Progress: A church that refuses to practice church discipline will see its ministry decline. The church may want to grow and reach out and it may try all kinds of stop gap measures, promotional campaigns, and programs in an attempt to turn things around, but if there is sin in the camp, it will all be to no avail. See Revelation 2:5 and 3:16 for illustrations of this principle. The Loss of Purpose: As His ambassadors to a lost and dying world, God has called the church to be a holy people, a people who, standing out as distinct from the world, proclaim the excellencies of the works of God in Christ (1 Peter 1:14-16; 2:9-15). If this is to occur, we must be different from the world and church discipline helps us to both remember and maintain that purpose. One of the recurring judgments against the church today as demonstrated in various polls taken across the country is the fact there is little or no difference between the church and the secular world when it comes to attitudes, values, morals, and lifestyle. We have lost our sense of purpose.”¹⁶⁸

How We Are to Discipline

Church discipline should be administered by those who are in fellowship with God and are knowledgeable of the Word of God and filled with the Spirit (Galatians 6:1). It must be done with an attitude of humility, gentleness and patience, always looking to ourselves that we too might not be

¹⁶⁷ Church Discipline, pages 1

¹⁶⁸ Church Discipline, pages 1-2

tempted (Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:24-25). It must be done impartially (1 Timothy 5:21). Those who are disciplined are to be warned and must be appealed to in love (1 Thessalonians 5:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; Ephesians 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:2).

This discipline, is not restricted to church leaders, but may be done by any person in the body with another if that person is influenced by the Spirit and governed by Him (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

If the person who is confronted does not stop and obey the Word of God, then they are to be publicly rebuked. No one in the congregation is to fellowship with them. The purpose for withholding fellowship with the sinning Christian is to make clear to them that they have dishonored the Lord and have caused a terrible disturbance in the body. The goal of such discipline is always restoration and the person is still to be counted as a brother or sister in Christ (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).

Also, this expulsion from the fellowship of the church is designed to create fear in the rest of the flock as a warning against sin (1 Timothy 5:20). Those who do not respond to the discipline are to be excommunicated (Matthew 18:17).

Several examples of church discipline are found in Scripture. The Corinthian church was to gather together for the purpose of taking action against the offending brother or sister (1 Corinthians 5:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15). This is defined by Paul as “punishment inflicted by the majority” (2 Corinthians 2:6). It must always be remembered that there must be a readiness to forgive (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

Who We Are to Discipline

Now, we must be very careful that when administering church discipline that we are not censuring someone for our taboos or pet peeves. As Keathley states “Scripture, not our opinions or dislikes, must be the guide for what is sin.”

The church is to administer discipline for those whose conduct is disorderly and negatively impacts the testimony of the church before the world (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15). Discipline is to be used with divisive or factious people causing divisions in the church (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-11). Those involved in immorality such as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5 are to be disciplined. Also, those involved with covetousness, idolatry, abusive speech, drunkenness, swindling, or idle busybodies who refuse to work and run around spreading dissension (1 Corinthians 5:1, 11; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-15). Those who teach false doctrine are to be disciplined as Paul did with Hymenaeus and Alexander.

Why We Discipline

It is extremely important that the church understands why disciplined must be administered. First of all, God’s holy character requires it. Secondly, it is for the testimony of the church. It also effects the unity and purity of the church. Lastly, discipline is for spiritual edification and restoration of the individual.

Procedure to Follow in Administering Discipline

The scriptural procedure is clear and specific steps are prescribed. First if one sees the offense or has an accurate knowledge of the sin or sins, one must be sure is calls for discipline and is not merely

something that is one of your taboos or pet peeves. The Word of God will guide us. Also, we all must know that we have all sinned and so we are to heed the warning in Galatians 6:1.

We also must go to the Father in prayer before we confront the wayward Christians (1 Samuel 8:6). We are not to procrastinate. Otherwise, the situation will only get worse. There is also to be no gossip about the person who is disciplined (cf. Proverbs 6:19; 10:19; 11:13; 18:8, 21; 20:19). We must first go to the offender in private and seeks to correct the situation privately (Matthew 18:15).

One must express genuine appreciation for the person who is the offender. He brings out in the conversation their good qualities. We must listen to the other person's side of the story and seek the facts in the interest of truth and fairness. If the person fails to respond, warn them that, according to the instructions of Scripture (Matthew 18:16), you will have to get others as witnesses and return with them to deal with the problem.

If the first step fails, take witnesses to strengthen the effect of the discipline, preferably spiritual leaders, so that if it has to be brought before the whole church it can be firmly proven and established (Matthew 18:16-17; 1 Timothy 5:19). The aid of church leadership should be sought if the problem involves an offense that is against the whole body or if it is a threat to the unity of the body.

These initial contacts, private and with witnesses, provide opportunity for correction, and forgiveness in love. On the other hand, if these first steps do not produce results, it constitutes a warning that further action will be taken and provides occasion for serious rebuke (2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Titus 2:15; 3:10).

If the second step fails, seek reconciliation and restoration through the whole body. If further action is necessary, it is to be taken before the whole church (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Matthew 18:17; 1 Timothy 5:20). 2 Thessalonians 3:14 and 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 with Matthew 18:17 indicate that the church is to exercise group disapproval by way of social ostracism (refusal to have intimate fellowship). If this does not work, the church is to remove the offender from the church fellowship. This must be approved of and done by the entire congregation (2 Corinthians 2:6). The Lord is exercising this discipline through the church's actions.

1 Timothy 1:20 - Paul Handed Over Hymenaeus And Alexander to Satan In Order to Discipline Them Not to Blaspheme

The apostle Paul in verse 20 identifies two pastors who suffered the shipwreck of their faith, namely Hymenaeus and Alexander. He also reveals that he administered discipline to these two individuals by handing them over to Satan in order that they would be taught not to blaspheme.

1 Timothy 1:18 This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, 19 keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. 20 Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme. (NASB95)

“Among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander” is composed of the genitive masculine plural form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὃς), “among whom” and the third person singular present active

indicative form of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί), “**are**” and the nominative masculine singular form of the proper noun *Hymenaios* (Ὑμέναιος), “**Hymenaeus**” and the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” followed by the nominative masculine singular form of the proper noun *Alexandros* (Ἀλέξανδρος), “**Alexander.**”

The antecedent of the relative pronoun *hos* is the nominative masculine plural form of the indefinite pronoun *tis* (τις), “**some,**” which refers to certain unidentified Christian pastor-teachers who taught false doctrines in fulfillment of Paul’s prophesy recorded in Acts 20:28. Therefore, *hos* in verse 20 refers to these pastors. The word functions as a partitive genitive meaning that it denotes these pastors as a whole of which Hymenaeus and Alexander were a part.

The verb *eimi* means, “to belong to a particular class of individuals.” This particular group of individuals is identified in verse 19 as those pastors in Ephesus who have suffered the shipwreck of their faith. Thus, the word denotes that Hymenaeus and Alexander belonged to a certain class of Christian pastors in Ephesus who suffered the shipwreck of their faith.

To suffer shipwreck of one’s faith means that these pastors experienced spiritual disaster. It speaks of the catastrophic damage to their fellowship with God and the church as a result of rejecting Paul’s teaching and adhering to the false teaching of the Judaizers. Consequently this rejection of Paul’s teaching adversely affected their conscience, i.e. their norms and standards. Therefore, because these pastors in Ephesus rejected faith in Paul’s apostolic teaching, i.e. his gospel, this rejection adversely affected their norms and standards and thus their conduct and speech. So, this verb describes the disastrous consequences of this rejection in that it caused them to lose fellowship God, which results in divine discipline from God.

The present tense and the active voice of the verb *eimi* is a “customary” or “stative” present used to signal an ongoing state. This indicates that Hymenaeus and Alexander “existed in a state of” suffering the shipwreck of their faith. The indicative mood of the verb is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement. We will translate *eimi*, “**are.**”

The name “Hymenaeus” is taken from the Greek god of marriage. It appears only twice in the New Testament (1:20; 2 Timothy 2:17). This individual was one of these unidentified pastors in Ephesus who was disciplined by the apostle Paul and thus expelled from the fellowship of the church in that city. His sin is revealed by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:17-18. Therefore, we can see from this passage that Hymenaeus was teaching that the resurrection or rapture of the church had already taken place, which upset the faith of many Christians in Ephesus. The Thessalonian church also was exposed to this false teaching prompting Paul to write two epistles to them to resolve the problem.

Paul’s statement here in 1 Timothy 1:20 makes clear that Hymenaeus did not stop propagating this teaching after being confronted by Paul and ordered to do so. This led to the apostle administering church discipline and expelling him from the fellowship of the church. If he had stopped, Paul would have restored him to the fellowship of the church. We know this because of Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 5 and 2 Corinthians 2 where Paul ordered the Corinthians to discipline a man who was having an incestuous relationship. When he repented, Paul ordered that the Corinthians restore him to fellowship with themselves.

The fact that Hymenaeus was a pastor is clearly indicated by Paul’s statements throughout chapter one. This individual was among a group of pastors who suffered the shipwreck of their faith. That this

was a group of pastors who suffered the shipwreck of their faith is indicated in that they are described in verse 3 as teaching false doctrine and being occupied with myths and genealogies rather than fulfilling their responsibilities to administrate the household of God by studying, teaching, praying and setting an example for the flock in Ephesus.

Paul also describes them in verse 7 as desiring to be teachers of the Law but yet don't understand the purpose of the Law and were misapplying it. Furthermore, in 2 Timothy 2:17-18, Paul says that Hymenaeus was teaching that the resurrection had already taken place. So it is clear that Hymenaeus was a pastor. He was not an unbeliever and neither were any of these unidentified individuals in this chapter who were teaching false doctrine because Paul has no authority over an unbeliever but only believers. Thus, he would not have the authority to have these individuals stop what they were doing unless they were under his authority.

The conjunction *kai* has a copulative function joining Hymenaeus and Alexander. The name "Alexander" means "defender of man" and was a common Hellenistic name among both Jews and Gentiles in the first century. This name appears 6 times in 5 verses of the New Testament. In Mark 15:21, Alexander is the son of Simon the Cyrene who helped Jesus carry His cross. In Acts 4:6, there is an Alexander mentioned who was of high priestly descent. There is also the Alexander mentioned in Acts 19:33 who was Jewish and unsuccessfully attempted to speak to the mob in the city of Ephesus. In 2 Timothy 4:14, Paul mentions an Alexander who was a coppersmith and did him much harm opposing his message.

The Alexander mentioned in Mark 15:21 cannot be the same individual mentioned by Paul in 1 Timothy 1:20 since the Alexander he mentioned would have been an Ephesian Christian and the one in Mark is not. The Alexander mentioned in Acts 4:6 is not the Alexander of 1 Timothy 1:20 since the latter again was an Ephesian Christian pastor and the former was not. The Alexander of Acts 19:33 is not the same individual mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20 although both were Ephesians. However, the former was not a pastor, nor was he a Christian.

The Alexander mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:14 might be the same one mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20 since both were disciplined by Paul. However, the former is identified as a well-known coppersmith and no such identification is given of this individual in 1 Timothy 1:20. So we can't be dogmatic that the Alexander mentioned in these two passages are one in the same.

The proper name *Alexandros* is also a nominative subject meaning that it is performing the action of the verb *eimi*.

"Whom I handed over to Satan" is composed of the composed of the accusative masculine plural form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὃς), **"whom"** and the first person singular aorist active indicative form of the verb *paradidomi* (παράδιδωμι), **"I handed over"** and the articular dative masculine singular form of the proper noun *Satanas* (Σατανᾶς), **"to Satan."**

The relative pronoun *hos* refers to Hymenaeus and Alexander and functions as an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *paradidomi*, **"I handed over."** This indicates that Paul administered church discipline to these two.

The verb *paradidomi* in 1 Timothy 1:20 means “to deliver over” and is used of Paul disciplining Hymenaeus and Alexander by expelling them from the fellowship of the church until they have stopped teaching false doctrine. It is used here of a judicial act performed by the apostle Paul in handing over these two to suffer the consequences of their actions in teaching false doctrine. This word expresses Paul exercising his apostolic authority. This judicial act is designed to get these two to stop conducting themselves against the will of God and to correct this behavior. This decision is designed to correct their behavior and produce the holiness of God in them or in other words so that they can have fellowship with God and the church again and experience their sanctification. The word is used this way by Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:5.

1 Corinthians 5:1 It is actually reported that sexual immorality exists among you, the kind of immorality that is not permitted even among the Gentiles, so that someone is cohabiting with his father’s wife. 2 And you are proud! Shouldn’t you have been deeply sorrowful instead and removed the one who did this from among you? 3 For even though I am absent physically, I am present in spirit. And I have already judged the one who did this, just as though I were present. 4 When you gather together in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit, along with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 turn this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (NET)

So in both passage, the verb *paradidomi* speaks of a disciplinary act performed by the apostle Paul, which was designed to lead the sinning Christian to confess their sins to God and correct their behavior. In both instances, it is an expression of the love of God since God disciplines His children in love.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the moment when Paul disciplined Hymenaeus and Alexander and removed them from the fellowship of the church in Ephesus. The active voice means that Paul as the subject performed the action of the verb. The indicative mood of the verb is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement. We will translate the word “**I handed over.**”

1 Timothy 1:20 Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme. (NASB95)

“**So that they will be taught not to blaspheme**” is composed of the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), “**so that**” and the third person plural aorist passive subjunctive form of the verb *paideuo* (παιδεύω), “**they will be taught**” and the negative particle *me* (μή), “**not**” and the present active infinitive form of the verb *blasphemeo* (βλασφημέω), “**to blaspheme.**”

The conjunction *hina* is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *paideuo*, “**they will be taught**” whose thought is completed by the infinitive form of the verb *blasphemeo*, “**to blaspheme.**” This construction forms a purpose clause that emphasizes the “intention” of the action of the verb *paradidomi*, “**I handed over.**” This indicates that Paul disciplined Hymenaeus and Alexander by handing them over to Satan for the express purpose that they would be taught not to blaspheme.

The verb *paideuo* means “to discipline” in the sense of God expressing His love for Hymenaeus and Alexander by punishing them by removing them from the fellowship of the church and exposing them to Satan’s kingdom. The verb speaks of training these two not to blaspheme God by handing them over to

the authority of Satan who would have been given authority to cause these two suffering in some form. The word speaks of educating these two through suffering and pain.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion an undefined period of time when the Lord would use Satan's kingdom to train and educate Hymenaeus and Alexander to not blaspheme. The passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb by either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here it denotes that Alexander and Hymenaeus as the subject are receiving training or discipline from God through the agency of Satan and his kingdom. The subjunctive mood is used with *hina* to form a purpose clause.

There are two categories of divine discipline that are an expression of God's love: (1) Negative: God expresses His love for His children by disciplining them in the sense that He "punishes" them when they are disobedient to His will. (2) Positive: God expresses His love for His children by disciplining them in the sense of "training" them when they are obedient to His will and in fellowship.

Both categories of divine discipline are designed to keep the believer on track in executing the Father's will by becoming like Christ. The Word of God is employed in both positive and negative categories of discipline.

Hebrews 4:12 The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (NASB95)

The Holy Spirit disciplines the disobedient child of God by rebuking them with the Word of God as it is communicated by the pastor-teacher in the local assembly and the purpose of such rebuke is to conform the believer to the will of his heavenly Father, which results in blessing and true happiness.

Jeremiah 32:33 "They have turned their back to Me and not their face; though I taught them, teaching again and again, they would not listen and receive instruction." (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the pastor-teacher who is the delegated authority in the local assembly, to reprove and rebuke the children of God from the pulpit with the Word of God as an expression of His love.

2 Timothy 4:1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom, 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. (NASB95)

God disciplines His disobedient children by permitting adversity, trials, and irritations to come into their lives that are beyond their capacity to handle in order to get their attention and to focus upon their number one priority in life as children of God, which is to conformity to the Father's will.

God disciplines His disobedient children by permitting them to reap the fruits of their bad decisions so that they might learn that conformity to His will is the only way to true joy and happiness and blessing in life (Ezek. 16:43; Galatians 6:7-8).

There are three categories of divine discipline (punishment) for the disobedient child of God: (1) Warning (Revelation 3:20; James 5:9) (2) Intense (Psalm 38:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:11). (3) Dying (Jeremiah 9:16; 44:12; Philippians 3:18-19; Re. 3:16; Psalm 118:17-18; 1 John 5:16).

God disciplines His "obedient" children through adversity and underserved suffering in order to build the believer's confidence in his relationship with God and to get him to depend on God for his security and protection rather than money and human relationships.

God disciplines His "obedient" children through adversity and underserved suffering in order to demonstrate to the believer the sufficiency of God's Word in handling any problem or difficulty in life.

The Lord Jesus Christ disciplines the believer in the sense that He rebukes, punishes and trains the believer because He personally and affectionately loves the believer (Revelation 3:14-19).

Revelation 3:19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. (NASB95)

"**Love**" is the verb *phileo*, which means, "to personally and affectionately love someone" and expresses the Lord Jesus Christ's personal affection, care and concern for the believer by disciplining him whether for training when obedient or punishment when disobedient.

"**Reprove**" is the verb *elencho*, "to reprove, chasten" and "convict" of sin in order to "instruct" the believer and restore him to fellowship.

"**Discipline**" is the verb *paideuo* and was commonly used in Greek literature to mean the "upbringing" and "teaching" and "disciplining" of children.

Such "upbringing" consisted of teaching general knowledge and various kinds of training aimed at developing discipline and character. The Lord reproves us because He is trying to develop His character in us.

Revelation 3:20-22 teaches that the Lord disciplines us not only because He loves us and but also because He wants to reward us. Just as any good father disciplines his children because he loves them, so God the Father disciplines His children because He loves them. If God did not train us when we are obedient and punishes us when we are disobedient, then we would be illegitimate children, thus divine discipline in the sense of punishment and training is the mark of a child of God (Hebrews 12:1-13).

Hebrews 12:10 teaches us that ultimately, God disciplines us because He wants us to share in His character and integrity, which is meant by the phrase "**share His holiness.**"

We are not to get angry or bitter when God disciplines us through the Word, or adversity and underserved suffering but rather we are to listen to what God is trying to say to us and to learn the lesson that He is teaching us so that we might acquire the character of our heavenly Father.

Ecclesiastes 7:14 In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity consider -- God has made the one as well as the other so that man will not discover anything that will be after him. (NASB95)

In order to receive discipline without getting bitter and complaining, the believer must recognize and submit to the authority of the Word of God, the delegated authority of the pastor-teacher and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ who controls history and therefore our circumstances.

Proverbs 3:11 My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD or loathe His reproof, 12 for whom the LORD loves He reproves, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights. (NASB95)

Job 5:17 Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproves, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. 18 For He inflicts pain, and gives relief; He wounds, and His hands also heal. (NASB95)

Proverbs 15:32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, but he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. 33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility. (NASB95)

Examples of the sin unto death: (1) Exodus Generation (1 Corinthians 10:1-11). (2) Saul (1 Chronicles 10:13). (3) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). (4) Believers in Corinth (1 Corinthians 11:30).

In 1 Timothy 1:20, the verb *blasphemeo* means “to blaspheme” in the sense of Hymenaeus and Alexander insulting God by not communicating the gospel and instead teaching false doctrine. It indicates that by rejecting communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ and instead teaching false doctrine, Hymenaeus and Alexander were disrespectful to God and were insulting Him and were insubordinate to Him.

This verb expresses the fact that by rejecting communicating the gospel and instead teaching false doctrine, these two were disrespecting God since the gospel is concerning His Son Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection. It denotes that Hymenaeus and Alexander were blaspheming God in the sense of insulting Him by contradicting Him by teaching false doctrine instead of proclaiming the gospel.

The verb’s meaning is negated by the negative particle *me* and together they deny any idea of Hymenaeus and Alexander ever again blaspheming God by teaching false doctrine rather than the gospel.

The present tense of the verb is a customary present used to signal an action that regularly occurs. It indicates that Hymenaeus and Alexander were “making it their habit of” blaspheming the Lord by teaching false doctrine instead of teaching the gospel. The active voice means that these two perform the

action of the verb. The verb is also a complementary infinitive meaning that it is completing the thought of the verb *paideuo*, “**they will be disciplined.**”

1 Timothy 1:20 Among whom are Hymenaeus as well as Alexander, whom I handed over to Satan in order that they will be disciplined not to blaspheme. (Author’s translation)

This verse teaches that Hymenaeus and Alexander belonged to a certain class of Christian pastors in Ephesus who suffered the shipwreck of their faith. To suffer shipwreck of one’s faith means that these pastors experienced spiritual disaster. It speaks of the catastrophic damage to their fellowship with God and the church as a result of rejecting Paul’s teaching and adhering to the false teaching of the Judaizers. Consequently, this rejection of Paul’s teaching adversely affected their conscience, i.e. their norms and standards. Therefore, because these pastors in Ephesus rejected faith in Paul’s apostolic teaching, i.e. his gospel, this rejection adversely affected their norms and standards and thus their conduct and speech. So, this verb describes the disastrous consequences of this rejection in that it caused them to lose fellowship God, which results in divine discipline from God.

The sin of “**Hymenaeus**” is revealed by Paul in 2 Timothy 17-18. Therefore, he was teaching that the resurrection or rapture of the church had already taken place, which upset the faith of many Christians in Ephesus.

Paul’s statement here in 1 Timothy 1:20 makes clear that Hymenaeus did not stop propagating this teaching after being confronted by Paul and ordered to do so. This led to the apostle administering church discipline and expelling him from the fellowship of the church. If he had stopped, Paul would have restored him to the fellowship of the church. We know this because of Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 5 and 2 Corinthians 2 where Paul ordered the Corinthians to discipline a man who was having an incestuous relationship. When he repented, Paul ordered that the Corinthians restore him to fellowship with themselves.

The fact that Hymenaeus was a pastor is clearly indicated by Paul’s statements throughout chapter one. This individual was among a group of pastors who suffered the shipwreck of their faith. That this was a group of pastors who suffered the shipwreck of their faith is indicated in that they are described in verse 3 as teaching false doctrine and being occupied with myths and genealogies rather than fulfilling their responsibilities to administrate the household of God by studying, teaching, praying and setting an example for the flock in Ephesus.

Paul also describes them in verse 7 as desiring to be teachers of the Law but yet don’t understand the purpose of the Law and were misapplying it. Furthermore, in 2 Timothy 2:17-18, Paul says that Hymenaeus was teaching that the resurrection had already taken place. So it is clear that Hymenaeus was a pastor. He was not an unbeliever and neither were any of these unidentified individuals in this chapter who were teaching false doctrine because Paul has no authority over an unbeliever but only believers. Thus, he would not have the authority to have these individuals stop what they were doing unless they were under his authority.

The Alexander mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:14 might be the same one mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20 since both were disciplined by Paul. However, the former is identified as a well-known coppersmith and no such identification is given of this individual in 1 Timothy 1:20. So we can’t be dogmatic that the Alexander mentioned in these two passages are one in the same.

The phrase “**whom I handed over to Satan**” refers to Paul disciplining Hymenaeus and Alexander by expelling them from the fellowship of the church until they have stopped teaching false doctrine. It is used here of a judicial act performed by the apostle Paul in handing over these two to suffer the consequences of their actions in teaching false doctrine. It expresses Paul exercising his apostolic authority. This judicial act is designed to get these two to stop conducting themselves against the will of God and to correct this behavior. This decision is designed to correct their behavior and produce the holiness of God in them or in other words so that they can have fellowship with God and the church again and experience their sanctification.

So, this statement speaks of a disciplinary act performed by the apostle Paul, which was designed to lead the sinning Christian to confess their sins to God and correct their behavior. In both instances, it is an expression of the love of God since God disciplines His children in love.

This passage teaches that Satan is agent that God uses to administer discipline to Hymenaeus and Alexander. In fact, Satan himself more than likely did not personally administer this discipline but rather one of those in his army was assigned to these two. Of course, Satan is accountable to God and is restricted and could not kill these two unless the Lord gave him permission.

The purpose clause “**in order that they will be disciplined not to blaspheme**” indicates that Paul disciplined Hymenaeus and Alexander by handing them over to Satan for the express purpose that they would be taught not to blaspheme. It denies any idea of Hymenaeus and Alexander ever again blaspheming God by teaching false doctrine rather than the gospel.

This act of disciplining Hymenaeus and Alexander was an expression of God’s love for these two. He was expressing His love through Paul by punishing them by removing them from the fellowship of the church and exposing them to Satan’s kingdom. It refers to training these two not to blaspheme God by handing them over to the authority of Satan who would have been given authority to cause these two suffering in some form. It speaks of educating these two through suffering and pain.

These two Christian pastors were blaspheming God in the sense that they were insulting God by not communicating the gospel and instead teaching false doctrine. It indicates that by rejecting communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ and instead teaching false doctrine, Hymenaeus and Alexander were act disrespectfully of God and insulting Him and were insubordinate. By rejecting communicating the gospel and instead teaching false doctrine, these two were disrespecting God since the gospel is concerning His Son Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection. They were blaspheming God in the sense of insulting Him by contradicting Him by teaching false doctrine instead of proclaiming the gospel.

1 Timothy 5:19 - Paul Commands That an Accusation Must Not Be Received Against an Elder Except on the Basis of Two or Three Witnesses

In 1 Timothy 5:19, the apostle Paul commands Timothy to continue making it his habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder except however, on the basis of two or three witnesses.

1 Timothy 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. (NASB95)

“**Do not receive an accusation against an elder**” is composed of the preposition *kata* (κατά), “**against**” and its object is the genitive masculine singular form of the adjective *presbuteros* (πρεσβύτερος), “**an elder**” and then we have the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *kategoria* (κατηγορία), “**an accusation**” and this is followed by the second person singular present passive imperative form of the verb *paradechomai* (παραδέχομαι), “**do receive**” whose meaning is negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), “**not**.”

In 1 Timothy 5:19, Paul is employing the figure of “asyndeton,” which means that he is not using a connective word between the command in this verse and the previous statement in 1 Timothy 5:18, which serves as support for Paul’s command in 1 Timothy 5:17. Paul uses this figure in order to emphasize the command here in 1 Timothy 5:19 in the sense that he wants Timothy and the Ephesian Christian community to dwell upon it and obey it. This figure emphasizes the importance of this command for the Christian community in Ephesus.

In 1 Timothy 5:19, the verb *paradechomai* means “to receive, i.e. to acknowledge as correct” and its object is the accusative form of the noun *kategoria*, “accusation.” The word’s meaning is negated by the negative particle *me*, which denies any idea of Timothy or anyone in the Ephesian Christian community “receiving” or “acknowledging as true” an accusation that is made against an elder. Together, the expression *μή παραδέχου* form a prohibition that forbids anyone in the Christian community receiving or acknowledging as true an accusation that is made against one of their elders. This is important because those in positions of leadership in the secular world or spiritual leadership are subject to scrutiny, criticism and rumors. Therefore, this prohibition would protect the elders from erroneous or unsubstantiated accusations.¹⁶⁹

Here in 1 Timothy 5:19, this prohibition is setting the parameters of due process in the examination and if necessary discipline of elders (ibid., page 367). So, Paul is teaching that one is innocent until proven guilty. The language that the apostle Paul is using here is legal indicating that a formal hearing would be in view when an accusation is made against a pastor-teacher, i.e. an elder. So, Paul gives this instruction to protect pastors from malicious and unsubstantiated accusations.

Commenting on 1 Timothy 5:19, Warren Wiersbe writes, “Paul’s first caution to Timothy was to be sure of his facts, and the way to do that is to have witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19). This principle is also stated in Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16; and 2 Corinthians 13:1. I think a dual application of the principle is suggested here. First, those who make any accusation against a pastor must be able to support it with witnesses. Rumor and suspicion are not adequate grounds for discipline. Second, when an accusation is made, witnesses ought to be present. In other words, the accused has the right to face his accuser in the presence of witnesses. A church member approached me at a church dinner one evening, and began to accuse me of ruining the church. She had all sorts of miscellaneous bits of gossip, none of which was true. As soon as she started her tirade, I asked two of the officers standing nearby to witness what she was saying. Of course, she immediately stopped talking and marched defiantly away. It is sad when churches disobey the Word and listen to rumors, lies, and gossip. Many a godly pastor has been defeated in his life and ministry in this way, and some have even resigned from the ministry. ‘Where there’s smoke, there’s fire’ may be a good slogan for a volunteer fire department, but it does not apply to

¹⁶⁹ Towner, page 367

local churches. ‘Where there’s smoke, there’s fire’ could possibly mean that somebody’s tongue has been ‘set on fire of hell!’ (James 3:6).”¹⁷⁰

Commenting on 1 Timothy 5:19, Swindoll writes, “Paul’s first recommendation protects the church from false accusations. Put bluntly, some churches are pastor killers. They have a habit of calling the very finest men and, for the first six months, behave like a model church. Then, they turn. They don’t want to be led; they want to lead. First, they doubt the leader they once hailed as their salvation and they start to question his ability to lead. When he remains steadfast, they undermine his authority by challenging his suitability to lead. Eventually, if he persists in telling them what they do not want to hear, they drum up a list of sins or seize on a convenient accusation to impugn his moral qualification to lead. After a brutal bloodletting, they cycle through a few interim pastors before starting the cycle again. Pastor-killing churches rarely change. Thankfully, some do. Invariably, those who do, remove from their midst the leaders who contaminated the church with their carnality. Timothy might have had a pocket of pastor killers in Ephesus. Paul wisely says in effect, ‘Don’t listen to every whim of criticism; investigate any accusation thoroughly to test its merit before taking any action.’ We must not interpret Paul’s words too woodenly. He quotes Deuteronomy 19:15 (cf. Deuteronomy 17:6) because that was the best standard of veracity in his day. In other words, we need not limit our investigation to eyewitness testimony. Other hard evidence may prove multiple witnesses to be mistaken or confirm the accusation of only one. In one tragic case I can recall, inappropriate emails between a staff member and his mistress exposed their sin.”¹⁷¹

Calvin writes “After having commanded that salaries should be paid to pastors, he likewise instructs Timothy not to allow them to be assailed by calumnies, or loaded with any accusation but what is supported by sufficient proof. But it may be thought strange, that he represents, as peculiar to elders, a law which is common to all. God lays down, authoritatively, this law as applicable to all cases, that they shall be decided “by the mouth of two or three witnesses.” (Deuteronomy 17:6; Matthew 18:16.) Why then does the Apostle protect elders alone by this privilege, as if it were peculiar to them, that their innocence shall be defended against false accusations? I reply, this is a necessary remedy against the malice of men; for none are more liable to slanders and calumnies than godly teachers. Not only does it arise from the difficulty of their office, that sometimes they either sink under it, or stagger, or halt, or blunder, in consequence of which wicked men seize many occasions for finding fault with them; but there is this additional vexation, that, although they perform their duty correctly, so as not to commit any error whatever, they never escape a thousand censures. And this is the craftiness of Satan, to draw away the hearts of men from ministers, that instruction may gradually fall into contempt. Thus not only is wrong done to innocent persons, in having their reputation unjustly wounded, (which is exceedingly base in regard to those who hold so honorable a rank,) but the authority of the sacred doctrine of God is diminished. And this is what Satan, as I have said, chiefly labors to accomplish; for not only is the saying of Plato true in this instance, that ‘the multitude are malicious, and envy those who are above them,’ but the more earnestly any pastor strives to advance the kingdom of Christ, so much the more is he loaded with envy, and so much the fiercer are the assaults made on him. Not only so, but as soon as any charge against the ministers of the word has gone abroad, it is believed as fully as if they were already convicted. This is not merely owing to the higher degree of moral excellence which is demanded from them, but because almost all are tempted by Satan to excessive credulity, so that, without making any inquiry, they eagerly condemn their pastors, whose good name they ought rather to have defended. On good grounds, therefore, Paul opposes so heinous iniquity, and forbids that elders shall be subjected

¹⁷⁰ The Bible Exposition Commentary; Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books; 1996

¹⁷¹ Swindoll, Charles R., Swindoll’s New Testament Insights: Insights on 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus; page 111; Zondervan; 2010

to the slanders of wicked men till they have been convicted by sufficient proof. We need not wonder, therefore, if they whose duty it is to reprove the faults of all, to oppose the wicked desires of all, and to restrain by their severity every person whom they see going astray, have many enemies. What, then, will be the consequence; if we shall listen indiscriminately to all the slanders that are spread abroad concerning them?"¹⁷²

Paul is taking from the Mosaic Law and specifically two texts in Deuteronomy which prohibited the establishment of guilt on the basis of a single witness.

Deuteronomy 19:15 "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. 16 If a malicious witness rises up against a man to accuse him of wrongdoing, 17 then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who will be in office in those days. 18 The judges shall investigate thoroughly, and if the witness is a false witness and he has accused his brother falsely, 19 then you shall do to him just as he had intended to do to his brother. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. 20 The rest will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such an evil thing among you. 21 Thus you shall not show pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." (NASB95)

Deuteronomy 17:6 "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. 7 The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. 8 If any case is too difficult for you to decide, between one kind of homicide or another, between one kind of lawsuit or another, and between one kind of assault or another, being cases of dispute in your courts, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the Lord your God chooses. 9 So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them and they will declare to you the verdict in the case. 10 You shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the Lord chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you. 11 According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left." (NASB95)

An accusation should only be considered only if two or three witnesses swear to it. When such accusations are proven true, then Timothy was to rebuke the offenders publicly meaning before the entire congregation. This would constitute church discipline.

The Lord Jesus Christ cited this Old Testament principle of two or more witnesses to establish a matter (Matthew 18:16; John 8:17) and the early first century apostolic church was governed by it (2 Corinthians 13:1).

This law of multiple witnesses is alluded to in other passages in the New Testament (Matthew 18:19-20; 27:38; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:30, 32; 10:1; 24:13; John 20:12; Acts 1:10; Hebrews 6:18; Revelation 11:3-4).

¹⁷² Calvin, John; Commentary on Timothy, Titus and Philemon; page 98; Christian Classics Ethereal Library; Grand Rapids, MI

In 1 Timothy 5:19, the present imperative form of the verb *paradechomai* and the negative particle *me* has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. Therefore, the present imperative form of the verb and the negative particle *me* indicate that as a general precept, the Ephesian Christian community must not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

The fact that Paul addresses this issue of accusation against elders implies that there was a problem in the Christian community in Ephesus with regards to their attitudes towards pastor-teachers. Of course, there were Christians who adhered to this prohibition issued by Paul in 1 Timothy 5:19 and there must have been some that did not otherwise he would not addressed this issue in the first place.

Thus, it is best to view this present imperative and the negative particle *me* as expressing a general precept. He is simply communicating a general precept of the Word of God and the Lord and the apostles' teaching without reference to whether there was a violation of this prohibition or not.

Paul's statements in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 4:6 imply that Timothy was carrying out everything he wrote in this epistle including this prohibition in 1 Timothy 5:19. Furthermore, Paul would not have delegated Timothy such a difficult task as the one in Ephesus unless he felt confident that his young delegate could carry out everything he required of him. Therefore, this prohibition is simply a reminder to Timothy to continue doing what Paul told him to do before he left for Macedonia.

The passive voice of the verb *paradechomai* means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the subject is Timothy and indirectly the Ephesian Christian community. The agency is expressed and is an accusation made by someone in the Christian community against a pastor. Therefore, as the subject, Timothy and the Ephesian Christian community were not to receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

The adjective *presbuteros* in 1 Timothy 5:19 is referring to those who held the office of overseer, which could only be held by those men with the spiritual gift of pastor-teacher that had met the qualifications listed by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. This is indicated by the fact Paul is discussing the treatment of elders in 1 Timothy 5:17-25.

In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul teaches that the *presbuteros* were to receive double remuneration for working hard teaching the Word of God. So their function is described by Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17 as teaching the Word of God. *Presbuteros* is used with reference to pastor-teachers in other places in the New Testament (Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1, 5; 2 John 1; 3 John 1). All this makes crystal clear that the *presbuteros* mentioned in 1 Timothy 5:17 and 19 is referring to pastor-teachers, who held the office of overseer and whose function according to 1 Timothy 3:2 was teaching the Word of God.

Presbuteros in 1 Timothy 5:17 and 19 does not refer to those men with the spiritual gift of leadership (cf. Romans 12:8), which is called "**administrations**" in 1 Corinthians 12:28. Nor, does it refer to those who held the office of deacon. This is indicated by the fact that the adverb *malista*, "**especially**" in 1 Timothy 5:17 is singling out or defining a specific segment of elders who are to receive double honor, namely those who teach, i.e. the pastor-teachers. *Malista* has an exegetical function and should be rendered "specifically," or "namely." That *malista* has this function or sense is indicated by the fact that *presbuteros* is a synonymous term with *episkopos*, "**overseer**" which appears in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and the

function of the overseer was teaching the Word of God according to 1 Timothy 3:2. J. H. Thayer says that the two words are employed indiscriminately.¹⁷³

Thus, the fact that *episkopos* and *presbuteros* are synonymous terms speaking of the same group of individuals whose function in the body of Christ is the same indicates that *malista* in 1 Timothy 5:17 is singling out pastor-teachers or is defining that these elders are those who teach the Word of God. Consequently, he is not referring to those who have the gift of leadership, i.e. administrators or those who hold the office of deacon since deacons do not teach and neither do those who have the gift of leadership. Also, this rules out *presbuteros* as referring to older men in the congregation, which it refers to in 1 Timothy 5:1.

The fact that *episkopos*, “overseers” and *presbuteros*, “elders” are synonymous is attested to by the passage in Acts 20 where the apostle Paul calls for a meeting with the pastor-teachers in Ephesus.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders (*presbuteros*) of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them, “You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; 20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. 24 But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. 26 Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopos*), to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (NASB95)

Notice that Luke says that Paul called the *presbuteros* and then addressed these same individuals saying that the Lord made them *episkopos*. Therefore, in Acts 20:18-28, both *episkopos* and *presbuteros* refer to the pastor-teacher who presides over a local assembly of believers. They are not two different offices in the Church but one in the same. This is attested to by some of the greatest scholars that the church has ever produced, such men as Lightfoot, Thayer, and Jerome.

Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Polycarp, all acknowledge that *episkopoi* and *presbuteros* are synonymous with each other, referring to the pastor-teacher who has authority over the local church.

Acts 20:17-28 teaches that *episkopos* and *presbuteros* are synonymous terms and Jerome, who lived from 347 A.D. to 419 A.D. who translated the Latin Vulgate and was one of the greatest scholars that the church has ever produced, confirms forcefully in his letters that these two words *episkopos*, “overseer,” and *presbuteros*, “elder” are synonymous.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Page 536, The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon

¹⁷⁴ The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd series, volume 6, page 288

Jerome writes, “We read in Isaiah the words ‘the fool will speak folly,’ and I am told that someone has been mad enough to put deacons before presbyters (*presbuteros*), that is, before bishops (*episkopos*). For when the apostle clearly teaches that presbyters (*presbuteros*) are the same as bishops (*episkopos*), must not a mere server of tables and of widows be insane to set himself up arrogantly over men through whose prayers the body and blood of Christ are produced? Do you ask for proof of what I say? Listen to this passage: ‘Paul and Timothy, the servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops (*episkopos*) and deacons.’”

In 1 Timothy 5:19, the noun *kategoria* means “accusation” referring to a charge made against an elder by someone in the Christian community.

In 1 Timothy 5:19, the genitive form of the adjective *presbuteros* is the object of the preposition *kata*, which functions as a marker of opposition, with the implication of antagonism and means, “against,” or “oppose.” This indicates that Paul is speaking of an accusation that is in “opposition to” or “against” an elder. We will translate the prepositional phrase κατὰ πρεσβυτέρου, “**against an elder.**”

1 Timothy 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. (NASB95)

“**Except on the basis of two or three witnesses**” is composed of the adverb *hektos* (ἔκτος), “**except**” and this is followed by the conditional particle *ei* (εἰ), “**if**” and this is followed by the negative particle *me* (μή), “**not**” and then we have the preposition *epi* (ἐπὶ), “**on the basis of**” and its object is the cardinal number *duo* (δύο), “**two**” and this is followed by the particle of separation *e* (ἢ), “**or**” and then we have the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *treis* (τρεις), “**three**” and this is followed by the genitive masculine plural form of the noun *martus* (μάρτυς), “**witnesses.**”

The expression ἐκτός ἐι μὴ is pleonastic and marks an exception. By pleonastic I mean that these three words are more than sufficient to express an exception since *hektos* can do so by itself as well as *ei* μὴ together (See Romans 7:7; 13:1, 8; 14:14). The adverb *hektos* is a marker of a contrast involving an exception. The conditional particle *ei* and the negative particle *me* coalesce into one particle and express a contrast. They take the same verb in the preceding prohibition for Timothy to continue making it his habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder.

Together, these three words present an exception to the preceding prohibition. They indicate that Timothy is to continue making it his habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder “except however” or “unless” there are two or more witnesses that can establish the accusation as fact.

In 1 Timothy 5:19, the noun *martus* is in the plural and means “witnesses” and refers to one who testifies. Here it is speaking of a Christian can “testify” or “verify” that an elder is committing particular sin. So the word refers to someone bearing testimony of a pastor sinning. It is referring to someone who has observed a pastor committing a particular sin that would require the church to administer discipline to this pastor by removing him from the fellowship of the church until of course however, he repents of this sin.

The noun *martus* is modified by the expression δύο ἢ τριῶν and is composed of the number *duo*, the particle of separation *e* and the number *treis*. The number *duo* means “two” and the number *treis* means “three.” The particle of separation *e* joins these two words and means “or.”

The noun *martus* is in the genitive form and is the object of the preposition *epi*, which functions as a marker of cause indicating the basis in which Timothy was to receive an accusation against an elder. He was only to receive an accusation against an elder “on the basis of” two or three witnesses. This interpretation of this preposition is substantiated by the fact that Paul is obviously referring to Deuteronomy 17:6 and 19:15. Thus, the word does not mean “in the presence of.”

1 Timothy 5:19 Continue making it your habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder except however on the basis of two or three witnesses. (Author’s translation)

This prohibition forbids Timothy and anyone in the Christian community receiving or acknowledging as true an accusation that is made against an elder. This is important because those in positions of leadership are subject to scrutiny, criticism and rumors. Therefore, this prohibition would protect the elders from erroneous or unsubstantiated accusations. This prohibition sets the parameters of due process in the examination and if necessary discipline of elders.

So Paul is teaching that one is innocent until proven guilty. The language that the apostle Paul is using here is legal indicating that a formal hearing would be in view when an accusation is made against a pastor-teacher, i.e. an elder. Paul gives this instruction to protect pastors from malicious and unsubstantiated accusations.

Paul is taking from the Mosaic Law and specifically two texts in Deuteronomy which prohibited the establishment of guilt on the basis of a single witness, namely Deuteronomy 19:15 and 17:6. An accusation against a pastor should only be considered if two or three witnesses swear to it. When such accusations are proven true, then Timothy was to rebuke the offenders publicly meaning before the entire congregation. This would constitute church discipline.

The Lord Jesus Christ cited this Old Testament principle of two or more witnesses to establish a matter (Matthew 18:16; John 8:17) and the early first century apostolic church was governed by it (2 Corinthians 13:1). This law of multiple witnesses is alluded to in other passages in the New Testament (Matthew 18:19-20; 27:38; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:30, 32; 10:1; 24:13; John 20:12; Acts 1:10; Hebrews 6:18; Revelation 11:3-4).

This prohibition is a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. It expresses the general precept that the Ephesian Christian community must not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

The fact that Paul addresses this issue of accusation against elders implies that there was a problem in the Christian community in Ephesus with regards to their attitudes towards pastor-teachers. Of course, there were Christians who adhered to this prohibition issued by Paul in 1 Timothy 5:19 and there must have been some that did not otherwise he would not have addressed this issue in the first place. Thus, it is best to view Paul as communicating a general precept of the Word of God and the Lord and the apostles’ teaching without reference to whether there was a violation of this prohibition or not.

Paul’s statements in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 4:6 imply that Timothy was carrying out everything he wrote in this epistle including this prohibition in 1 Timothy 5:19. Furthermore, Paul would not have delegated Timothy such a difficult task as the one in Ephesus unless he felt confident that his young delegate could

carry out everything he required of him. Therefore, this prohibition is simply a reminder to Timothy to continue doing what Paul told him to do before he left for Macedonia.

1 Timothy 5:20 - Unrepentant Elders Are to Be Rebuked Publicly in Order to Deter Sinful Behavior in the Church

The apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:20 continues his discussion of elders by teaching Timothy and the Ephesian Christian community that those elders who are not unrepentant of sinful behavior are to be rebuked publicly before the congregation. The purpose of such discipline is to deter the rest of the church from sinful behavior.

1 Timothy 5:20 Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. (NASB95)

“**Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all**” is composed of the articular accusative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *hamartano* (ἁμαρτάνω), “**those who continue in sin**” and this is followed by the preposition *enopion* (ἐνώπιον), “**in the presence of**” and then we have the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), “**all**” and this is followed by the second person singular present active imperative form of the verb *elencho* (ἐλέγχω), “**rebuke.**”

In 1 Timothy 5:20, Paul is once again employing the figure of “asyndeton,” which means that he is not using a connective word between the command in this verse and the prohibition in 1 Timothy 5:19. Paul uses this figure in order to emphasize the command here in 1 Timothy 5:20 in the sense that he wants Timothy and the Ephesian Christian community to dwell upon it and obey it. This figure emphasizes the importance of this command for the Christian community in Ephesus.

The verb *hamartano* means “to sin” and is used intransitively (without a direct object) and refers to any mental, verbal or overt act of sin that is contrary to the will and law of God. It describes sinning as missing mark, which is the absolute perfection of God’s character, which is His holiness.

Notice that Paul does not identify for the reader what particular or specific sin that these elders are committing on a habitual basis or possessing a lifestyle of committing a particular sin. This indicates that every mental, verbal or overt act of sin does not measure up to God’s perfect holy standards. It means that God does not distinguish certain sins as more detestable than others. All sin is an abomination to God whether it is homosexuality, lying or gossip or failing to forgive your fellow Christian for committing a sin against you when he or she has asked for forgiveness!

Here in 1 Timothy 5:20, the term is used of elders who are committing sin and are unrepentant about it. That the word is speaking of elders and not Christians in general as some argue is indicated clearly by the context. In 1 Timothy 5:17-25, Paul instructs Timothy as to the proper treatment of elders. Throughout verses 17-25 Paul is addressing the issue of elders, i.e. overseers who are pastors-teachers. This is indicated by the fact that in verses 17-18 he speaks with regards to their remuneration, which is based on the teaching of the Old Testament. Then, in verses 19-21, he is addressing the topic of administering church discipline with sinning pastors who are unrepentant, which is to be impartial. Verse 22, Paul addresses the issue of ordaining pastors. In verses 24-25, the apostle gives the reason for his statements in verse 22 telling Timothy why he should not be hasty in ordaining men as overseers. Verse 23 is parenthetical addressing Timothy’s health, who is pastor, and is a digression based upon

Paul's statement at the end of verse 22 for Timothy to keep himself pure. Thus, his statements in verses 24 and 25 should be considered a part of the same discussion.

Now, in 1 Timothy 5:19, the apostle Paul commands Timothy to continue making it his habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder except however, on the basis of two or three witnesses. Here in 1 Timothy 5:20, the apostle discusses what to do with those elders who have been found guilty of sin as supporting by the two or three witnesses. So, once a particular sinful action on the part of the elder has been substantiated by two or three witnesses, Paul now moves to the next, namely how to deal with these elders. Therefore, Paul's statements in verse 20 are still addressing the issue of elders and not the Christian community in general.

That *hamartano* is speaking of elders who are unrepentant sinners is indicated by the present tense of the verb, which is a customary present that signals an action that regularly occurs. Here the customary present tense of the verb describes these elders as "regularly" or "habitually" committing sin. It emphasizes that these elders are committing a particular sin as a lifestyle or in other words, it is one that they habitually commit so as to hurt the testimony of the church and the spiritual growth of the pastor and as a result his congregation.

The present tense indicates that this sin is not sporadic or occasional (which every Christian does) but a lifestyle and continues to be committed on a regular basis by the elder. Thus, they have not repented of this sin meaning they have not stopped committing this sin on a habitual basis. They would be repentant and consequently in fellowship with God if they had stopped committing this particular sin on a habitual basis.

Mappes argues against this interpretation of the present tense. He writes "The translation 'those who continue to sin' suggests that the sinning elder is to be rebuked only if he is guilty of persistent, ongoing sin. If he repents, then no rebuke is to be given. On the other hand the rendering 'those who sin' normally emphasizes the articular construction of τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, so that Paul was contrasting those found innocent with those found guilty of an accusation. This second translation contends that the participle depicts the guilt of those who are justly accused. Brown, Earle, Fee, Hunson, and Lock agree that τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας refers to elders who are found in a present sinful state, though only Hanson and Brown (and possibly Lock) explicitly say it refers to those elders who persistently sin. It is unclear what these commentators mean by persistent sin. Do they mean persistent, ongoing sin in spite of accusations having been formally presented, or do they mean that the accusation of the particular sin at that present time was verified as true? The only support to which these commentators appeal is the present tense of the participle. Many commentators are ambiguous about the actual meaning of τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας. For example Huther writes that τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας refers to 'those presbyters who, in their official work or general walk, do not conduct themselves in a manner worthy of their office.' It seems preferable to see the participle τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας as simply referring to elders who have been legitimately accused of sin and found guilty. It describes those who are guilty of the accusation of a past or present sin, and not just those who are presently persisting in a sin. In other words the focus is on the present position of guilt associated with the substantiated accusation. To argue that the participle refers only to ongoing persistent sin is to introduce a foreign idea into the progression of the passage. As Kelly observes, 'Some lay stress on the present participle...and explain it as meaning 'those who persist in wrongdoing', presumably after an initial private remonstrance (Matthew xviii. 15); but this introduces an entirely fresh idea.' Paul's thought progresses from protecting elders against unjust accusation to rebuking those elders who are found guilty of a sin. The present tense denotes the present guilt of the

accused. In some cases present guilt could refer to a past sin. Those who say that τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας refers only to an elder's ongoing persistent sin imply that if an elder repents in the discipline process, no further action is to be taken regarding the elder, that is, he is not to be rebuked. Paul clearly stated, however, that if there is substantiated accusation, the elder is to be rebuked. The present participle, 'those who are sinning,' is set in contrast with 'the elders who rule well' (5:17). Those who rule well are to be doubly honored. Those who default in their duties, bringing dishonor to the name of Christ by their sinful actions, are to be publicly rebuked.¹⁷⁵

That the present tense of *hamartano* is referring to a regularly occurring ongoing action and not emphasizing present guilt, as Mappes argues, is indicated by the fact in 1 Timothy 5:19, Paul speaks of the stage after a private rebuke where two or three witnesses are to substantiate guilt of an elder. This corresponds to the procedure stipulated by the Lord in Matthew 18:16. Then, in 1 Timothy 5:20, Paul speaks of rebuking this elder before the entire congregation, which corresponds to the procedure in Matthew 18:17. This implies that the elder has not admitted his guilt after two or three witnesses have testified to his guilt. This indicates that he is "continuing" to sin since he did not admit his guilt and stopped committing this sin after two or three witnesses have testified to his guilt. The fact that Paul instructs Timothy to rebuke this elder before the entire church after two or three witnesses have verified his guilt indicates quite clearly that the apostle is referring to a situation where the elder "continues" to commit a particular sin even after two or three witnesses have testified to his guilt.

If Paul wanted to emphasize present guilt, then why not put the verb *hamartano* in the perfect tense? The perfect tense would be an intensive perfect, which emphasizes a present state that is the result of a past action. The past action would be the establishment of guilt by the two or three witnesses and the present state would be the present guilt of the elder. This is how Mappes is interpreting the present tense.

However, Paul put *hamartano* in the present tense because he is emphasizing a durative or ongoing idea. If he wanted to emphasize a present state of guilt from a past action of two or three witnesses testifying to the elder's guilt, he would have put the verb in the perfect tense. He didn't put the word in the perfect tense because he wanted to emphasize a durative idea rather than a present state, which the intensive perfect would have expressed.

Further indicating that the present tense of *hamartano* in 1 Timothy 5:20 has a durative and ongoing sense and is not emphasizing a present state is that 1 Timothy 5:20 is a logical extension of 1 Timothy 5:19. The former speaks of a procedure that is to follow the procedure referred to by the latter. 1 Timothy 5:19 instructs Timothy to confront the guilty elder with two or three witnesses and then he is to be rebuked before the entire congregation according to 1 Timothy 5:20. This implies that the sinning elder has not repented after being confronted by two or three witnesses clearly indicating he is "continuing" to sin. This corresponds to the Lord's teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 since the Lord teaches that if the guilty party does not repent after being confronted with two or three witnesses, that this should be followed by having the entire church confront him. Thus, the present tense of *hamartano* in 1 Timothy 5:20 is speaking of a regularly occurring act of sin that is continuing even after the sinning elder has been confronted with two or three witnesses.

Therefore, the fact that Paul is following the procedure stipulated by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 coupled with the present tense indicates quite clearly that he is emphasizing that the elder has not admitted his guilt and repented but stubbornly refuses to do so and is thus continuing to commit a

¹⁷⁵ Bibliotheca Sacra volume 154, number 615, July 1997, pages 337-338

particular sin. Thus, to interpret the present tense of *hamartano* in 1 Timothy 5:20 as emphasizing a present state of guilt introduces a foreign idea into the text. It fails to take into consideration that if Paul wanted to emphasize a present state that is the result of two or three witnesses testifying to the elder's guilt, he would have put the verb in the perfect tense. It fails to see that Paul is following the procedures for church discipline that are laid out in Matthew 18:15-17.

The customary present tense of *hamartano* also indicates and the purpose clause to follow also indicates that these elders have passed through the three of the four stages of church discipline as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.

Matthew 18:15 “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” (NASB95)

The Lord teaches in this passage that church discipline begins with a private confrontation. The believer who is habitually sinning or possesses a sinful lifestyle must first be confronted privately as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15. Paul does not refer to this stage though it is implied from the context of the epistle that Timothy was confronted apostate pastors. Also, these sinning elders have been confronted by two or three witnesses according to Timothy 5:19 which is taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:16. The third stage of church discipline as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:17 would require that the entire church rebuke the sinning elder and the last stage would involve him being removed from the fellowship of the church by the entire church. The third stage is being referred to in 1 Timothy 5:20 since Paul does not speak of removing the individual from the fellowship of the church, which is the fourth stage of discipline according to Matthew 18:15-17. If the sinning elder does not repent from the rebuke of the entire church, then he is to be removed from the fellowship of the church as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:17.

The fear of being publicly rebuked for sinful lifestyle would deter the rest of the church from practicing a sinful lifestyle. It would teach the congregation the shamefulness and seriousness of sin and its consequences.

Paul is following the Lord's teaching in Matthew 18:15-17, which is indicated by the fact that in 1 Timothy 5:19 he mentions two or three witnesses being used to establish guilt, which corresponds to our Lord's teaching in Matthew 18:16. Then in 1 Timothy 5:20 he speaks of a public rebuke of the unrepentant elder, which corresponds with Matthew 18:17. This indicates that Paul is not instituting a special way of disciplining pastors, i.e. elders.

If these elders repent, they should be allowed back in the fellowship of the church as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17. Therefore, there are not two sets of rules with regards to church discipline meaning that the same rules that are used to deal with sinful behavior among individual Christians are to be used with respect to elders. The same grace that is to be demonstrated to repentant Christians after they have been confronted with regards to their sin is to be exercised towards repentant pastors. If the church does not forgive and show grace to repentant pastors, is this not hypocrisy and sin itself?

Mappes argues against this interpretation that Paul is following Matthew 18:15-17, he writes, “Certainly the severity of the rebuke would reflect the elder’s attitude and the nature of the sin in which he was involved. The basis for not rebuking an elder is usually attributed to a forced harmonization between 1 Timothy 5:20 and Matthew 18:15–20. Since the goal of Matthew 18:15–20 is the immediate restoration of a sinning believer that may preclude public rebuke, the supposition surfaces that the elder discipline process need continue only until repentance occurs. Though possible, it is unlikely that Paul assumed Timothy would have initiated the first two steps of discipline according to Matthew 18:15–20 before a public rebuking of the guilty elder occurred. Paul seems to have set aside these preliminary steps of Matthean discipline when he publicly refuted Peter at Antioch (Gal 2:14) and when he delivered Hymenaeus and Alexander over to Satan (1 Tim 1:20). In Matthew 18 the additional brethren are to accompany the individual to assist in restoration. If they are unsuccessful, then they become witnesses. But in 1 Timothy 5:20 the accusation is not even to be accepted unless witness-accusers are present. This difference becomes noteworthy in light of Deuteronomy 19:16–21. In 19:16 the accusation warrants investigation even in the absence of witness-accusers. However, Paul explicitly forbade any form of official inquisition unless the accusation is accompanied by two or more witness-accusers. This difference exists because Paul’s intent was to protect the leader as an individual Christian and also to protect the integrity of the office of ministry. Moreover, the consequence of the rebuke in 1 Timothy 5:20 (‘so that the rest also may be fearful’) differs from the Matthean account. A guilty elder who repents during or after the process of discipline must then be restored to fellowship with Christ and should be forgiven by the church community. However, the nature of the sin may disqualify the leader from functioning as an elder, even though he has been forgiven. Even if the sin is of a less severe nature, the rebuke (presumably public) must take place, since the accusation (presumably with some public awareness) would impede the elder from functioning as an elder.”¹⁷⁶

Mappes argument that “it is unlikely that Paul assumed Timothy would have initiated the first two steps of discipline according to Matthew 18:15–20 before a public rebuking of the guilty elder occurred” is incorrect. Paul’s statements in 1 Timothy 1:3-20 required Timothy to rebuke the apostate pastors in Ephesus. Thus, the first stage of church discipline was already being carried out by Timothy.

Mappes argument that “Paul seems to have set aside these preliminary steps of Matthean discipline when he publicly refuted Peter at Antioch (Gal 2:14) and when he delivered Hymenaeus and Alexander over to Satan (1 Tim 1:20)” is compelling but can be answered. In Galatians 2:14, Paul did not adhere to the teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 and privately rebuke Peter first because it did not apply to the situation with Peter. Peter’s sin of hypocrisy and misrepresenting the gospel created a public scandal and required a public rebuke from Paul. The passage in Matthew is not addressing public sin but private otherwise why would the Lord instruct His disciples to make an unrepentant brother’s sin public before the entire congregation? In 1 Timothy 1:20, Paul does not mention the preliminary steps of discipline that are stipulated in Matthew 18:15-17 because his emphasis was not to teach the steps necessary to discipline elders like Hymenaeus and Alexander but rather that he did administer the final step of church discipline to these individuals. In 1 Timothy 5:19-20 is instructing Timothy and the Ephesian church as to the process involved in disciplining an elder whereas in 1 Timothy 1:20 he is not teaching on this but simply discussing apostasy among elders in Ephesus.

Mappes argues that 1 Timothy 5:20 conflicts with Matthew 18. The latter required brethren to accompany the individual to assist in restoration and if unsuccessful, then they become witnesses. However, the former teaches that the accusation is not even to be accepted unless witness-accusers are

¹⁷⁶ Bibliotheca Sacra, volume 154, number 615, July 1997, page 339

present. This can be reconciled. In Matthew 18:16 the text says to **“take one or two more with you so that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.’”** It does not teach to take some brethren with you to confront the guilty party to “become” witnesses but that they “are” the witnesses. It does not say that the **“one or two more”** have no knowledge of the guilty party’s sin but that they are witnesses to this sin. Then the accusation can be received by the church when these witnesses are present.

Mappes also argues against 1 Timothy 5:19-20 as following the procedure in Matthew 18:15-17 because 1 Timothy 5:20 teaches that the purpose of disciplining the unrepentant elder is to cause fear in the congregation whereas in Matthew 18:15-17 there is no mention of fear as a result of this discipline. This can be reconciled as well. The Lord did not mention fear because His Jewish audience would have understood that the purpose of such discipline was to cause fear because of the teaching of Moses in Deuteronomy 19:15-21.

Also, Paul was addressing a problem of apostasy in the church in Ephesus among pastors at the time he wrote the epistle whereas the Lord was not addressing a present problem. Paul was attempting to get a church back on track whereas the Lord was not addressing a problem like this. Fear of discipline from the church would get this church back on track, thus Paul mentions fear.

Mappes also teaches that the “nature of the sin may disqualify the leader from functioning as an elder, even though he has been forgiven.” This flies in the face of the teaching of Scripture. Does not the Scripture teach that Moses struck the rock twice in disobedience to the Lord, and was disciplined but yet continued to lead Israel? Did not the Scripture record that David committed adultery and murder and was forgiven but disciplined and yet continued to lead Israel? Does not the Scripture record that Peter denied the Lord three times and was forgiven and continued to lead the church?

Nowhere in Scripture does it teach that a certain sin could cause a leader to be disqualified from functioning as an elder. The Scripture teaches if a Christian whether a pastor or layperson, it makes no distinction, confesses his sin and repents of it meaning he stops committing the sin, he is to be restored just like a layperson (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5; cf. 2 Corinthians 2).

The congregation is “obligated” to forgive the elder. There is no option. (Read Matthew 6:14-15; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13). If the congregation has been forgiven their sins by God through Christ, they are obligated to forgive the sins of other Christians and non-Christians and this includes repentant elders. If God has forgiven the congregation of their sins and restored them to fellowship with Himself when they repent by confessing their sins to Him and obeying Him, then they are obligated to restore to their fellowship the pastor who’s repented and confessed his sins to the Father and is obeying the Lord.

If the elder has not repented, then he should not be allowed to continue to lead the congregation since Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5 teach that an unrepentant believer is to be removed from the fellowship of the church after being confronted by the entire church with his or her sin. However, if he has repented, he must be allowed to continue as elder of the church. If the church does not treat its leaders in grace when they sin and repent of the sin, then the church is not operating in grace but is involved in hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

The purpose of church discipline is restoration. If the church does not allow a pastor to continue in his role in the church when he has repented after being confronted with his sin by the church, then the church does not understand the purpose of church discipline.

In 1 Timothy 5:20, the active voice of the verb *hamartano* is a stative active meaning that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb, which means that the elder “exists in the state of” possessing a sinful lifestyle or habitually committing a particular act of sin.

The verb is in the participle form and is a substantive participle as indicated by the definite article preceding it, which functions as a substantiver meaning that it converts the participle into a substantive. The article should be rendered with the relative pronoun phrase “those who” since it is referring to those elders who are unrepentant sinners.

In 1 Timothy 5:20, the verb *elencho* means “to rebuke,” which is indicated by the following *hina* purpose clause that implies severity and teaches that the action of this verb results in the congregation fearing church discipline or being publicly rebuked by the entire church. This purpose clause indicates that this rebuke is public and is speaking of the third stage of administering church discipline which is taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17. Again, the purpose of the rebuke is to get the sinning elder to admit his guilt and repent of the sin or abandon his sinful lifestyle whatever it may be.

The present imperative form of the verb is a “customary present imperative,” which is a command used of a general precept that teaches that Timothy and the Ephesian Christian community must rebuke elders who continue, as a lifestyle to commit a particular sin whatever it may be.

The fact that Paul addresses this issue of disciplining unrepentant sinning elders implies that there was a problem in the Christian community in Ephesus with elders. Undoubtedly, this was the direct result of the apostasy of many pastors in Ephesus, whom Paul discusses in 1 Timothy chapter one. Of course, there were elders who were not in apostasy but there were some that were otherwise Paul would not have addressed this issue in the first place. Thus, it is best to view this present imperative as Paul, simply communicating a general precept of the Word of God and the Lord and the apostles’ teaching without reference to whether there was a violation of this command or not.

Paul’s statements in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 4:6 imply that Timothy was carrying out everything he wrote in this epistle including this command in 1 Timothy 5:20, which is addressed to Timothy as indicated by the second person singular form of the verb *elencho*. Furthermore, Paul would not have delegated Timothy such a difficult task as the one in Ephesus unless he felt confident that his young delegate could carry out everything he required of him. Therefore, this command is simply a reminder to Timothy to continue doing what Paul told him to do before he left for Macedonia.

The improper preposition *enopion*, which is composed of the preposition *en* and *opion* generally means, “before, in the sight or presence” either in terms of space, sight, relationships, time or rank. It can also pertain to value judgment meaning “in the opinion” or “in the judgment of.”

Here in 1 Timothy 5:20, *enopion* means “in the presence of” and is used with reference to entire Christian community in Ephesus. It indicates that Paul is referring to the third stage of administering church discipline as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:17.

This stage involves confronting the unrepentant Christian before the entire church. The fourth stage would involve removing this Christian from the fellowship of the church if they refuse to admit their guilt and repent.

The adjective *pas* functions as a substantive and pertains to the totality of the Ephesian Christian community. Therefore, Paul is telling Timothy that he must continue to rebuke in the presence of “everyone,” i.e., the entire Christian community unrepentant elders. It does not refer to the elders in the Christian community in Ephesus but the entire church since Paul is following the Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching in Matthew 18:15-17, which addresses the subject of church discipline. Specifically, Paul is speaking of administering the third stage of church discipline as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:17. This involves confronting and rebuking the unrepentant sinner in the presence of the entire church. The fourth stage, which Paul does not mention, would involve removing the unrepentant elder from the fellowship of the church if he fails to admit his guilt. This guilt is to be established by two or three witnesses as prescribed in Matthew 18:16. We will translate the word “**everyone**.”

1 Timothy 5:20 Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. (NASB95)

“**So that the rest also will be fearful of sinning**” is composed of the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), “**so that**” and the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**also**” and then we have the articular nominative masculine plural form of the adjective *loipos* (λοιπός), “**the rest**” and this is followed by the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *phobos* (φόβος), “**fearful**” and then we have the third person plural present active subjunctive form of the verb *echo* (ἔχω), “**will be**.”

The conjunction *hina* is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *echo*, “**will be**” in order to form a purpose clause that emphasizes the “intention” of the preceding command. This indicates that *hina* is introducing a clause that presents Paul’s purpose for Timothy obeying his previous command. We will translate the conjunction “**in order that**.”

The conjunction *kai* is used here in an adjunctive sense meaning that the public rebuke of the unrepentant elder is not only for the guilty party but “also” for the entire Christian community.

The adjective *loipos* is articular and plural in number and is functioning as a substantive referring to the Ephesian Christian community as a corporate but in contrast to the unrepentant elder who is being disciplined by the church for a sinful lifestyle. *Loipos* functions as a nominative subject meaning that it is performing the action of the verb *echo*, “**will be**.”

The verb *echo* means “to possess a particular emotion or characteristic,” which is identified by the noun *phobos*, “**fearful**.” This indicates that the purpose of church discipline in relation to the unrepentant elder is not only to bring him to admit his guilt and repent of his sinful behavior but also to cause the rest of the Ephesian Christian community to “possess” fear. This would involve a fear of being disciplined public by the church for a sinful lifestyle and being removed from the fellowship of the church for such behavior.

The present tense of the verb *echo* is a customary present signaling an ongoing state or stative indicating the entire Christian community “existing in the state of being” fearful of being disciplined for a sinful lifestyle. The active voice is stative indicating the same thing. The subjunctive mood of the verb

is employed with the conjunction *hina* in order to form a purpose clause that expresses an additional purpose of administering church discipline to an unrepentant elder.

In 1 Timothy 5:20, the noun *phobos* is used in an active sense meaning “that which causes fear” and is used here of the individual members of the Christian community in Ephesus. It speaks of fear of being discipline publicly by the entire church for a sinful lifestyle.

Paul is teaching that administering church discipline with regards to an elder who refuses to admit his guilt and repent of his sinful lifestyle by rebuking him publicly before the entire church will serve as a deterrent to sinful behavior and lifestyles among the individual members of the Christian community.

Paul’s teaching is not only within the framework of our Lord’s teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 but also within the framework of Deuteronomy 19:15-21. This passage teaches that the punishment inflicted upon the guilty party is to cause the rest of the Israelite congregation to fear of receiving the same kind of punishment if they become involved in sin.

1 Timothy 5:20 You must continue to rebuke in the presence of everyone those who continue, as a lifestyle, sinning in order that the rest also will be in a state of fear. (Author’s translation)

In this verse, Paul is once again employing the figure of “asyndeton,” which emphasizes the importance of this command for the Christian community in Ephesus.

“**Those who continue, as a lifestyle, sinning**” is the participle form of the verb *hamartano*, which refers to elders who are committing sin and are unrepentant about it. That the word is speaking of elders and not Christians in general as some argue is indicated clearly by the context. In 1 Timothy 5:17-25, Paul instructs Timothy as to the proper treatment of elders. Throughout verses 17-25 Paul is addressing the issue of elders, i.e. overseers who are pastors-teachers. This is indicated by the fact that in verses 17-18 he speaks with regards to their remuneration, which is based on the teaching of the Old Testament. Then, in verses 19-21, he is addressing the topic of administering church discipline with sinning pastors who are unrepentant, which is to be impartial. Verse 22, Paul addresses the issue of ordaining pastors. In verses 24-25, the apostle gives the reason for his statements in verse 22 telling Timothy why he should not be hasty in ordaining men as overseers. Verse 23 is parenthetical addressing Timothy’s health, who is pastor, and is a digression based upon Paul’s statement at the end of verse 22 for Timothy to keep himself pure. Thus, his statements in verses 24 and 25 should be considered a part of the same discussion.

Now, in 1 Timothy 5:19, the apostle Paul commands Timothy to continue making it his habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder except however, on the basis of two or three witnesses. Here in 1 Timothy 5:20, the apostle discusses what to do with those elders who have been found guilty of sin as supporting by the two or three witnesses. So, once a particular sinful action on the part of the elder has been substantiated by two or three witnesses, Paul now moves to the next, namely how to deal with these elders.

That *hamartano* is speaking of elders who are unrepentant sinners is indicated by the present tense of the verb, which is a customary present that signals an action that regularly occurs. Here the customary present tense of the verb describes these elders as “regularly” or “habitually” committing sin. It emphasizes that these elders are committing a particular sin as a lifestyle or in other words, it is one that

they habitually commit so as to hurt the testimony of the church and the spiritual growth of the pastor and as a result his congregation. It indicates that this sin is not sporadic or occasional (which every Christian does) but a lifestyle and continues to be committed on a regular basis by the elder. Thus, they have not repented of this sin meaning they have not stopped committing this sin on a habitual basis. They would be repentant and consequently in fellowship with God if they had stopped committing this particular sin on a habitual basis.

“You must continue to rebuke in the presence of everyone” teaches that unrepentant elders must be publicly rebuked before the entire Christian community in Ephesus. This is indicated by the following *hina* purpose clause **“in order that the rest also will be in a state of fear”** that implies severity and teaches that the action of this verb results in the congregation fearing church discipline or being publicly rebuked by the entire church. This purpose clause indicates that this rebuke is public and is speaking of the third stage of administering church discipline which is taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17. Again, the purpose of the rebuke is to get the sinning elder to admit his guilt and repent of the sin or abandon his sinful lifestyle whatever it may be.

“You must continue to rebuke in the presence of everyone” teaches also a general precept of administering church discipline with respect to unrepentant elders. The fact that Paul addresses this issue of disciplining unrepentant sinning elders implies that there was a problem in the Christian community in Ephesus with elders. Undoubtedly, this was the direct result of the apostasy of many pastors in Ephesus, whom Paul discusses in 1 Timothy chapter one. Of course, there were elders who were not in apostasy but there were some that were otherwise Paul would not have addressed this issue in the first place. Paul is simply communicating a general precept of the Word of God and the Lord and the apostles’ teaching without reference to whether there was a violation of this command or not. Paul’s statements in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 4:6 imply that Timothy was carrying out everything he wrote in this epistle including this command in 1 Timothy 5:20, which is addressed to Timothy as indicated by the second person singular form of the verb *elencho*. Furthermore, Paul would not have delegated Timothy such a difficult task as the one in Ephesus unless he felt confident that his young delegate could carry out everything he required of him. Therefore, this command is simply a reminder to Timothy to continue doing what Paul told him to do before he left for Macedonia.

“In order that the rest also will be in a state of fear” is a purpose clause that emphasizes that presents Paul’s purpose for Timothy obeying his previous command to continue rebuking those elders, who continue as a lifestyle sinning. It also teaches that the public rebuke of the unrepentant elder is not only for the guilty party but also for the entire Christian community.

“The rest” is the adjective *loipos* which is referring to the Ephesian Christian community as a corporate but in contrast to the unrepentant elder who is being disciplined by the church for a sinful lifestyle.

“Fear” is the noun *phobos*, which speaks of fear of being discipline publicly by the entire church for a sinful lifestyle. Paul is teaching that the administration of church discipline with regards to an elder who refuses to admit his guilt and repent of his sinful lifestyle by rebuking him publicly before the entire church will serve as a deterrent to sinful behavior and lifestyles among the individual members of the Christian community.

Paul's teaching in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 indicates that he is following the procedure to administer church discipline as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17. The Lord teaches in this passage that church discipline begins with a private confrontation. The believer who is habitually sinning or possesses a sinful lifestyle must first be confronted privately as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15. Also, these sinning elders have been confronted by two or three witnesses as also taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:16. The third stage of church discipline as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:17 would require that the entire church rebuke the sinning elder and the last stage would involve him being removed from the fellowship of the church by the entire church. The third stage is being referred to here in 1 Timothy 5:20. The fourth stage is not mentioned by Paul since he just says to publicly rebuke the unrepentant elder and does not say to remove them. Thus, he is leaving room open for repentance for some of the apostate elders in Ephesus. If the sinning elder does not repent from the rebuke of the entire church, then he is to be removed from the fellowship of the church as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:17.

That Paul is following the Lord's teaching in Matthew 18:15-17, is indicated by the fact that in 1 Timothy 5:19 he mentions two or three witnesses being used to establish guilt, which corresponds to Matthew 18:16. Then, in 1 Timothy 5:20, he speaks of publicly rebuking the guilty party, which corresponds to Matthew 18:17. This indicates that Paul is not instituting a special way of disciplining pastors, i.e. elders. If these elders repent, they should be allowed back in the fellowship of the church as taught by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-17. Therefore, there are not two sets of rules with regards to church discipline meaning that the same rules that are used to deal with sinful behavior among individual Christians are to be used with respect to elders. The same discipline of removing an unrepentant sinner from the congregation should be applied to unrepentant pastors. The same grace that is to be demonstrated to repentant Christians after they have been confronted with regards to their sin is to be exercised towards repentant pastors. If the church does not forgive and show grace to repentant pastors, is this not hypocrisy and sin itself and a poor testimony before the unsaved as well as a failure to exercise God's love?

Paul's teaching is not only within the framework of our Lord's teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 but also within the framework of Deuteronomy 19:15-21. This passage teaches that the punishment inflicted upon the guilty party is to cause the rest of the Israelite congregation to fear of receiving the same kind of punishment if they become involved in sin.

1 Timothy 5:21 - Paul Solemnly Charges Timothy to Carry Out the Commands In 1 Timothy 5:19-20 Without Prejudging and Do Absolutely Nothing on the Basis of Partiality

The apostle Paul in verse 21 solemnly charges Timothy in the presence of the Father and Christ Jesus and His elect angels to carry out the commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 without prejudging and to do absolutely nothing on the basis of partiality.

1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality. (NASB95)

“I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels” is composed of the first person singular present middle indicative form of the verb *diamarturomai*

(διαμαρτύρομαι), “**I solemnly charge**” and this is followed by the preposition *enopion* (ἐνώπιον), “**in the presence of**” and then we have the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), “**of God**” and this is followed by the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” and then we have the genitive masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), “**Christ**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the proper noun *Iesous* (Ἰησοῦς), “**Jesus**” and this is followed by the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” and then we have articular genitive masculine plural form of the noun *angelos* (ἄγγελος), “**angels**” which is modified by the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *eklektos* (ἐκλεκτός), “**chosen.**”

In 1 Timothy 5:21, Paul is once again employing the figure of “asyndeton,” which means that he is not using a connective word between his solemn warning in verse 21 and his command in verse 20. Paul uses this figure in order to emphasize the solemn warning in verse 21 in the sense that he wants Timothy to dwell upon it and obey it. This figure emphasizes the importance of this warning for the Christian community in Ephesus and for Timothy to administrate the household of God in Ephesus.

The verb *diamarturomai* means “to solemnly charge” with the implication of imposing on someone a duty or responsibility. Here it is used with Paul as its subject and the commands that appear in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 as its object. It denotes that Paul is “solemnly charging” Timothy to put into practice these commands with the implication that the apostle is imposing this upon Timothy as his duty and responsibility as Paul’s delegate to the Ephesian Christian community.

The term expresses Paul’s apostolic authority and a degree of formality because he mentions the Father, Son and the elect angels as his witnesses emphasizing with Timothy that it is imperative that he is faithful in putting into practice these commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. It emphasizes with Timothy that he will held accountable in the matter. It indicates that Timothy will have to give an account of his service in Ephesus and in particular with regards to these two commands in verses 19-20. It also emphasizes that these commands come ultimately from the Father and the Son and that the elect angels are observing his actions to testify to his faithfulness or unfaithfulness, which will be determined by his observance of these commands or failure to do so. The verb emphasizes the gravity of the situation.

The word also emphasizes how important that Timothy carry out these commands with impartiality in that the testimony of the church before the unsaved is at stake and thus the cause of Christ. Also, the spiritual growth of the church is at stake because the pastor-teachers, i.e. elders or overseers are those who communicate doctrine to the church and if these men are not functioning in their spiritual gift due to a unrepentant lifestyle of sin, then the church’s growth will suffer. The verb *diamarturomai* also implies that Timothy represents the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The present tense is an instantaneous present or aoristic or punctiliar present used to indicate that an action is completed at the moment of speaking. It is used normally with the verb of speaking or saying and denotes that the act itself is completed at the moment of speaking. Thus, the present tense of *diamarturomai* denotes that Paul’s solemn charge to Timothy to observe impartially the commands found in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 is completed at the moment he wrote it. The middle voice of the verb is an intensive middle focusing attention on Paul’s as the subject and is emphasizing Paul’s apostolic authority with Timothy. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement of fact.

The improper preposition *enopion*, which is composed of the preposition *en* and *opion* generally means, “before, in the sight or presence” either in terms of space, sight, relationships, time or rank. It can also pertain to value judgment meaning “in the opinion” or “in the judgment of.”

Here in 1 Timothy 5:21, *enopion* means “in the presence of” and is used with reference to God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels. It emphasizes with Timothy that he is living and acting in the presence of these three. It emphasizes with Timothy that he will held accountable in the matter. It also emphasizes that these commands come ultimately from the Father and the Son and that the elect angels are observing his actions to testify to his faithfulness or unfaithfulness, which will be determined by his observance of these commands or failure to do so.

The noun *theos* means “God” and refers to the Father. This is indicated by the fact that the articular construction of this noun in the New Testament commonly signifies the first member of the Trinity. Also, it is not the Spirit because He is the one who is giving this charge to Timothy through Paul. It of course cannot refer to the Son since He is mentioned as well in this prepositional phrase.

The conjunction *kai* is used here in an adjunctive sense meaning that Paul is solemnly charging Timothy to observe impartially his commands in verses 19-20 in the presence of not only the Father but “also” the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, we will translate this word “**as well as.**”

Christos signifies that Jesus of Nazareth served God the Father exclusively and this was manifested by His execution of the Father’s salvation plan which was accomplished by His voluntary substitutionary death on the Cross. The word signifies that Jesus of Nazareth has been given authority by God the Father to forgive sins, give eternal life, and authority over all creation and every creature as a result of His execution of the Father’s salvation plan. It denotes that Jesus of Nazareth was perpetually guided and empowered by God the Holy Spirit during His First Advent. Lastly, *Christos* signifies that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised deliverer of the human race from the bondage of Satan, his cosmic system and the old Adamic sin nature.

The proper name *Iesous* refers to the human nature of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth. It functions as a “genitive of simple apposition” meaning that it stands in apposition to the genitive form of the noun *Christos*, “**Christ.**” It simply clarifies who is Christ here, namely Jesus of Nazareth since there were many in the first century who made the claim.

The conjunction *kai* is used here again in an adjunctive sense meaning that “in addition to” the Father and the Son, Paul is issuing this solemn charge in the presence of the elect angels. Therefore we will translate this word “**and in addition.**”

The noun *angelos* refers to the elect angels and not the non-elect angels, which is indicated by the fact that the word is modified by the adjective *eklektos*, “elect,” which signifies that these angels are members of the kingdom of God in contrast to Satan’s angels, which are non-elect.

The adjective *eklektos* means “elect” and is modifying the noun *angelos*, “**angels**” and signifies a particular group of angels who are members of the kingdom of God in contrast to those angels who are members of Satan’s kingdom. These elect angels will testify to Timothy’s faithfulness or unfaithfulness in carrying out Paul’s commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

This adjective functions as a “genitive of simple apposition” meaning that it stands in apposition to the genitive form of the noun *angelos*, “**angels**.” It simply clarifies which angels of God will testify to Timothy’s faithfulness or unfaithfulness in carrying out the commands in verses 19-20.

The definite article preceding it denotes adjectival position in that it signifies an attributive position, which gives the adjective greater emphasis than the noun it modifies.

1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality. (NASB95)

“**To maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality**” is composed of the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), “**to**” and then we have the accusative neuter plural form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), “**these things**” and this is followed by the second person singular aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *phulasso* (φυλάσσω), “**maintain**” and then we have the improper preposition *choris* (χωρίς), “**without**” and its object is the genitive neuter singular form of the noun *prokrima* (πρόκριμα), “**bias**” and then we have the accusative neuter singular form of the adjective *medeis* (μηδεῖς), “**nothing**” which is followed by the nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *poieo* (ποιέω), “**doing**” and then we have the preposition *kata* (κατά), “**in**” and its object is the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *prosklisis* (πρόσκλησις), “**partiality**.”

The conjunction *hina* is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *phulasso*, “**maintain**” in order to form a direct object clause that presents the content of the verb *diamarturomai*, “**I myself solemnly charge**.” This indicates that *hina* is introducing a clause that presents the content of the preceding solemn charge and answers the question as “what?” the preceding solemn charge is with reference to.

The verb *phulasso* is used in active sense meaning “to carry out, to execute” Paul’s commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. In verse 19, Paul commanded Timothy to continue making it his habit of not receiving an accusation against an elder except however on the basis of two or three witnesses. Then, in verse 20, he commanded his young delegate to continue to rebuke in the presence of everyone those who continue, as a lifestyle, sinning in order that the rest of the Christian community in Ephesus also will be in a state of fear. Therefore, in verse 21, the verb *phulasso* indicates that Paul is solemnly charging Timothy to carry out these commands or execute them or put them into effect.

The second person singular form of the verb is of course referring to Timothy. The subjunctive mood of the verb is employed with the conjunction *hina* in order to form a direct object clause that presents the content of the verb *diamarturomai*, “**I myself solemnly charge**.” The active voice means that Timothy, as the subject, is to obey this solemn charge to obey the commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. The aorist tense is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the action of Timothy obeying Paul’s commands in these verses.

The immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* refers to Paul’s commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. This is indicated by the fact that each time Paul uses this word in the accusative plural form in 1 Timothy (1:18; 3:14; 4:6, 11, 15; 5:7), it sums up the immediate preceding paragraph. This is also indicated by the manner in which Timothy is to carry out these commands, which is to be with impartiality.

Therefore, because these commands deal with accusations against elders and administering church discipline to those who are unrepentant apostates and that Timothy is to carry out these commands with impartiality indicates that *houtos* is referring to these commands in verses 19-20.

Houtos functions as an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *phulasso*, “**carry out**” indicating that Timothy as the subject is to perform the action of carrying out or putting into practice the commands that appear in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. We will translate *houtos*, “**these things**.”

The noun *prokrima* means “prejudgment, prejudice” and is directly related to the commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

The noun *prokrima* is the object of the improper preposition *choris*, which means “without” indicating that Timothy was to carry out Paul’s commands in verses 19-20 “apart from” or “independently of” or “without” prejudging or prejudice.

The verb *poieo* means “to do” in the sense of carrying out Paul’s commands in verses 19-20. The word functions as a substantive participle speaking of Timothy who is to do nothing according to partiality. The verb is also a nominative subject. The present tense of the verb *poieo* is a customary present used to signal an action that regularly occurs and specifically the continuation of a regularly occurring action. This indicates that Timothy was to “continue to make it his habit of” doing absolutely nothing on the basis of partiality.

Paul’s statements in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 4:6 imply that Timothy was carrying out everything he wrote in this epistle including this solemn charge in 1 Timothy 5:21. Furthermore, Paul would not have delegated Timothy such a difficult task as the one in Ephesus unless he felt confident that his young delegate could carry out everything he required of him. Therefore, this solemn charge is simply a reminder to Timothy to continue doing what Paul told him to do before he left for Macedonia. The active voice of *poieo* is a simple active indicating that Timothy as the subject performs the action of the verb.

In 1 Timothy 5:21, the emphatic negative adjective *medeis* functions as a substantive and means “**absolutely nothing**” and refers to any action in relation to the commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 that would be the result of partiality. The word functions as an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *poieo*.

The noun *prosklisis* indicates an inclination toward something and thus means “partiality,” normally in a negative sense. It speaks of an unjustified preference for something.¹⁷⁷ It refers to a “relatively strong preference for something.”¹⁷⁸ The term denotes giving preferential treatment to a person or persons. Thus, Paul is telling Timothy that he is to do nothing that is according to partiality. This word is used in relation to the commands in 1 Timothy 5:20-21.

In 1 Timothy 5:21, the accusative form of the noun *prosklisis* is the object of the preposition *kata*, which functions as a marker of a norm of similarity introducing the basis for Timothy’s actions in

¹⁷⁷ Louw and Nida, 88.241

¹⁷⁸ BDAG, page 881

relation to the execution of the commands in verses 19-20. This indicates that Timothy was to do absolutely nothing “based upon” or “because of” partiality.

1 Timothy 5:21 I myself solemnly charge in the presence of God the Father as well as Christ, who is Jesus and in addition the elect angels that you carry out these things without prejudging. Continue making it your habit of doing absolutely nothing on the basis of partiality. (Author’s translation)

In this verse, Paul is once again employing the figure of “asyndeton,” which emphasizes the importance of this warning for the Christian community in Ephesus and for Timothy to administrate the household of God in Ephesus.

“I solemnly charge in the presence of God the Father as well as Christ, who is Jesus and in addition the elect angels” denotes that Paul is solemnly charging Timothy to put into practice these commands with the implication that the apostle is imposing this upon Timothy as his duty and responsibility as Paul’s delegate to the Ephesian Christian community. It expresses Paul’s apostolic authority and a degree of formality because he mentions the Father, Son and the elect angels as his witnesses emphasizing with Timothy that it is imperative that he is faithful in putting into practice these commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. It emphasizes with Timothy that he will held accountable in the matter. It indicates that Timothy will have to give an account of his service in Ephesus and in particular with regards to these two commands in verses 19-20. It also emphasizes that these commands come ultimately from the Father and the Son and that the elect angels are observing his actions to testify to his faithfulness or unfaithfulness, which will be determined by his observance of these commands or failure to do so. This statement emphasizes the gravity of the situation.

It also emphasizes how important that Timothy carry out these commands with impartiality in that the testimony of the church before the unsaved is at stake and thus the cause of Christ. Also, the spiritual growth of the church is at stake because the pastor-teachers, i.e. elders or overseers are those who communicate doctrine to the church and if these men are not functioning in their spiritual gift due to an unrepentant lifestyle of sin, then the church’s growth will suffer. This statement implies that Timothy represents the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“That you carry out these things” is referring to Paul’s commands in verses 19-20. This is indicated by the fact that each time Paul uses this word in the accusative plural form in 1 Timothy (1:18; 3:14; 4:6, 11, 15; 5:7), it sums up the immediate preceding paragraph. This is also indicated by the manner in which Timothy is to carry out these commands, which is to be without prejudging or partiality. Therefore, because these commands deal with accusations against elders and administering church discipline to those who are unrepentant apostates and that Timothy is to carry out these commands without prejudging and impartiality indicates that *houtos* is referring to these commands in verses 19-20.

“Without prejudging” speaks of Timothy prejudging innocence or guilt of an elder before considering the evidence. It indicates that Timothy must listen objectively to witnesses to determine whether or not the accusations against an elder are true or not.

“Continue making it your habit of doing absolutely nothing on the basis of partiality” refers to any action in relation to the commands in 1 Timothy 5:19-20 that would be the result of partiality. It denotes giving preferential treatment to a person or persons.

Romans 16:17 - Paul Warns Romans to Watch for And Avoid Those Causing Divisions and Temptations Contrary to Doctrine They've Been Taught

In Romans 16:17, Paul warns the Roman believers to watch out for those who cause divisions and temptations to sin and apostasy contrary to the doctrine they've been taught and that they were to avoid them.

Romans 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. (NASB95)

“Now” is the “transitional” use of the post-positive conjunction *de* (δέ), which is correctly translated and marks a transition from the previous paragraph in Romans 16:3-16 to the paragraph that follows it in Romans 16:17-20.

In Romans 16:17-19, the apostle Paul warns the Roman Christians about false teachers. Then, in Romans 16:20, he assures the Roman believers of their ultimate victory over Satan and also he prays that the grace of God will be manifested among them.

“I urge” is the first person singular present active indicative form of the verb *parakaleo* (παρακαλέω), which is a compound verb composed of the preposition *para*, “beside” and the verb *kaleo*, “to call, invite,” thus the word literally means “to call to one’s side.”

The verb *parakaleo* means “to warn” since in context Paul is giving admonishing advice to the Roman believers of the spiritual danger of false teachers coming into their midst and causing divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching they have received from him in this epistle and their pastors.

The first person singular form of the verb is an obvious reference to the apostle Paul.

The present tense of the verb is an “instantaneous” present used to indicate that the action of Paul appealing to his readers is completed at the “moment” of writing.

The active voice refers to Paul as the subject producing the action of warning his readers to keep an eye out for those who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching they have received from their pastors as well as him in this epistle.

The indicative mood is “potential,” which is used with verbs of obligation, wish or desire followed by an infinitive. In our passage, we have the verb *parakaleo*, which expresses Paul’s desire that his readers to keep an eye out for those who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching they received from their pastors as well as from him in this epistle and is followed by the infinitive form of the verb *skopeo*, “to keep your eye on.” Therefore, we will translate *parakaleo*, “I warn.”

“You” is the accusative second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), which is a reference to Paul’s Gentile and Jewish Christian readers in Rome and is used in a distributive sense. This

indicates that Paul is warning “each and every one of” his Jewish and Gentile Christian readers “without exception” to keep an eye out for those who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching they have received from their pastors as well as him in this epistle.

“**Brethren**” is the vocative masculine plural form of the noun *adelphos* (ἀδελφός), which means “fellow-believer, fellow-Christian, spiritual brother or sister.” It refers specifically to each and every one of the Roman believers without exception as indicated by the personal pronoun *su*, “**each and every one of you without exception.**” This word *adelphos* emphasizes with the Roman Christians that they are on equal footing with the apostle in that they are sons of God like him (cf. John 1:12-13; Galatians 3:26-28).

The anarthrous construction (no definite article) of the noun *adelphos* is “qualitative” emphasizing the qualitative aspect of the word. Thus, it emphasizes that the Roman believers are Paul’s “spiritual” brothers and sisters through regeneration.

This is a vocative of direct simple address indicating Paul is directly addressing in writing his spiritual brothers and sisters who were located in the city of Rome.

“**To keep your eye on**” is the present active infinitive form of the verb *skopeo* (σκοπέω), which means “to keep a watchful eye on” those individuals who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching that the Roman believers received from their pastors and Paul in this epistle.

The present tense of the verb is a “customary” or “stative” present used to signal an ongoing state. This indicates that Paul is warning the Roman believers to “exist in a state of” keeping a watchful eye out for those individuals who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching that they received from their pastors as well as himself in this epistle. The active voice is “stative” indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. The subject is the Roman believers. This again indicates that Paul is warning the Romans to “exist in the state of” keeping a watchful eye out for those individuals who cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching that they received from their pastors as well as himself in this epistle. The verb *skopeo* functions as a “complementary infinitive” meaning that it is completing the thought of the verb *parakaleo*.

“**Those who cause**” is composed of the articular accusative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb (ποιέω), “**those who cause.**”

The verb *poieo* means “to cause to be” indicating that Paul is warning the Romans to keep a watchful eye out for those individuals who “cause” divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching they received from their pastors and himself in this epistle. As we will note *poieo* is used of the legalistic teaching of the Judaizers, which caused divisions in the churches in the Roman Empire and believers to sin and enter into apostasy.

The article refers to the Judaizers whose legalistic teaching caused divisions in the churches in the first century and believers to sin. This is indicated by the prepositional phrase *para ten didachen hen humeis emathete* (παρὰ τὴν διδασχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε), “**contrary to the teaching which you learned.**”

The present tense of the verb is a “customary” or “stative” present used to signal an ongoing state. This indicates that Paul is warning the Roman believers to keep a watchful eye out for the Judaizers who

“existed in a state of” causing divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching that the Romans received from their pastors as well as himself in this epistle. The active voice is “stative” indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. The subject is the Judaizers whose legalistic teaching caused divisions in the churches in the first century and believers to sin and which teaching was contrary to the teaching the Romans received from their pastors and Paul in this epistle. This again indicates that Paul is warning the Romans to keep a watchful eye out for those individuals who “exist in a state” of causing divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching that they received from their pastors as well as himself in this epistle.

“**Dissensions**” is the articular accusative feminine plural form of the noun *dichostasia* (δικοστασία), which is related to *dischotatio* and is from *dicha*, which is both an adverb and a preposition meaning, “in two, apart” and the verb *histemi*, “to stand.” Therefore, the word is a “standing apart,” thus it is a “dissension” or “an act of sedition.”

In Romans 16:17, the noun *dichostasia* is in the plural and means “divisions” referring to that which is caused in the Christian community by false teachers. The word functions as an accusative direct object meaning it is receiving the action of the verb *poieo*. The articular construction of the word indicates that these divisions were well-known to Paul’s readers since their pastors warned them about these divisions and Paul did as well in this epistle.

Though Paul does not explicitly identify these individuals, his teaching in Romans chapters 2-4 does strongly suggest that he is referring to the Judaizers since these chapters are designed specifically to refute their legalistic teaching. Further suggesting that Paul is referring to that which is caused by the Judaizers’ teaching is that Paul’s epistles and the book of Acts reveal that the Judaizers’ caused divisions in the churches that Paul established from Jerusalem to Illyricum. In particular, their teaching caused divisions in Galatia, which Paul addressed in the Galatian epistle.

The fact that Paul would use three chapters in this epistle to refute their teaching, which his other epistles and the book of Acts reveal caused divisions in the churches, strongly suggests that this noun *dichostasia* in Romans 16:17 is a reference to the divisions caused by the Judaizers’ legalistic teaching.

The Judaizers originated with the Pharisees and those who adhered to their teaching and were composed of both believing and unbelieving Jews who taught strict adherence to the 613 mandates found in the Mosaic Law as well as the oral traditions of the Rabbis, which are now, documented in the Mishna and the Talmud. They elevated the oral traditions of the Rabbis to be on a par with the Scriptures and in some cases elevated them above the Scriptures (cf. Mk. 7).

Many of the Judaizers were believers since Acts 6:7, 15:5 and 21:20 state that many of the priests and Pharisees who were teachers of the Mosaic Law believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation but after salvation they still adhered to the Mosaic Law rather than the mystery doctrine for the church age that Paul was teaching.

The NT Scriptures described the Judaizers with the following phrases: (1) “**dogs, evil workers, the false circumcision**” (Philippians 3:2). (2) “**Drifting off course from grace**” (Galatians 5:4). (3) “**Enemies of the cross**” (Philippians 3:18). (4) “**Coming short of the grace of God**” (Hebrews 12:15). They are referred to in the following NT passages: (1) Acts 13:45 (2) Acts 15:5 (3) Acts 17:5 (4) Acts 21:20 (5) Galatians 1:6-7 (6) Philippians 1:12-18 (7) Philippians 3:1-3.

The Judaizers taught that one had to observe and practice the Mosaic Law in order to get saved whereas Paul taught salvation by grace through faith in Christ and not through the works of the Mosaic Law (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16). They followed Paul throughout his missionary journeys seeking to discredit and destroy his ministry (Acts 13:45; 17:5). Paul denounces their teaching in the book of Galatians since they taught a “**different gospel**” according to Galatians 1:6 and “**distorted the gospel of Christ**” (Galatians 1:7). Consequently, the apostle Paul describes the Judaizers as “enemies of the cross” in Philippians 3:17-19.

The Gospel message demonstrates that all of humanity is totally and completely dependent upon God and His grace for not only human existence itself but also for salvation. They could do nothing to earn or deserve salvation and were totally and completely dependent upon God to provide salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Judaizers also hated the gospel message because the gospel taught that all of humanity, both Jew and Gentile have absolutely no merit with God and that only Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Christ has merit with God since He is the only sinless human being in history. Therefore, the gospel rejects human arrogance and pride.

The Judaizers distorted Paul’s teaching of justification by grace through faith in Christ by saying that this doctrine encourages people to sin or gives them license to sin, which is called “antinomianism.”

They rejected the grace message since it rejects human arrogance, which expresses itself by attempting to perform some sort of system of works in order to be justified before a holy God (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:5-7). They also rejected it because they were involved in evil, which is independence from God (Isaiah 14:12-14). The Judaizers twisted and distorted the gospel message that Paul and the apostles communicated since it exposed their sin and hypocrisy and self-righteousness and thus their need for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3).

The Judaizers claimed that circumcision was necessary for salvation but the first church council in Jerusalem disagreed since the Holy Spirit revealed to the council that it was through faith in Christ that was one received the promise of eternal life regardless if you were a Jew or Gentile racially (Acts 15).

The Judaizers were very religious and legalistic people. Theologically, religion is the antithesis to Biblical Christianity in that it is the ignorant, presumptuous, vain and arrogant attempt by man to gain the approbation of God by depending upon a legalistic, meritorious system of human works rather than the impeccable Person and Finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun legalism, “strict adherence, or the principle of strict adherence, to law or prescription, especially to the letter rather than the spirit.”

The Judaizers like the Pharisees taught strict adherence to the letter of the Law, especially to the letter rather than the spirit of the Law (Mk. 2-3)! The legalism of the Pharisees from whom the Judaizers originated is illustrated by their critical attitude of our Lord Jesus when he healed on the Sabbath. Under the Mosaic Law, the Sabbath was designed to benefit Israel by prohibiting Israel from working on this day and yet the Pharisees criticized the Lord for healing on the Sabbath, thus they strictly adhered to letter of the Law rather than the spirit of the Law.

In Philippians 3:2-3 Paul issues a warning to the Philippians to beware of the Judaizers and their legalistic teaching, in which they taught that man must be circumcised in order to be saved.

Philippians 3:2 Beware of those dogs, beware of those evil workers, beware of the mutilation 3 because we are the circumcision those who are serving (God the Father) by means of the Spirit of God, who are priding themselves in the nature of Christ Jesus, who have no confidence in the flesh. (Author's translation)

“**The mutilation**” was a term used by Paul to mock the Judaizers who taught one must be circumcised in their flesh in order to be saved.

God is concerned about the condition of the heart and not the male phallus.

1 Corinthians 7:19, “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.”

Circumcision of the flesh is useless unless there is a circumcision of the heart.

Deuteronomy 30:6 “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.” (NASB95)

Colossians 2:11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. (NASB95)

Philippians 3:2 is composed of the three successive warnings to the Philippians regarding the Judaizers: (1) *Blepete tous kunas*, “**beware of those dogs.**” (2) *Blepete tous kakous ergatas*, “**beware of those evil workers.**” (3) *Blepete ten katatomen*, “**beware of the mutilation.**”

Each warning identifies a certain aspect regarding the Judaizers: (1) *Modus operandi* or mode of operation: Attacking in packs. (2) Policy: Evil (3) Issue: Circumcision.

The first warning identifies the *modus operandi* of the Judaizers which is to always attack its enemy in packs or groups. It identifies the Judaizers with the most contemptuous animal in the ancient world, the dog, thus by identifying them with the dog, he is attributing to them certain qualities or characteristics which this animal possessed as it was known in the first century A.D.

Paul is definitely referring to Isaiah 56:10-11 when referring to this group of individuals, “**His watchmen are blind, all of them know nothing. All of them are mute dogs unable to bark, dreamers lying down, who love to slumber; And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each one to his unjust gain, to the last one.**”

References to the dog, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, are usually of a contemptuous character. A dog, and especially a dead dog, is used as a figure of insignificance.

Each quarter of a city has its own pack of dogs, which vigorously resents any invasion of its territory. A dog which for any reason finds itself in foreign territory gets home as quickly as possible, and is lucky if it does not have to run the gauntlet of a pack of vicious foes.

In ancient Israel, the dog was not “man's best friend.” In fact, calling someone a dog was one of the most offensive ways of insulting that person. The Bible mentions dogs frequently; most of the references are derogatory. Even in New Testament times, Jews called Gentiles “dogs” (Matthew 15:26). The term “dog” also referred to a male prostitute (Deuteronomy 23:18). They often banded together in packs and lived off the refuse and food supplies of a village.

Some dogs were useful as watchdogs or guardians of sheep, but even they were not altogether reliable (Isaiah 56:10). In Bible times, as now, troops of hungry and half-wild dogs roamed the fields and the streets feeding upon dead bodies and other refuse (1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:19,23; 2 Kings 9:10,36; Jeremiah 15:3); etc.) and thus became objects of dislike. Fierce and cruel enemies were called dogs (Psalm 22:16, 20; Jeremiah 15:3).

The dog being an unclean animal, the terms “dog,” “dead dog,” “dog's head” were used as terms of reproach, or of humiliation if speaking of one's self (1 Samuel 24:14; 2 Samuel 3:8; 9:8; 2 Kings 8:13), the watch of the house, and of the flock (Isaiah 56:10-11; Job 30:1). More commonly ownerless, and banded in troops which divide cities into so many quarters; each half-starved, ravenous troop keeps to its own quarter, and drives off any intruder; feeding on blood, dead bodies, and offal; therefore regarded as “unclean” (1 Kings 14:11; 16:4; 21:19,23; 22:38; 2 Kings 9:10,35-36).

Thus, like the dog of the ancient world, the Judaizers traveled in packs throughout the city seeking to attack and destroy Paul and his message of grace. They preyed upon his spiritual flock throughout the Roman Empire as the dog of the ancient world would prey upon unsuspecting persons in a city. They were ferocious and vicious in their attacks upon Paul and members of the royal family who were advancing spiritually.

The Judaizers were very territorial in the sense that they did not want Paul, the other apostles and their students to communicate the message of God's grace policy in the fear that they would lure away their students from their ritualistic teaching of the Mosaic Law. Like the dog of the ancient world fed off dead bodies and the refuse of a city, so the Judaizers fed off the spiritually dead (temporal and positional).

The second warning in Philippians 3:2 describes the policy of evil which characterizes the nature and origin of the Judaizers' actions. They were operating in the old sin nature and were indoctrinated by the evil of Satan's cosmic system.

Evil is Satan's policy as the ruler of this world. It is the way that Satan operates as ruler of this world. He seeks to capture and control the human soul with his policy of evil. Satan seeks to establish his own millennium and become the victor in the angelic conflict through his policy of evil. God's policy of grace is antithetical or totally opposite to Satan's policy. Grace and Bible Doctrine represent the genius and thinking of God in relation to the human race. Evil represents the genius and thinking of Satan regarding the human race. Evil is a system of thinking just as Bible Doctrine is a system of thinking. All of sin is evil but not all evil is sin. Human good is evil because it is based upon improper motivation from the influence of the old sin nature and the cosmic system of Satan upon the human soul.

All sin is evil but not all evil is sin. Evil includes much more than sin even though sin and evil often overlap. Evil includes human good. Human good is the attempt by man to solve his problems apart from Bible Doctrine and apart from divine establishment. The area of strength in the old sin nature is the

source of human good. God hates human good (Isaiah 64:6). The area of strength in the old sin nature produces human good or “dead works” (Hebrews 6:1). Both believers and unbelievers produce human good because both possess a sin nature.

The third warning in Philippians 3:2 identifies the issue that the Judaizers champion which is circumcision.

In Philippians 3:3, Paul presents three great fundamental principles of Biblical Christianity that the Judaizers rejected: (1) **“those who are serving by means of the Spirit of God”**: Dependence upon omnipotence of the Spirit (2) **“who are priding themselves in Christ Jesus”**: Dependence upon the new Christ-nature (3) **“who have no confidence in the flesh”**: Rejection of the old Adamic-nature.

These three great fundamental principles of Biblical Christianity form the spiritual code of conduct referred to by Paul in Philippians 3:16, “In any case, having progressed this far, let us continue to live in agreement according to the same code of conduct.” These individuals nullify the impact in their lives of the work of Christ on the cross. The old Adamic-nature was crucified at the cross. The concept of living for self therefore, was nullified. The old Adamic-nature will be permanently eradicated at the end of human history.

Christ’s work on the cross was not benefiting the Judaizers because they were self-righteous and their lives manifested the fact that they lived for self. An enemy of the cross of Christ is an individual whose attitude and lifestyle are antagonistic to the message of the cross of Christ. This antagonism is revealed in religion and the observance of human traditions, rituals, rules and regulations. The unregenerate rejects the work of Christ on his behalf for salvation.

The regenerate individual is an enemy of the cross of Christ because they consistently choose to live according to the old Adamic-nature and not in the new Christ-nature, thus they reject the three great fundamental principles of Christianity as noted in Philippians 3:3. Paul weeps for the unregenerate Jew because they reject the Lord Jesus as their Messiah (cf. Romans 9:1-5; 10:1-4). He weeps for the regenerate Judaizers because they will die the sin unto death and lose rewards and privileges for the eternal state (1 John 2:28; 5:16).

The Judaizers defamed the character of Paul and the apostles and other communicators of the gospel of Jesus Christ as a result of bitterness towards them. In Rome, they expressed their jealousy by proclaiming Christ while Paul was under house arrest in the Praetorian Camp in Rome during his first Roman imprisonment in 60-62 A.D. in order to turn the Roman government against Paul according to Philippians 1:12-17.

In Romans 3:8, Paul indirectly addresses the Judaizers’ charge that his gospel of grace was “antinomianism,” which comes from the Greek *anti*, “against” and the noun *nomos*, “law,” thus the expression literally means, “against the law.”

Romans 3:8 Furthermore, what is the conclusion that we are forced to? (As we have been slanderously charged with in the past and continue to be up to the present moment and as some have in the past alleged we say and continue to do so up to the present moment), “Let us perpetrate evil acts in order that blessings might result.” No! Their condemnation is, as an eternal spiritual truth, deserved. (Author’s translation)

Paul was accused by the Judaizers that he was “against the Law” meaning that his message of grace gave one a license to sin when in reality Paul taught that grace is a license to obey and serve God (Romans 7:1-13).

The Judaizers were accusing Paul of teaching that grace encourages people to sin, which is of course false since Paul taught that God’s grace is so that we might obey and serve God and was not a license to sin as the Judaizers accused him of teaching.

As we noted earlier, Paul refutes the legalistic teaching of the Judaizers in Romans chapters 2-4. Not only did the Judaizers teach that circumcision guaranteed them entrance into the kingdom of God but also, they believed that their racial background would as well. They also thought that being the recipients and custodians of the Old Testament Scriptures would gain them entrance into the kingdom and deliver them from eternal condemnation. All this, Paul addressed in Romans chapter 2-4.

In Romans 2:1-3:8, the apostle Paul addresses the sin of the Jews and will do so in three stages: (1) Without naming his opponent, he establishes the principles of divine judgment by which the Jew is clearly condemned, just as the pagan Gentiles (Romans 2:1-16). (2) Paul explains how the Law condemns (2:17-29). (3) He adds a parenthetical response to possible misconceptions of what he has said (3:1-8).

In Romans 3:9-10, Paul summarizes his statements made in Romans 2:1-3:8 that he has made clear that God has declared not only the Gentile guilty but also He has declared the Jew guilty before Him and thus is in need of salvation like the Gentile.

In Romans 2, he presents twelve principles of divine judgment by which the Jew is clearly condemned, thus the Jews are as guilty as the pagan Gentiles and will likewise receive the wrath of God. In Romans 2:1-16, Paul states that the Jews are as guilty as the Gentiles and will likewise be under eternal condemnation. This of course would refute the Judaizers since they taught that being circumcised and being a racial descendant of the patriarchs gains the Jew entrance into the kingdom of God.

In Romans 2:17-24, Paul teaches the Jews that their racial background as well as there being the recipients and custodians of the Old Testament Scriptures does not guarantee them entrance into the kingdom of heaven or deliver them from eternal condemnation. This would refute the Judaizers who taught the opposite.

In Romans 2:17-29, Paul destroys the Jews false security, which was based upon six privileges God had given to them: (1) Security in their Racial Heritage: “**Jew**” (Romans 2:17) (2) Security in Being the Recipients of the Law: “**Rely upon the Law**” (Romans 2:17) (3) Security in their Relationship with God Obtained through the Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs: “**Boast in God**” (Romans 2:17). (4) Security in their Knowledge of the Will of God Obtained through the Law: “**Know His will**” (Romans 2:18). (5) Security in their Awareness of Spiritual Essentials that they Obtained through the Law: “**Approve the things that are essential**” (Romans 2:18). (6) Security in Being Instructed out of the Law: “**Being instructed out of the Law**” (Romans 2:18).

These privileges did not produce obedience in the Jews but rather arrogance towards their relationship with the Gentiles, which was manifested in four pretensions according to Paul in Romans 2:19-20: (1) They believed they were a guide to the spiritually blind Gentiles: “**Are confident that you**

yourselves are a guide to the blind” (Romans 2:19). (2) They believed they were a light to the Gentiles who were in spiritual darkness: **“A light to those who are in darkness”** (Romans 2:19). (3) They believed they were instructors of the foolish Gentiles: **“A corrector of the foolish”** (Romans 2:20). (4) They believed they were teachers of the spiritually immature: **“A teacher of the immature”** (Romans 2:20).

There is another factor that strongly suggests that Paul is speaking of the Judaizers when he warns the Romans in Romans 16:17 to watch out for those who cause divisions. In Romans 16:18, Paul uses the noun *koilia*, **“appetites”** to describe these individuals who cause divisions, which is the same word he uses in Philippians 3:19 to describe the Judaizers.

In Philippians 3:19, this word *koilia* means “stomach.” It does not refer to the emotions and there is no precedence in classical, the LXX or the NT for the use of the word in this manner. Paul is being sarcastic with his use of this word. He is referring here to the Judaizers’ fanatical observance of the many dietary laws of the Mosaic Law, which Paul addressed in Romans 14.

This word *koilia* does not refer to licentiousness or immorality, but rather moral degeneracy. Many expositors identify these individuals in Philippians 3:18-19 and Romans 16:17-18 as antinomianists because of the presence of the word *koilia* in both passages, but the antinomianists were not causing divisions by being immoral degenerates.

The Judaizers were causing divisions in the church by attempting to impose the ritual of circumcision upon the Gentile believers (Acts 15; Galatians 5) and by imposing the observance of laws of food of the Mosaic Law on the Gentiles (Colossians 2:16-17).

The entire context of this passage in Philippians 3:19 refers to the Judaizers who were involved in moral degeneracy and who observed circumcision and the dietary laws of the Mosaic Law.

Behm commenting on the use of the noun *koilia* in Romans 16:18 and Philippians 3:19 writes, “When we turn to the polemical and sarcastic expressions in Romans 16:18: *hoi gar toioutoi to kurio hemon Christo ou douleuousin alla te heauton koilia*, and Philippians 3:19: *hon ho theos he koilia*, it is hard to say what the reference is. If, in contrast to 1 C. 6:13, Paul is here using *koilia* in the common Greek sense, he is speaking of unbridled sensuality, whether gluttony or sexual licentiousness. But the context in both instances seems to point to Judaizers rather than libertines. Hence, the older view is more plausible that Paul is alluding to the observance of laws of food and that he is pouring bitter scorn on the Judaizers with their belly god” (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 3, page 788).

Romans 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. (NASB95)

“And” is the “adjunctive” use of the conjunction *kai* (καί), which introduces another thing that the Roman believers were to watch out for with regards to the Judaizers, which is “in addition to” the divisions they cause by their teaching. We will translate the word **“as well as.”**

“Hindrances” is the articular accusative neuter plural form of the noun *skandalon* (σκάνδαλον) which means “temptations to sin and apostatize” in the sense of leading one to act contrary to a set of beliefs. The word is used of the Judaizers since the noun like the noun *dichostasia* functions as an

accusative direct object of the articular substantival participle form of *poieo* “**who causes**” and the noun *dichostasia* is used of the divisions caused by the Judaizers legalistic teaching. This is indicated by the prepositional phrase *para ten didachen hen humeis emathete* (παρὰ τὴν διδασχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε), “**contrary to the teaching which you learned.**” This indicates that the same group of individuals namely, the Judaizers is causing both divisions and temptations to sin by their legalistic teaching.

Therefore, Paul is warning the Romans to not only watch out for the divisions caused by the legalistic teaching of the Judaizers but also watch out for their teaching since it will tempt them to sin and to go into apostasy if they adhere to this teaching. It would cause the Romans to sin and go into apostasy since if they do adhere to this legalistic teaching they would no longer be living their lives according to the Lord’s teaching and that of the apostles. They would no longer be living according to God’s grace and no longer living by faith.

Paul warns Titus about the false teaching of the Judaizers.

Titus 1:7 For the overseer must be blameless as one entrusted with God’s work, not arrogant, not prone to anger, not a drunkard, not violent, not greedy for gain. 8 Instead he must be hospitable, devoted to what is good, sensible, upright, devout, and self-controlled. 9 He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught, so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching and correct those who speak against it. 10 For there are many rebellious people, idle talkers, and deceivers, especially those with Jewish connections, 11 who must be silenced because they mislead whole families by teaching for dishonest gain what ought not to be taught. (NET Bible)

In Romans 16:17, the articular construction of *skandalon* indicates that this legalistic teaching of the Judaizers which can cause believers to sin and go into apostasy was well known by Paul’s readers since their pastors warned them about this legalistic teaching and Paul did as well in this epistle.

“**Contrary to the teaching**” is composed of the preposition *para* (παρά), “**contrary to**” and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *didache* (διδασχὴ), “**the teaching.**”

The noun *didache* refers to the content of the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles that was passed down to the pastors in Rome and communicated to the Roman believers. It refers to instruction concerning Jesus Christ and His teaching, i.e. Christian doctrine or in other words a set of truths or practices to be learned and obeyed that originate with Jesus Christ. The word also refers to historical facts concerning the Person and life of the Lord Jesus Christ that are absolutely essential for unregenerate man to know in order to make a rational decision to accept Jesus Christ as Savior or not since the acceptance by faith of His Person and Work results in justification.

Didache would also include information regarding the meaning and significance of the spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ as well as the meaning and significance of His burial, His resurrection, His ascension and session and how these facts apply to the Roman believers. These historical facts about the perfect life of the Lord Jesus Christ serve as the basis for the believer’s spiritual life. Thus, the content of that doctrinal instruction would include the fact that the Roman believers have been positionally crucified, buried, raised and seated with Christ.

The articular construction of the noun *didache* in Romans 16:17 indicates that this doctrinal instruction or teaching was well known to Paul's readers since it was communicated to them by their pastor-teachers and Paul in the main argument of the epistle.

Didache is the object of the preposition *para*, which functions as a marker of that which is contrary to what should be indicating that Paul is warning the Romans to avoid the Judaizers legalistic teaching because it is "contrary to" the teaching of the Lord and the apostles, which was passed down to their pastor-teachers in Rome and communicated to them by these pastors and Paul in the main argument of this epistle.

"Which" is the accusative feminine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὃς), which agrees in gender (feminine) and number (singular) with its antecedent, which the feminine singular form of the noun *didache*, **"the teaching."** Therefore, *hos* refers to Christian instruction or teaching that was communicated to the Romans by their pastor-teachers. The word functions as an accusative of simple apposition meaning that it stands in apposite to the noun *didache* introducing a statement that clarifies or identifies this teaching for the reader. We will translate the word **"which."**

"You" is the nominative second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), which is a reference to Paul's Gentile and Jewish Christian readers in Rome and is used in a distributive sense indicating that "each and every one of" his Jewish and Gentile Christian readers "without exception" received this Christian instruction or teaching from their pastor-teachers.

"Learned" is the second person plural aorist active indicative form of the verb *manthano* (μανθάνω), which means "to learn" since it refers to acquiring information as the result of instruction, whether in an informal or formal context. This indicates that Paul is warning the Roman believers to reject the Judaizers whose legalistic teaching is contrary to that which they learned. In other words, they were to reject the teaching of the Judaizers which is contrary to the information they received about the Christian faith through instruction from their pastor-teachers in both formal and informal settings.

"Turn away" is the second person plural present active imperative form of the verb *ekklino* (ἐκκλίνω), which is a compound composed of the preposition *ek*, "out from" and the verb *klino*, "to lean," thus the word literally means, "to turn aside, deviate" from the right way.

In Romans 16:17, the verb means, "to avoid" the Judaizers whose legalistic teaching caused divisions in the churches in the first century and enticed believers to sin and apostasy. This word means that the Romans were to purposely avoid association with the Judaizers and those who adhere to their teaching. Paul wants them to be on their guard for their teaching to avoid contact with them. This avoidance of false teachers was practiced by the Lord, His apostles and their disciples.

Mark 8:15 And Jesus ordered them, "Watch out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod!" (NET Bible)

Luke 20:46 "Beware of the experts in the law. They like walking around in long robes, and they love elaborate greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets." (NET Bible)

Philippians 3:2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh! (NET Bible)

2 Peter 2:1 But false prophets arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. These false teachers will infiltrate your midst with destructive heresies, even to the point of denying the Master who bought them. As a result, they will bring swift destruction on themselves. 2 And many will follow their debauched lifestyles. Because of these false teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. 3 And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation pronounced long ago is not sitting idly by; their destruction is not asleep. 4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into hell and locked them up in chains in utter darkness, to be kept until the judgment, 5 and if he did not spare the ancient world, but did protect Noah, a herald of righteousness, along with seven others, when God brought a flood on an ungodly world, 6 and if he turned to ashes the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when he condemned them to destruction, having appointed them to serve as an example to future generations of the ungodly, 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man in anguish over the debauched lifestyle of lawless men, 8 (for while he lived among them day after day, that righteous man was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) 9 – if so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from their trials, and to reserve the unrighteous for punishment at the day of judgment, 10 especially those who indulge their fleshly desires and who despise authority. Brazen and insolent, they are not afraid to insult the glorious ones, 11 yet even angels, who are much more powerful, do not bring a slanderous judgment against them before the Lord. 12 But these men, like irrational animals – creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed – do not understand whom they are insulting, and consequently in their destruction they will be destroyed, 13 suffering harm as the wages for their harmful ways. By considering it a pleasure to carouse in broad daylight, they are stains and blemishes, indulging in their deceitful pleasures when they feast together with you. 14 Their eyes, full of adultery, never stop sinning; they entice unstable people. They have trained their hearts for greed, these cursed children! 15 By forsaking the right path they have gone astray, because they followed the way of Balaam son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, 16 yet was rebuked for his own transgression (a dumb donkey, speaking with a human voice, restrained the prophet's madness). 17 These men are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm, for whom the utter depths of darkness have been reserved. 18 For by speaking high-sounding but empty words they are able to entice, with fleshly desires and with debauchery, people who have just escaped from those who reside in error. 19 Although these false teachers promise such people freedom, they themselves are enslaved to immorality. For whatever a person succumbs to, to that he is enslaved. 20 For if after they have escaped the filthy things of the world through the rich knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again get entangled in them and succumb to them, their last state has become worse for them than their first. 21 For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, having known it, to turn back from the holy commandment that had been delivered to them. 22 They are illustrations of this true proverb: "A dog returns to its own vomit," and "A sow, after washing herself, wallows in the mire." (NET Bible)

2 John 9 Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting. (NASB95)

Satan promotes religion through his false prophets. The Lord warned His disciples of these false teachers (Matthew 7:15-29). Paul warned the pastors in Ephesus in his farewell address to beware of these false teachers that promote religion (Acts 20:28-30). He warned the Galatians of these false teachers that teach a counterfeit gospel (Galatians 1:8-9). Peter warned his readers of being deceived by false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-3).

So in Romans 16:17, the verb *ekklino* means, “to avoid” and is used of the Roman believers in relation to the Judaizers whose legalistic teaching caused divisions in the churches in the first century and enticed believers to sin and apostasy. This word means that the Romans were to purposely avoid association with the Judaizers and those who adhere to their teaching. Paul wants them to be on their guard for their teaching to avoid contact with them.

The second person plural form of the verb refers of course to Paul’s readers in Rome as a corporate unit.

The present imperative form of the verb is a “customary present imperative” whose force is for Paul’s Christian readers in Rome to simply continue avoiding the Judaizers. The customary present imperative is a command for action to be continued, action that may or may not have already been going on. It is often a character building command to the effect of “make this your habit,” “train yourself in this, discipline yourself.”

This is the use of the present imperative in general precepts. The present imperative of *ekklino* means, “to continue or make it your habit of” keeping away from the Judaizers. The present imperative of the verb is used of a general precept for habits that should characterize one’s attitude and behavior. Therefore, it denotes that Paul’s Christian readers were to be characterized as those who keep away from the Judaizers and other false teachers whose teaching contradicts the Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching and His apostles.

Paul’s statements in Romans 1:8, 15:14-15 and 16:19 indicate that they were in fact already doing this. Therefore, the present imperative form of the verb indicates that Paul’s command is simply giving his readers a reminder to continue doing what they were doing and was designed to protect their fellowship with God, each other and their testimony among the unsaved.

To summarize, this verse marks a transition from the previous paragraph in Romans 16:3-16 to the paragraph that follows it in Romans 16:17-20. It contains a warning for the Roman believers to keep a watchful eye out for those who cause divisions in churches and who entice believers to sin and apostatize.

This group of individuals is the Judaizers and their legalistic teaching is what causes divisions in churches and believers to sin and apostatize. The Romans were to keep a watchful eye out for these individuals because their teaching was contrary to the teaching they have learned from their pastor-teachers who received their teaching from the Lord and the apostles. On the heels of this warning, Paul commands the Romans to continue making it their habit of keeping away from these individuals.

Romans 16:18 - The Judaizers Do Not Serve Christ But Their Own Stomach and Deceive the Naive by Their Smooth Talk and Flattery

In Romans 16:18, Paul informs the Romans that the Judaizers who cause divisions in churches and temptations to sin and apostasy by their teaching do not serve Christ but their own appetites. He also writes that they deceive the spiritually immature by their smooth talk and flattery.

Romans 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. 18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. (NASB95)

“**For**” is the “causal” use of the conjunction *gar* (γάρ), which introduces a statement that presents the reason for the previous warning and command in Romans 16:17.

This verse contains a warning for the Roman believers to keep a watchful eye out for those who cause divisions in churches and who entice believers to sin and apostatize. On the heels of this warning, Paul commands the Romans to continue making it their habit of keeping away from these individuals.

Now, in Romans 16:18, he uses the conjunction *gar* to introduce a statement that presents the reason why the Roman believers were to keep a watchful eye out for those who cause divisions and temptations and continue avoiding them. Therefore, the Romans were to keep a watchful eye out for those who cause divisions and temptations and continue avoiding them “because” they are by no means slaves to the Lord Jesus Christ but to their own appetites and in addition they deceive the immature by their smooth and flattering speech.

“**Such men**” is composed of the nominative masculine plural form of the definite article *ho* (ὁ) and the nominative masculine plural form of the demonstrative pronoun *toioutos* (τοιοῦτος).

The demonstrative pronoun *toioutos* functions as a substantive as indicated by the article. The word means “such individuals” and is used of persons referring to a definite group of individuals with special characteristics or qualities. Here it refers to those individuals Paul warns about in Romans 16:17 that cause divisions and temptations contrary to the teaching the Romans received from their pastor-teachers.

“**Are not slaves**” is composed of the third person plural present active indicative form of the verb *douleuo* (δουλεύω), “**are slaves**” and the emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὐ), “**not.**”

The verb *douleuo* refers to the status or the condition of being servants of the Lord Christ. The word is used of those who cause divisions in the churches in the first century and temptations for believers to sin and enter into apostasy, who, as we noted, were the Judaizers. The verb’s meaning is emphatically negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, which emphatically negates the idea that the Judaizers possessed the status or condition of being a servant of the Lord Christ because they caused divisions in the body of Christ and temptations for members to sin and enter into apostasy.

Paul does not employ the verb *doulouo* but rather *douleuo* since the former emphasizes the “act” of being made a slave whereas the latter emphasizes the “relationship” between the slave and the master.

Therefore, Paul chooses *douleuo* here because he wants to emphasize the servant/master “relationship” that emphatically does not exist between the Judaizers and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The present tense of the verb *douleuo* is a “gnomic” present indicating that the Judaizers and individuals like them are by no means “characterized” as slaves of the Lord Christ.

The present tense is also a customary present signaling an ongoing state indicating that the Judaizers and individuals like them by no means “exist in the state” of being characterized as slaves of the Lord Christ.

“**But**” is the adversative use of the conjunction *alla* (ἀλλά), which functions as a marker of an emphatic contrast. It is used to introduce an expression that stands in direct contrast with the idea of the Judaizers being slaves to the Lord Christ. We will translate *alla*, “**but rather.**”

“**Of their own appetites**” is composed of the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *koilia* (κοιλία), “**of...appetites**” and the genitive third person masculine plural form of the reflexive pronoun *heautou* (ἐαυτοῦ), “**their own.**”

In Romans 16:17, the noun *koilia* means “stomach” and contains the figure of “synecdoche” of the part where the stomach of the Judaizers is put for their strict adherence to the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law. It does not refer to the emotions and there is no precedence in classical, the LXX or the NT for the use of the word in this manner. Paul is being sarcastic with his use of this word. He is referring here to the Judaizers’ fanatical observance of the dietary laws of the Mosaic Law. Paul uses this word in Philippians 3:19 in the same manner.

In Romans 16:18, the articular construction of *koilia* is used with the reflexive pronoun *heautou* to denote possession. The reflexive pronoun *heautou* is a genitive of possession indicating that this stomach “belongs to” the Judaizers and other individuals like them.

The noun *koilia* functions as a dative direct object meaning it is receiving the action of the verb *douleuo*. This category of the dative is found with verbs of serving, which *douleuo* denotes in Romans 16:18. The word is put in the dative rather than accusative case since Paul is emphasizing the personal relationship that exists between the Judaizers and their stomachs, which again refers to their strict adherence to the dietary laws found in the Mosaic Law.

The plural form of the reflexive pronoun *heautou* refers to the Judaizers and other individuals like them and is used to highlight their participation in the verbal action, as indirect object. Its force is frequently to indicate that the subject is also the object of the action of the verb or in other words, it reflects back on the subject. Therefore, the reflexive personal pronoun *heautou* means “their own” and emphasizes the action of the Judaizers being slaves to “their own” stomach. The word functions as a genitive of possession indicating that stomach “belongs to” the Judaizers who emphasizes strict adherence to the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law.

“**By their smooth and flattering speech**” is composed of the preposition *dia* (διὰ), “**by**” and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *chrestologia* (χρηστολογία), “**smooth speech**” and the “adjunctive” use of the conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *eulogia* (εὐλογία), “**flattering.**”

The noun *eulogia* means “flattery” which refers to praising someone excessively especially from selfish motives. It is used here of the Judaizers who praise immature believers excessively for selfish interests.

Both the noun *eulogia* and *chrestologia* are the object of the preposition *dia*, which functions as a marker of the instrument by which something is accomplished indicating that smooth speech and flattery are the “means by which” the Judaizers deceive immature believers.

The expression *tes chrestologias kai eulogias* (τῆς χρηστολογίας καὶ εὐλογίας) contains the figure of “hendiadys.” This figure takes place when two nouns are used to express one idea or concept and it literally means “one by means of two” and takes place when the author uses two words but only one idea is intended. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns, and are always joined together by the conjunction “and” and are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic.

In Romans 16:18, we have two nouns *chrestologia*, “**smooth talk**” and *eulogia*, “**flattery**” and they are separated by the conjunction *kai*, “**and**.” The noun *eulogia*, “**flattery**” modifies and intensifies the meaning of the noun *chrestologia*, “**smooth talk**.” Therefore, the figure of “hendiadys” indicates that these two expressions do “not” refer to two separate things but rather refer to one thing. Therefore, we will translate this expression “**smooth talk, yes, flattering talk too.**”

The Granville Sharp rule is in effect in this expression. This rule states that “When the copulative καὶ connects two nouns of the same case, [viz. nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles) of personal description, respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connexion, and attributes, properties, or qualities, good or ill], if the article ὁ, or any of its cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle: i.e. it denotes a farther description of the first-named person.” (Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, Page 272).

In Romans 16:18, the nouns *chrestologia*, “**smooth talk**” and *eulogia*, “**flattery**” are personal describing the Judaizers and the article precedes the first noun and is not repeated with the second. This indicates that both nouns are speaking of the same individuals.

“**They deceive**” is the third person plural present active indicative form of the verb *exapatao* (ἐξαπατάω), which is a compound word composed of the verb *apatao*, “to deceive” and the preposition *ek* that intensifies the verb’s meaning. Thus, the verb literally means, “to deceive or seduce completely and thoroughly.”

Paul uses the word in Romans 16:18 where it again means “to deceive” and is used of the Judaizers “deceiving” unsuspecting Christians by teaching that they must adhere to the Law.

The present tense of the verb is a customary present signaling an ongoing state indicating that the Judaizers “existed in the state” of deceiving immature believers. It denotes deceiving the immature is the lifestyle of the Judaizers.

“The hearts of the unsuspecting” is composed of the articular accusative feminine plural form of the noun *kardia* (καρδία), **“the hearts”** and the articular genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *akakos* (ἄκακος), **“of the unsuspecting.”**

The noun *kardia* means “hearts” of believers who are naïve and denotes that aspect of the soul, which circulates thought or mental activity and is where one’s frame of reference and memory center resides. It is also the place where one’s vocabulary and the classification of thoughts reside as well as the conscience where the norms and standards reside.

A person’s entire mental attitude circulates in the *kardia* as well as the subconscious where various categories of things that shock or impress from adversity, sin, failure or disappointment are located. Also, it contains the volition, which enables a person to make decisions.

The noun *kardia* functions as an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *exapatao* indicating that the hearts of believers who are naïve are the object of the Judaizers’ deception. The articular construction of the word indicates that these hearts belong to a unique group of individuals who are identified by Paul with the adjective *akakos*.

The adjective *akakos* pertains to being unsuspecting or naïve with regard to possible deception (Louw and Nida, 31.34). It obviously refers to an immature believer because a mature believer has his senses trained by the word of God to discern good and evil (see Hebrews 5:14). The word refers to believers who are deficient in godly wisdom because they are either ignorant of the Word of God or they are not fully educated in it and therefore trained to discern false teaching from accurate teaching.

The word’s articular construction functions as a substantiver meaning that it converts the adjective *akakos* into a substantive. It functions as a genitive of possession indicating that the word possesses the noun *kardia* indicating that the Judaizers deceive the hearts which “belong to” the naïve.

To summarize, we noted that in Romans 16:17, Paul warns the Roman believers to watch out for those who cause divisions and temptations to sin and apostasy contrary to the doctrine they’ve been taught and that they were to avoid them. This group of individuals were the Judaizers and their legalistic teaching is what caused divisions in churches and believers to sin and apostatize.

Then, in Romans 16:18, he presents two reasons why they were to watch out for the Judaizers and their legalistic teaching and avoid them. The first is that they do not serve Christ but their own stomach, which contains the figure of “synecdoche” of the part where the stomach of the Judaizers is put for their strict adherence to the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law. They were causing divisions in the church by attempting to impose the ritual of circumcision upon the Gentile believers (Acts 15; Galatians 5) and by imposing the observance of laws of food that were a part of the oral traditions of the Rabbis and were not a part of Scripture (Colossians 2:16-17). If you recall, in Romans 14, Paul addressed the proper attitude to the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law, which the Judaizers insisted upon.

The second reason why the Romans were to watch out for the legalistic teaching of the Judaizers and avoid them is that they deceived the spiritually naïve or immature by their smooth talk and flattery.

Final Thoughts on Church Discipline

So, we can see that the Scriptures clearly teach that church discipline must and should be administered by the church with regards to certain individuals in the church who are hurting not only themselves through their habitual sinful conduct but also hurting the testimony of the church in the community.

We have seen that the Bible tells us who we are to discipline. It also instructs us as to why we are to discipline. The Word of God also presents how we are to discipline. Lastly, it also presents to us the procedure that the church must follow.

We have seen that both the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles taught the church to administer discipline. The apostle Paul gives us several examples in his epistles in which he ordered discipline to be administered to certain apostate believers in the church. He severely rebuked the Corinthian church for practicing it when it should have been.

Therefore, the church today would do well to listen to the voice of the Spirit in the Word of God when it comes to the subject of church discipline. The consequences of not doing so will be terribly devastating. First, it injures the life, vitality and testimony of the church. Secondly, it of course hurts those believers who are habitually living according to the lusts of their sin nature and being deceived by the devil. Lastly, it is a sin against God and a failure to respect His holy character.

Chapter Thirteen: Resurrection of the Church

The term “rapture” is used by students of prophecy and eschatology to describe the doctrine which is taught in the Greek New Testament, namely the resurrection of the church. Now we must remember that like the term “Trinity,” the term “rapture” is not found in the original languages of Scripture. However, like the term “Trinity” the term “rapture” is used by theologians to describe a doctrine that is taught in the Bible. The rapture is taught in John 14:1-3, 1 Corinthians 1:7, 15:50-57, Philippians 3:20-21, 4:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, Titus 2:13, 1 John 2:28, 3:2-3, Hebrews 10:25, James 5:7-9, 1 John 2:28, 3:2-3; and Revelation 22:7, 12, and 20.

This term “rapture” is taken from the Latin term *rapio*, “caught up” that is used to translate the Greek verb *harpazō* (ἁρπάζω), which appears in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. In this verse, the word means to “snatch, seize, forcibly remove something, to seize by force with the purpose of removing and is translated **“will be caught up”** by the ESV and NASB95 and **“will be suddenly caught up”** by the NET Bible.

The church age is a dispensation, which contains no prophecy except for that of the rapture. The church age began with a miracle, namely the baptism of the Spirit (cf. Acts 2) and will end with a miracle. The church age will end with the rapture, which the Scriptures teach is preceded by apostasy (2 Thess. 2:1-13; cf. 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5). The rapture will also mark the completion of the royal family of God. The formation of the church began with the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost and its completion will be at the rapture.

The church or royal family of God is called the body of Christ preceding the rapture (1 Cor. 12:12-27). The church or royal family of God is called the bride of Christ after it (Rev. 19:7-9). Therefore, the Bible teaches that the body of the bride of Christ will not be complete until the rapture comes.

In this study of the rapture, we will note that the apostle Paul describes the rapture in 1 Corinthians 15:51 as “a mystery.” The New Testament writers like Paul describes the resurrection of the church as imminent which means it could happen at any moment. The imminency of the rapture we will note is to motivate the believer to obey the commands of Scripture and thus live a godly life which honors Jesus Christ.

We will also note in this study that the rapture or resurrection of the church will bring to completion the process of salvation and sanctification which both began at the moment of their justification through regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit. We will also note that the guarantee of a receiving a resurrection from the Lord Jesus at any moment should motivate the believer to appropriate by faith their identification with Him in His death and resurrection in order to experience their salvation and sanctification. In other words, so that they will experience the holiness of God in their lives.

We will also note the distinctions between the rapture and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. Lastly, in this study we will investigate five different views of the rapture in relation to the seventieth week of Daniel and in particular the last three and a half years of this seven-year period which Jesus described in Matthew 24:21 as the “great tribulation.” These five views are: (1) “pre-tribulation” (2) “partial” (3) “mid-tribulation” (4) “post-tribulation” (5) “pre-wrath.” We will demonstrate that the “pre-tribulation” is the correct view.

Terminology

During the course of this study of the rapture of the church, there will be recurring terms this author will use, which need to be defined in order to avoid confusion.

First of all, as we noted the term “rapture” refers to Jesus Christ descending from heaven to the earth’s atmosphere in order to give resurrection bodies to the dead in Christ first and then immediately after doing the same those who are alive on the earth at the time of His descent. At that time, He will deliver the church from the wrath of God which will poured out on planet earth during the seventieth week of Daniel.

The “second advent” refers to the Lord Jesus Christ descending from heaven with the church and the elect angels and orbiting planet earth and then landing on the Mount of Olives in order to terminate the seventieth week and the Times of the Gentiles. At that time, He will destroy the Tribulational armies, have Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:11-19), will imprison Satan for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3) and will establish His millennial reign on planet earth (Rev. 20:4-6).

The “seventieth week of Daniel” refers to the final seven-year period of the seventy-weeks of Daniel prophecy recorded in Daniel 9:24-27 which will take place sometime after the rapture and will begin with Antichrist establishing a treaty with the leadership of Israel. This period is divided into two three and a half year periods. The last three and a half years of this seven-year period begin with Antichrist desecrating the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and declaring himself God. These last three and a half years are called by Jesus Christ in Matthew 24:21 as the “great tribulation,” which will end with the second advent of Jesus Christ.

There are three distinct terms used in the Greek New Testament for the rapture and the second advent of Jesus Christ.

The first is the noun *parousia* (παρουσία), which means “to be present” and the noun literally means “I am present.” It can have the following meanings in classical literature: (1) presence of persons (2) arrival or advent of a royal or official personage (3) occasion (4) visits (5) situation of a planet at a point on the zodiac in astrology (6) substance, property (7) contribution in money.

Parousia means on the one hand, “presence (with certain effects following) or (in a more neutral sense) property, fortune, income, military strength; and on the other hand, it means arrival, someone’s coming in order to be present.” Technically, the noun is used for the arrival of a ruler a king, emperor, ruler, or even troops from the Ptolemaic period to the second century A.D. Special payments in kind and taxes were exacted to defray the costs. In Greece, a new era was reckoned from the parousia of Hadrian, and special advent coins were struck in various places to commemorate the parousia of the emperor. The corresponding Latin term is *adventus*. The cities of Corinth and Patras struck advent coins commemorating the visit of Nero in whose reign Paul wrote to Corinth. They bear the inscriptions *Adventus Aug(usti) Cor(inthi)* and *Adventus Augusti*.¹⁷⁹

The word was used for the appearing of the gods on men’s behalf. Such a parousia is not thought of merely as future, but is experienced as a reality in the present. An inscription at Tagea combines the

¹⁷⁹ cf. Deismann *Light from the Ancient East*, page 372

term with the deification of the emperor Hadrian: “In the year of 69 of the first parousia of the god Hadrian in Greece”.¹⁸⁰ This parousia marked the beginning of a new era. This was approximately at the time when Christians were beginning to speak explicitly of the first parousia of Christ, as distinct from the second.

The noun *parousia* appears four times in the Septuagint, all of which are non-canonical. Josephus uses the word for the presence of God in the Shekinah Glory.

The noun *parousia* appears 24 times in the Greek New Testament and has the following meanings: (1) presence (2) coming, advent, arrival.

In the New Testament, it is used for both the rapture or resurrection of the church (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; James 5:7-8; 1 John 2:28) and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 2:8; 2 Pet. 3:4).

The second term is noun *apokalupsis* (ἀποκάλυψις), which is a compound word composed of the preposition *apo*, “from” and the verb *kalupto*, “to cover, hide,” thus the word literally means, “unveiling, revelation.” It is a word that conveys the Biblical concept of divine revelation and denotes God’s self-revelation to men and may be expressed in historical events or God revealing Himself through the Scriptures.

Louw and Nida define *apokalupsis*, “to uncover, to take out of hiding,’ not occurring in the NT) to cause something to be fully known—‘to reveal, to disclose, to make fully known, revelation’¹⁸¹.”

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition lists the following meanings for *apokalupsis*: (1) making fully known, revelation, disclosure (2) as part of a book title Revelation.¹⁸²

The noun *apokalupsis* appears 18 times in the Greek New Testament. This word is used of the rapture of the church in 1 Corinthians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:7, 13, and 4:13. The term is used only once in the New Testament for the second advent of Jesus Christ in 2 Thessalonians 1:7.

The third and final term in the Greek New Testament which is used for the rapture and the second advent of Jesus Christ is the noun *epiphaneia* (ἐπιφάνεια), which in classical Greek, *epiphaneia* means “appearance, revelation, manifestation” of someone or something. However, it also could mean “the brilliant spectacular” appearance of something or someone. In later Hellenistic Greek, the term was used of the “revelation” of a hidden deity. It was used of a king who claimed to be the “manifestation” of deity as with Antiochus IV Epiphanes. *Epiphaneia* also referred to a feast celebrating the birth of a god or the ascension of a king to a throne or a ruler’s return from exile.

The term appears 12 times in the Septuagint, three of which are canonical (2 Samuel 7:23; Esther 5:1c; Amos 5:22). It occurs only 6 times in the New Testament where it refers to the first and second advents of Jesus Christ as well as the rapture of the church. This noun is used of the first advent of Jesus

¹⁸⁰ Deismann Light from the Ancient East, page 377; Oepke, “parousia,” Kittel, 5:860

¹⁸¹ 28.38

¹⁸² Page 112

Christ in 2 Timothy 1:10. It is used of the Second Advent in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and 2 Timothy 4:1 and refers to the rapture in 1 Timothy 6:14, 2 Timothy 1:10, 4:1, 8 and Titus 2:13.

The Rapture is a Mystery

In 1 Corinthians 15:51, the apostle Paul describes the resurrection or rapture of the church as “a mystery.”

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (NASB95)

“**Mystery**” is the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον). The precise origin of this noun is itself a mystery according to Bornkamm.¹⁸³ The word is found from the time of the “Tragic Poets” onwards and comes from the verb *muo*, “to shut, to close.” The noun means “that which must not or cannot be said.” It was a term for the many ancient mystery cults, which developed from the seventh century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. The basic features of these mysteries were the guarding of secrets and the initiation process where the participants share through a ritual act in the life of the god. Another feature was the promise of cosmic salvation.

Finkernath states “The mystery celebration gave a ceremonial and dramatic representation of the deity suffering and overcoming death and the initiated attained salvation and deification by sharing in the deity’s fortunes through resurrection.”¹⁸⁴

Over time, these mystery cults infiltrated philosophical circles with terminology, concepts and speculation. Magic was influenced as well. “Mysteries” were “secrets” that were disclosed to the Gnostic practitioner. The majority of the documents containing the noun *mustērion* are non-canonical intertestamental writings that do not have Hebrew behind them. However, it appears that the concept of *mustērion* appears in Daniel which is reflected in the Aramaic word *raz*, “secret, mystery.” This word describes the mystery revealed to Daniel as the interpreter of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Both the Septuagint and Theodotion’s version render *musterion* with the *raz*. In Daniel, the meaning of *musterion* went from “secret” to “revealed secret.”

Bornkamm writes, “In Daniel *mustērion* takes on for the first time a sense which is important for the further development of the word, namely that of an eschatological mystery, a concealed intimation of divinely ordained future events whose disclosure and interpretation is reserved for God alone...and for those inspired by His Spirit.”¹⁸⁵

Silva writes “The noun μυστήριον derives from the old vb. μύω, “to close” (used mainly intrans.), which could be applied to any opening, incl. the mouth (cf. Plato *Phaedr.* 251d). Thus, presumably,

¹⁸³ Kittel 4:803

¹⁸⁴ The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown, General Editor, volume 3, page 501; Regency, Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967, 1969, 1971

¹⁸⁵ Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 4, page 814-815; Gerhard Kittel, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1964
vb. verb

μυστήριον orig. referred to that which cannot (or must not) be said, i.e., a secret. However, aside from a prob. spurious maxim attributed to Periander (Μυστήριον κρύπτει, “Hide a secret”; see F. W. A. Mullach, ed., *Fragmenta philosophorum Graecorum*, 3 vols. [1860–81], 1:215), the word already in its earliest uses (6th cent. BC) is found in the pl. as a technical term with ref. to “the mysteries,” i.e., the sacred rites associated with certain gods, esp. Demeter (the Eleusinian Mysteries). The sg. is attested with certainty for the first time in Menander (see T. Kock, *Comicorum Atticorum fragmenta*, 3 vols. [1980–88], frg. 695), though the pl. is occasionally found with a general sense even earlier (e.g., of philosophical teachings, Plato *Theaet.* 156a). Mystery religions became widespread during the Hel. period and esp. in Christian times in connection with such deities as Isis, Attis, Mithras, etc. The mystery celebration gave a ceremonial and dramatic representation of the deity suffering and overcoming death, and the initiated attained salvation and deification by sharing in the deity’s fortunes through sacramental acts such as washings, cultic feasts, and ceremonies of death and resurrection (cf. G. Wagner, *Pauline Baptism and the Pagan Mysteries* [1967]). The cultic acts and symbols were kept strictly secret. In Gnosticism the μυστήρια become secret revelations granted only to the “perfect” with a view to the redemption of their souls. In later mystic philosophy, esp. in Neoplatonism, μυστήριον is that which by its very nature cannot be put into words. Mystic speech is the very negation of speech (cf. G. Bornkamm in *TDNT* 4:809). The derived vb. μύεω is used mainly in the pass. voice and almost always has the technical sense “to be initiated [into the mysteries]” (e.g., Hdt. 8.56.4). This term too, however, can be applied more generally (cf. the adj. ἀμύητος, “uninitiated,” with ref. to philosophy, Plato *Theaet.* 156a). Other derivatives incl. the noun μύστης, referring to a person who has been initiated into the mysteries, and the adj. μυστικός, “mystical,” in the sense of that which is related to the mysteries.”¹⁸⁶

intrans. intransitive(ly)
 incl. include(d)/including
 cf. *confer* (compare)
 orig. origin, original(ly)
 i.e. *id est* (that is)
 prob. probable, probably
 ed. editor(s)
 cent. century
 BC before Christ
 pl. plural
 ref. reference
 i.e. *id est* (that is)
 esp. especially
 sg. singular
 frg. fragment
 pl. plural
 e.g. *exempli gratia* (for example)
 Hel. Hellenistic
 esp. especially
 cf. *confer* (compare)
 esp. especially
 cf. *confer* (compare)

TDNT Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, transl. G. W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (1964–76)

vb. verb
 pass. passive
 e.g. *exempli gratia* (for example)
 Hdt. Herodotus, *The Histories*
 cf. *confer* (compare)
 adj. adjectival
 ref. reference
 incl. include(d)/including
 adj. adjectival

¹⁸⁶ Silva, M. (Ed.). (2014). *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Second Edition, Vol. 3, pp. 350–351). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

The noun *mustērion* appears 28 times in the Greek New Testament, 21 are attributed to Paul. Of the remaining seven, three occur in the Synoptic Gospels in parallel texts (Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10). The other four appear in Revelation (1:20; 10:7; 17:5, 7).

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition commenting on this word *musterion*, writes, “Secret, secret rite, secret teaching, mystery, a technical term applied in the Greco-Roman world mostly to the mysteries with their secret teachings, religious and political in nature, concealed within many strange customs and ceremonies. The principal rites remain unknown because of a reluctance in antiquity to divulge them.”¹⁸⁷ They list the following meanings for the word: (1) the unmanifested or private counsel of God, (God’s) secret, the secret thoughts, plans and dispensations of God, which are hidden from human reason, as well as from all other comprehension below the divine level and await either fulfillment or revelation to those for whom they are intended (2) that which transcends normal understanding, transcendent/ultimate reality, secret, with focus on Israelite/Christian experience.¹⁸⁸

In relation to the Greek New Testament, the noun *mustērion* referred to Bible doctrine that was never revealed to Old Testament saints but was revealed through the Spirit to the church. It referred to God’s set of instructions for the church age believer, which were not known to Old Testament saints.

The noun *mustērion* was used by the Greeks of the content of the doctrines and the actual principles and points that had to be learned by the initiated. It was used in the ancient fraternities of Athens, Greece. These ancient fraternities had secret doctrines, which they called mystery doctrines and only those initiated into those fraternities knew the mystery doctrines or the secrets. Every Greek fraternity had its own secret doctrines and cultic rites. The mystery doctrine that Paul taught and is found in the New Testament is truth. He took the noun *mustērion* away from the secrets of the ancient mystery cults and used it in technical theological language. He did this to indicate that the doctrine that he was teaching was totally unknown in Old Testament times.

Mustērion is something that is hidden from those outside the fraternity. The fraternity is the royal family of God formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. Only members of the royal family of God have received the mystery doctrine of the church age. Our Lord taught this principle to us disciples and employed it Himself (Matt. 13:10-11). Only the initiated or within our Lord’s circle of students were given the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lord taught this principle to us disciples and employed it Himself (Matt. 13:10-11). Only the initiated or within our Lord’s circle of students were given the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

In Romans 11:25, the noun *musterion* means “mystery” and refers to the will of God concerning Israel and the Gentiles being revealed during the church age by the Spirit through the apostles to the church and which was not previously known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel. The content of this mystery is that a partial hardening of Israel has taken place and will continue to take place until the full number of Gentiles who will be saved have been saved.

¹⁸⁷ Page 661

¹⁸⁸ Page 662

The partial hardening of Israel is manifested in that only a remnant of Jews have believed in Christ since the First Advent of Christ up to the time Paul wrote Romans and this will continue to be the case up to the Second Advent of Christ. Paul taught the remnant doctrine in Romans 9:27-29 and 11:2-6.

The noun *musterion*, “mystery” appears in Romans 16:25 where it refers to the plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentiles and is now fully revealed during the church age by the Spirit through the apostles to the church and was not fully known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel.

Romans 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen. (Author’s translation)

The content of this mystery is Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection for both Jew and Gentile. The “hidden” nature of the gospel is not that it was totally unknown since the Old Testament prophets, all the way back to Abraham, were told that salvation would be provided for both Jew and Gentile through the Jewish Messiah. What Paul means by *mustērion* in Romans 16:25 is that through the Spirit, God the Father has “fully” disclosed the gospel in the person of Jesus Christ and in the proclamation of the gospel by the apostles.

So the “**mystery**” in Romans 16:25 refers to the proclamation of Jesus Christ’s victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile. It refers to the manifestation of the divine decree eternity past. It is a secret known only by God but has now been revealed to the church by the Spirit through the apostles.

Ephesians 3:1-13 teaches that it was a mystery that the Gentiles through faith in Christ would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel. In this passage, “**mystery**” is the noun *mustērion*, which refers to doctrines that centered upon the Person of Christ and members of His body and were doctrines never revealed to Old Testament saints. The mystery is *not* that the Gentiles would be saved since this was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isa. 11:10; 60:3). Rather, the mystery concerning the Gentiles is that they would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members with Jewish believers in the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the covenant promises to Israel.

The content of this mystery is three-fold: (1) The Gentile believers are fellow heirs with Jewish believers in the sense that they share in the spiritual riches God gave them because of His covenant with Abraham (Gal. 3:26-28). (2) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow members of the body of Christ with Jewish believers. There is one body, the body of Christ (Eph. 4:4), which has no racial distinctions (1 Cor. 12:13) and has the Lord Jesus Christ as its head (Eph. 5:23). Each individual member of the body of Christ shares in the ministry (Eph. 4:15-16). (3) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel. The four great unconditional covenants to Israel will be fulfilled: (1) Abrahamic deals with the race of Israel (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18). (2) Palestinian is the promise of land to Israel (Gen. 13:15; Num. 34:1-12). (3) Davidic deals with the aristocracy of Israel (2 Sam. 7:8-17) (4) New deals with the future restoration of Israel during the millennium (Jer. 31:31-34).

Ephesians 3:9-10 teaches that this mystery concerning the Gentiles is important to the angels both elect and non-elect since it reveals the multifaceted wisdom of God. Paul teaches in Ephesians 5:22-33 that the eternal union between church age believers and the Lord Jesus Christ is also described by Paul as a “**mystery**.”

The noun *mustērion* appears in Ephesians 5:32 where it is used to describe the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church.

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church 30 because we are members of His body. 31 “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.” 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband. (NASB95)

The noun *mustērion* appears in Colossians 1:26-27.

Colossians 1:24 I am presently rejoicing because of my sufferings on behalf of each and every one of you. In fact, I am supplementing that which remains of the one and only Christ’s intense sufferings by means of my physical body on behalf of His body which is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the church. 25 Of which I myself became a servant because of the stewardship which is from God (the Father) which was given to me on behalf of each and every one of you in order to fulfill the task of communicating the message originating from God (the Father). 26 Specifically, the mystery which has been concealed from past ages, in other words from past generations but now has been revealed to His saints. 27 For the benefit of whom, God (the Father) wanted to make known what is of infinite value, namely the glorious revelation of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is, as an eternal spiritual truth Christ in each and every one of you, who is the confident expectation of glory. (Author’s translation)

In Colossians 1:26-27, the noun *mustērion* speaks of a truth which was not known to Old Testament saints but has now revealed by the Father through the Spirit during the church age to the apostles who communicated it to the church. This mystery is identified in Colossians 1:27 as Jesus Christ permanently indwelling each and every Gentile church age believer and not just Jewish church age believers exclusively.

In the New Testament, the church is never actually called a mystery but we know it is a mystery because its major elements are specifically designated as mysteries. For example, the first major element is the body concept of Jewish and Gentile believers united into one body to form one “new man” or “new humanity.” This is described a mystery in Ephesians 3:1-12. The second major element is that the

church is the Bride of Jesus Christ which is taught in Ephesians 5:22-32. The third element is the rapture or resurrection of the church which is described as a mystery as well in First Corinthians 15:51-52. Lastly, the fourth and final major element is the concept of Jesus Christ indwelling each and every church age believer which is taught here in Colossians 1:24-27 and also in 2:10-19; 3:4 and 11.

This “**mystery**” refers to the manifestation of the divine decree eternity past. It is a secret known only by God but has now been revealed to the church by the Spirit through the apostles. It is a revelation of the divine decree, which is God’s eternal and immutable will, regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence. The decree of God is the chosen and adopted plan of all God’s works. Therefore, “**the mystery**” is the revelation of the chosen and adopted plan that both Jewish and Gentile church age believers would be permanently indwelt by Jesus Christ. This was the Father’s eternal purpose according to the counsels of His own will, whereby for His own glory He has foreordained whatever comes to pass.

Paul then defines what he means by this mystery by asserting that the Father caused this mystery to remain unknown to mankind. Therefore, Paul is defining this “mystery” as something that has been concealed from mankind by God.

The apostle states that this mystery has been concealed by God the Father “**from past ages**” which refers to the period of time beginning with the creation of the time, matter, space continuum and continuing throughout human history up to the church age. He is saying that human beings who lived during the ages prior to the beginning of the church age were kept from knowing the mystery of Jesus Christ permanently indwelling both Jewish and Gentile church age believers. Paul then defines for the reader specifically what he means by this prepositional phrase “**from the past ages**.” The Father concealed this mystery of Jesus Christ permanently indwelling both Jewish and Gentile church age believers specifically from past generations of human beings who lived during these past ages. These past generations is referring to generations of human beings extending from Adam up to the church age. Human beings who lived during the ages prior to the beginning of the church age were kept from knowing the mystery of Jesus Christ permanently indwelling both Jewish and Gentile church age believers.

Then, Paul asserts that this mystery has now been revealed for the benefit of the saints. Specifically, it has now been revealed during the church age which began on the day of Pentecost in June of 33 A.D. and is recorded in Acts 2 and ends with the rapture which is the resurrection of the church. The apostle asserts in Colossians 1:27 that this mystery of Jesus Christ permanently indwelling both Jewish and Gentiles church age believers has been revealed by the Father to the saints.

In Colossians 1:27, the apostle then goes on to describe Jesus Christ as “**the confident expectation of glory**,” since each and every church age believer will in the future receive a resurrection body from the Lord Jesus Christ as well as rewards if they remain faithful to Him. He is describing Jesus Christ as being the confident expectation of glory for the Christian in the sense that He will give each and every church age believer a resurrection body just like His at the rapture or resurrection of the church which is imminent. Also, they will receive from Him rewards at the Bema Seat for faithful service. Furthermore, this “**confident expectation of glory**” is also used in relation to the church age believer experiencing fellowship with the Trinity. It is related to the blessing of having the character of Christ being formed in them by the Spirit through fellowship and various adversities and undeserved suffering. This blessing is related to deliverance experientially from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system.

So in Colossians 1:27, Paul is asserting with these faithful Christians in Colossae that each and every one of them is indwelt by Jesus Christ permanently and this glorious revelation was a mystery which was not known prior to the church age. The indwelling of Jesus Christ is therefore totally unique to the church age since it has never taken place prior to the church age. It serves as a sign that the Christian is a child of God. The indwelling of Jesus Christ serves as assurance for the Christian that he or she is eternally secure. It also serves as encouragement to the Christian when he or she endures underserved suffering. The indwelling of Jesus Christ serves also as motivation for the Christian to grow to spiritual maturity. It is the basis for the Christian to give number one priority to their relationship with God rather giving it to people.

The indwelling of Jesus Christ serves as a reminder to the Christian that they have divine omnipotence available to them to grow to maturity and to endure undeserved suffering. It is also a guarantee that the Christian possesses eternal life and will live with God forever. The indwelling of Jesus Christ serves as a guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

Paul uses the word *mustērion* again in Colossians 2:2 in order to describe Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:1 In fact, I want each and every one of you to know for certain how great a struggle I am experiencing on behalf of each and every one of you as well as for those who are located in Laodicea, yes in fact, for all those who have never seen my face in the flesh. 2 The purpose of this struggle is that their hearts would be encouraged. Specifically by being united by means of divine-love. Also, for a wealth which is absolute which is produced by that which is conviction which produces that which is discernment. For the purpose of knowing experientially the mystery which originates from God (the Father), namely the Christ. (Author's translation)

The noun *mustērion* in this verse does not mean that Jesus Christ was not known to Old Testament saints since His person and work were prophesied about by the Old Testament prophets of Israel. Rather, the word describes Jesus Christ in relation to those who do not exercise faith in Him as Savior in order to be declared justified by the Father. Jesus Christ is a mystery to those are not initiated and to be initiated is accomplished by being declared justified by the Father through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. So this word is an attack at the Essence branch of Judaism which possessed an incipient form of Gnosticism.

The noun *mustērion* appears one final time in Colossians, namely Colossians 4:3.

Colossians 4:2 Each of you must continue to make it your habit of being dedicated to persevering in prayer while continuing to exist in a state of being vigilant in it with thanksgiving. 3 Also, each of you at the same time continue to make it your habit of occupying yourselves with prayer on behalf of each one of us. Specifically, that the Father would make possible for each of us an opportunity for our unique message, namely, to communicate the mystery, which is concerning the one and only Christ because of which, I am in fact imprisoned. (Author's translation)

As was the case in Colossians 2:2, the noun *mustērion* here in Colossians 4:3 does not mean that Jesus Christ was not known to Old Testament saints since His person and work were prophesied about by the Old Testament prophets of Israel. Rather, the word describes Jesus Christ in relation to the unsaved or unregenerate. Jesus Christ is a mystery to those are not initiated into the Christian way of

life, which is accomplished by being declared justified by the Father through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.

In First Timothy 3:9, the noun *mustērion* means “mystery” and refers to the plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentiles and is now fully revealed during the church age by the Spirit through the apostles to the church and was not fully known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel. The content of this mystery is Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection for both Jew and Gentile. Therefore, *mustērion* refers to the proclamation of Jesus Christ’s victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile. It refers to the manifestation of the divine decree eternity past. It is a secret known only by God but has now been revealed to the church by the Spirit through the apostles.

As was the case in First Timothy 3:9, the noun *mustērion* in First Timothy 3:16 means “mystery” and is used in relation to *eusebeia*, “**godliness**.” Both are explained in the six line hymn about Jesus Christ. Therefore, together, they refer to the fact that Jesus Christ fully disclosed what godly living is all about. He perfectly revealed God’s character, will and ways by His earthly life, His First Advent. He perfectly exemplified godly living. In other words, He perfectly revealed to the human race how God lives since He is the incarnate Son of God. These two words are not used specifically of the Christian but rather are used to describe Jesus Christ. However, all precedence for the Christian way of life is derived from the Jesus Christ’s First Advent, His earthly life. Therefore, in 1 Timothy 3:16, the noun *mustērion* speaks of Jesus Christ who is the content of the gospel fully disclosing God’s plan of salvation through His death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through His earthly life, His First Advent. It speaks of the fact that He fully revealed what godly living is all about. In other words, He fully disclosed how a human being should live in order to honor God.

J. Hampton Keathley III writes “The following is a synopsis of the various aspects of this mystery as it is revealed in the New Testament. (1) The mystery of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13). The mystery of the interim program of God between Christ’s first and second advents. (2) The mystery of the blindness of Israel and God’s purpose with Israel’s blindness (Rom. 11:1-25). (3) The mystery of the rapture, the departure of the church at the end of this age (1 Cor. 15:51-57; 1 Thess. 4:13f). (4) The mystery of the church as the body of Christ where Jew and Gentile become one new man in Christ where Jews and Gentiles would be equal heirs in the one body of Christ (Eph. 3:1-11; 2:11f). (5) The mystery of the church as the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25-32). (6) The mystery of the indwelling of Christ as the hope of glory or spiritual deliverance by the power of the indwelling Christ (Col. 1:26-27; 2:2). (7) The mystery of lawlessness—the continuation and gradual build up of the state of lawlessness that will culminate in the man of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:7-8). Lawlessness is not necessarily confusion and disorder or even the absence of law, but rather the presence of rebellion against God’s established rule and purposes. It speaks of the aim of Satan and his hosts of wickedness to overthrow the divine government and established ordinances of God as He designed them. (8) The mystery of godliness, or the process by which man becomes God-like in character through the person, work, and life of Jesus Christ as He is faithfully proclaimed and defended by the church of Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 3:16). (8) The mystery of the church as the seven stars (Rev. 1:20). (9) The mystery of God, the answer to the age-old question, why has God allowed Satan and evil to continue to exist (Rev. 10:7). Please note that the answer to this is found in Scripture, it was revealed to God’s New Testament prophets. There are two key parts to this answer: (a) To resolve the angelic warfare—to answer and demonstrate that Satan, the accuser and slanderer of God’s character, is wrong in his accusations and that he is worthy of God’s judgment for his sin. (b) To demonstrate God’s patience and love and to provide ample opportunity for

men to come to Christ (2 Pet. 3:9). So when the angel of Revelation 10:7 says “the mystery of God is completed” he means that once the seventh trumpet is sounded, this time of demonstrating God’s character and of demonstrating man and Satan for what they are, this time of allowing Satan and rebellion to continue, will be over; God will act swiftly now to establish His rule of righteousness on earth. This period of the patience of God will be over. (11) The mystery of Babylon, the truth regarding the source of the ancient and godless mother-child cult (Rev. 17:5, 7).”¹⁸⁹

In 1 Corinthians 15:51, Paul describes the resurrection of the church with the noun *mustērion*. It describes this event as a mystery in that it was not known to Old Testament prophets but was revealed exclusively to the apostles and thus to church age believers (1 Cor. 15:51-53). The fact that the rapture is a mystery doctrine indicates that it is a totally unique feature of the church age. It belongs exclusively to the church age.

This was a mystery to Old Testament saints and never recorded in the Old Testament canon of Scripture. Therefore, the church age is also called the dispensation of the great parenthesis. Old Testament prophets skipped over the church age in silence as in Daniel 2:40 () 41; 7:23 () 24; 8:22 () 23; 11:35 () 36; Hosea 3:4 () 5; 5:15 () 6:1. Old Testament prophets knew nothing about the church age. It was not revealed to them but only to the New Testament writers of Scripture.

The Rapture is Imminent

The rapture of the church is “imminent” which means that the rapture could happen at any time. There are several Scriptures, which teach the church to expect Christ to come back at any moment (cf. John 14:1-3; Romans 13:11-12; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 5:1-9; Titus 2:13; James 5:7-9; Philipians 4:5; Hebrews 10:25; 1 John 2:28; 3:2-3; Revelation 22:7, 20).

Wayne Brindle writes “In 1973 Robert Gundry, a posttribulationist, wrote that ‘by common consent imminence means that so far as we know no predicted event will *necessarily* precede the coming of Christ.’”¹⁹⁰ John A. Sproule, a pretribulationist, countered in 1974 that ‘imminence’ is better defined as the belief that ‘Christ can return for His Church *at any moment* and that no predicted event will intervene before that return.’¹⁹¹ Both definitions are acceptable. Some posttribulationists have responded to the doctrine of imminence by claiming that all the intervening signs have already occurred, and thus the final Parousia can occur at any time. Others deny that the Bible teaches imminence in any sense. Most posttribulationists prefer to redefine ‘imminence’ along the lines adopted by Douglas Moo, who objects that the term does not necessarily mean ‘any moment,’ but rather that it simply means the return of Christ ‘could take place within any limited period of time’¹⁹²...How is one to know for certain whether a passage teaches the imminence of the rapture, when no rapture passage gives a specific temporal designation? Four criteria may be suggested, any one of which indicates imminence: (1) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as at any moment. (2) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as ‘near,’¹⁹³ without stating any signs that must precede His coming. (3) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as something that gives believers hope and encouragement, without indicating that these believers

¹⁸⁹ Keathley, J. Hampton III, *Paul’s Letter to the Colossians: An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary*; page 99; Biblical Studies Press 2002

¹⁹⁰ Robert H. Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 29 (italics his). More recently Wayne Grudem has said “imminent” means that “Christ *could* come and *might* come at any time” (*Systematic Theology* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994], 1096, n. 7).

¹⁹¹ John A. Sproule, *In Defense of Pretribulationism* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1980), 12 (italics his). John F. Walvoord has also said Gundry’s definition is untenable for pretribulationists (*The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976], p. 71).

¹⁹² Douglas J. Moo, “The Case for the Posttribulation Rapture Position,” in *Three Views on the Rapture*, ed. Gleason Archer Jr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 208.

¹⁹³ See Robert L. Thomas, “The Doctrine of Imminence in Two Recent Eschatological Systems,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 157 (October–December 2000): 439.

will suffer tribulation. (4) The passage speaks of Christ's return as giving hope without relating it to God's judgment of unbelievers. Based on these criteria, many passages on the Second Coming do not teach imminence. Matthew 24–25, for example, describes Christ's return as delivering the elect from the midst of tribulation and death, and thus those chapters do not prove imminence. Likewise 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 19 fail to speak of imminence, since both depict eschatological events that include signs for Christ's return (although 2 Thess. 2:1, a reference to the rapture, could arguably be separated from the rest of the chapter). However, seven New Testament passages do clearly teach the imminent return of Christ."¹⁹⁴

The doctrine of the "imminent" return of Christ at the rapture of the church is supported by the fact that there are no signs preceding the rapture whereas there are many signs prior to the Second Advent of Christ, which terminates the Tribulation period.

Supporting the "imminent" return of Christ for His bride is that the Lord Jesus in John 14:1-3 first speaks of the rapture and does not mention any intervening events between preparing a place for His disciples in His Father's house and receiving them to Himself.

John 14:1 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." (ESV)

John Walvoord writes "The hope of the return of Christ to take the saints to heaven is presented in John 14 as an imminent hope. There is no teaching of any intervening event. The prospect of being taken to heaven at the coming of Christ is not qualified by description of any signs or prerequisite events. Here, as in other passages dealing with the coming of Christ for the church, the hope is presented as an imminent event. On this basis, the disciples are exhorted not to be troubled. If the teaching of Christ had been to the intent that His coming for them was after the Great Tribulation, it is difficult to see how this message would have been a source of solace to their troubled hearts. Contrast the message of Christ to those living in the Tribulation to flee their persecutors (Matt. 24:15-22). Other exhortations in relation to the return of Christ for the church also lose much of their meaning if the doctrine of imminency is destroyed. It should be obvious that only flagrant spiritualization of the tribulation passages that predict the program of events during the tribulation period can possibly save the doctrine of imminency for the posttribulationist. If there are definite events of horrible suffering and persecution yet ahead before the return of Christ to establish His kingdom, in no sense can this coming be declared imminent. When Calvin anticipated the imminent coming of Christ, it was on the ground that the tribulation was already largely past—a deduction that depended on the spiritualization of the tribulation passages. Most posttribulationists today oppose the doctrine of imminency and regard the coming of Christ as approaching but not immediate. For the most part, scriptural evidence for imminency today is equivalent to proof of the pretribulation viewpoint."¹⁹⁵

In Romans 13:11-12, the apostle Paul refers to the imminency of the rapture as a motivation to live a godly life.

¹⁹⁴ Brindle, W. A. (2001). [Biblical Evidence for the Imminence of the Rapture](#). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 158, 139.

¹⁹⁵ Walvoord, John F.. *The Rapture Question* (pp. 73-74). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Romans 13:11 So then, all of continue making it your habit of practicing this because all of you are well aware of the significance of this particular period of history characterized by urgency and opportunity, demanding immediate action, namely that, it is now already the moment for each and every one of you to be awake from sleep because our deliverance is now nearer to taking place than when we believed. **12** The night has drawn to a close. Indeed, the day is approaching. Therefore, let us for the duration continue to lay aside for ourselves the activities, which characterize the kingdom of darkness. Indeed, let us for the duration continue to clothe ourselves with the weapons, which characterize those belonging to the kingdom of light. (Author's translation)

In this passage, we see that Paul commands his Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of loving their neighbor as themselves as a result of what he taught in Romans 13:8-10, which is, that loving one's neighbor fulfills the requirements of the Mosaic Law. Also, in this passage, he teaches that they are to continue obeying this command because they are well aware of the significance of the period of history in which they were living in, namely, they were living in the church age preceding the imminent return of Christ at the rapture. This period is characterized by urgency and opportunity for them in that they can gain rewards at the Bema Seat, which follows the rapture, for obeying the command to love your neighbor as yourself. It also demands immediate action on their part. This immediate action is referred to when he teaches that it is now already the moment for each and every one of them to be awake spiritually because their permanent deliverance is now nearer to taking place than when they first became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. To awake from spiritual sleep refers to the confession of sins to be restored to fellowship with God and maintaining that fellowship by obedience to the Word of God. This deliverance is a permanent deliverance from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system at the rapture of the church, which is imminent.

So the passage emphasizes not only the imminency of our Lord's return at the rapture but also the urgency in that the believer must always stay spiritually awake by keeping short accounts with God. This again is accomplished by confessing his sins in order to be restored to fellowship and maintaining that fellowship by obedience to the will of the Father, which is revealed by the Spirit through the Word of God.

The statement **"the night has drawn to a close"** teaches that the period in which the church age believer is not in his or her resurrection body and is living during a period of history in which Satan is the god of this world has drawn to a close.

The statement **"the day is approaching"** emphasizes with Paul's readers that the period of time when each and every one of them is living in their resurrection body and is permanently delivered from living in Satan's cosmic system is approaching or is imminent. This period begins for the believer with the rapture of the church and will never end and will go on throughout eternity future.

1 Corinthians 1:7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

"Wait" is the verb *apekdechomai*, which denotes the attitude of intense expectation or eager anticipation for the rapture of the church and the attention being withdrawn from all else and concentrated upon the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer is eagerly waiting or waiting expectantly for the rapture of the church when the Lord Jesus Christ will snatch the believers alive on planet earth to be

with Him in the 1st heaven, the earth's atmosphere along with the dead in Christ (1 Th. 4:13-17). The believer is not only to be waiting eagerly or expectantly but is also to persevere until His return at the rapture. He is to be occupied with Christ until the rapture while eagerly anticipating the rapture of the church. The Corinthians were to be "eagerly anticipating" Jesus Christ coming back for them at any moment, which means an imminent rapture.

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 also speaks of the imminency of the rapture.

1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (ESV)

Wayne Brindle writes "Three time periods are described here, and the Thessalonian believers had participated or would participate in all of them. First, when Paul visited them with the gospel, they "turned to God from idols," that is, they responded to Christ by faith and were born again. Second, they were now serving "a living and true God" (rather than the idols and false gods they formerly worshiped), as they waited for Christ to return from heaven. Third, one day Jesus will appear out of heaven and rescue them 'from the wrath which is to come' (ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης). What 'wrath to come' is this? Since Christ's appearance 'out of heaven' is later described in 4:15–17 as the rapture, this 'coming wrath' must be the same wrath described in 5:3, 9, God's wrath in the future Tribulation.¹⁹⁶ The general context of both Thessalonian epistles is the Day of the Lord, especially that aspect of God's judgment that precedes and leads up to Christ's second coming. Indeed, the fact that 1:10 calls it a 'coming wrath' implies that the 'rescue' is related to Christ's return. In what sense will believers be rescued from this wrath? Paul wrote that they will be rescued 'from,' 'out of,' or 'away from' the coming wrath. The UBS¹⁹⁷ text, following three Alexandrian manuscripts, reads ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς. Wallace, however, argues that the internal evidence strongly supports as original the reading ἀπό τῆς ὀργῆς,¹⁹⁸ which implies that Christ will keep believers 'away from' the coming wrath. 'On all fronts the internal evidence is decidedly in favor of ἀπό. There are many good reasons why a scribe would change ἀπό to ἐκ, and virtually nothing to argue in the other direction. To answer the question, 'Which reading best explains the rise of the others(s)?' ἀπό must be judged as the obvious originator of ἐκ. This writer would give ἀπό an A-rating on internal probability.'¹⁹⁹ Even apart from the strength of the ἀπό reading, the statement points to a deliverance before wrath begins. The attempt by many nonpretribulational expositors to interpret this wrath as God's final judgment illustrates the point. To say that the point of this passage is to show that salvation by Christ provides a present deliverance that will keep believers 'out of' the final wrath and judgment of God makes it necessary that one interpret the deliverance as total and complete. In other words the saved will not be touched at all by God's final wrath.²⁰⁰ If the same explanation of ἐκ or ἀπό is used with regard to the believer's deliverance from the coming eschatological wrath (the Tribulation, as depicted in 1 Thess. 5), the present passage must be viewed as providing strong evidence for Paul's belief in an imminent rapture. Some say that the participle which names Jesus as the One who

¹⁹⁶ See William K. Harrison, "The Time of the Rapture as Indicated in Certain Scriptures—Part I," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 114 (October–December 1957): 319.

UBS United Bible Societies

¹⁹⁷ UBS United Bible Societies

¹⁹⁸ Daniel B. Wallace, "A Textual Problem in 1 Thessalonians 1:10: 'Ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς vs. 'Ἀπό τῆς ὀργῆς,'" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 147 (October–December 1990): 478.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Leon Morris, *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 42. See also D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Thessalonian Epistles* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), 75.

rescues (τόν ῥυόμενον) believers (since it is a present tense) must denote a current, progressive deliverance from God's general (noneschatological) wrath. However, this misunderstands both the relevance of the tense of the articular participle and the meaning of the final participle (τῆς ἐρχομένης, "coming"). The participle ῥυόμενον may be considered timeless with the force of a substantive.²⁰¹ As Bruce puts it, 'the participle plays the part of a *nomen agentis*, "our deliverer"' (as in Romans 11:26, where ὁ ῥυόμενος is usually translated "the Deliverer").²⁰² On the other hand the present participle here could be futuristic, making it similar to the phrase ἀπό τῆς μελλούσης ὀργῆς ("from the coming wrath") in the preaching of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:7; Luke 3:7). The closing participle, τῆς ἐρχομένης, seems clearly to be futuristic. This would allow a close connection between the future deliverance and the fact that the object of the deliverance is a wrath which itself is still 'coming.' In any event 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 seems to function as Paul's 'apostolic kerygma,' imparted to the infant church while Paul was still in Thessalonica. It serves as a 'summary of the eschatological teaching Paul had given, which finds its expansion and further explanation in 4:13–5:11.'^{203,204}

1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 teaches that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night meaning that it will take place unexpectedly.

1 Thessalonians 5:1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. (NASB95)

The only way the day of the Lord could break unexpectedly upon the world is to have it begin immediately after the rapture of the church, which is imminent. The thief comes at night when you least expect them. So it is with the return of Jesus Christ at the rapture of the church.

James 5:7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. (NASB95)

Notice that James says that the coming of the Lord is near or in other words at hand, which speaks of the imminency of His return.

Brindle writes "If something must happen someday, and could happen today, then it can be described as 'at hand' and imminent. This event is therefore the rapture, and as such, James reminds us that 'we are not separated from it by any known event at all.'^{205,206}

Zane Hodges writes "The readers are thereby likened to a group of litigants or defendants, standing within a courtroom. Total silence is required out of respect for the judge who is just outside the courtroom door and about to step inside to take his place on the judgment seat. Like a Roman lictor

²⁰¹ Hiebert, *The Thessalonian Epistles*, 72.

²⁰² F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 19–20.

²⁰³ Wallace, "A Textual Problem in 1 Thessalonians 1:10," 479.

²⁰⁴ Brindle, W. A. (2001). [Biblical Evidence for the Imminence of the Rapture](#). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 158, 142–144.

²⁰⁵ Zane Hodges, *The Epistle of James: Proven Character Through Testing* (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1994), 110–11.

²⁰⁶ *The Doctrine of an Imminent Rapture*; Wayne Brindle; *The Popular Handbook on the Rapture*; General Editors: Tim LaHaye, Thomas Ice, Ed Hindson; Harvest House Publishers; Eugene Oregon; 2011

announcing a judge's impending entry, as it were, James cries 'Quiet!' His Christian readers must fully silence their complaints against one another in the realization that their Lord and Judge can at any moment appear and sit down on the Bema (Judgment Seat) in order to assess their lives (cf. 2:12-13; see also 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12)."²⁰⁷

So James viewed the rapture as an imminent event with this description of Jesus Christ waiting at the door as Judge about to enter the courtroom to exercise his duties on the judgment seat.

1 John 2:28 Correspondingly, each one of you dear children must now continue to make it your habit of living in fellowship with Him so that each one of us would possess confidence whenever He has been revealed. Consequently, each one of us would not experience shame because of Him at His arrival. (Author's translation)

Now, the command in 1 John 2:28 required that each of the recipients of this epistle continue making it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ. The recipients of this epistle were already obeying this command since the apostle John affirms in 1 John 2:12-14 that the recipients of this epistle were remaining faithful to his apostolic teaching and thus were already obeying this command which he more than likely had taught them many times in the past.

In this command in 1 John 2:28, "**Him**" is not referring to the Holy Spirit even though the Spirit is mentioned in 1 John 2:27. Rather, it is referring to Jesus Christ which is indicated by the rest of the statements which appear in 1 John 2:28.

The result clause which follows this command in 1 John 2:28 states that the referent of this intensive pronoun will appear, which cannot be the Father or the Spirit but rather the Son since He is the only member of the Trinity who became visible by becoming a human being (cf. John 1:18). Furthermore, this appearance is a reference to Jesus Christ appearing at the rapture or resurrection of the church to remove the church from the earth prior to Daniel's seventieth week (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-57; Phil. 3:20-21). This appearance at the rapture or resurrection of the church is also called in 1 John 2:28 the Lord's "coming." Also, the shame mentioned in 1 John 2:28 speaks of the shame the unfaithful believer will experience at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church as a result of losing rewards because of unfaithfulness (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12). This evaluation of the church will be conducted by Jesus Christ according to Paul's teaching in 2 Corinthians 5:10.

This command which John issues the recipients of this epistle in 1 John 2:28 is followed by a purpose-result clause which presents both the purpose and the result for John issuing this command. It emphasizes that the recipients of this epistle continuing to make it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ would accomplish the Spirit inspired purpose for which John issued the previous command to do so here in verse 28.

This purpose-result clause teaches that as a result of obeying this command, both John and the recipients of this epistle would possess confidence whenever Jesus Christ has been revealed. John then presents the result of possessing this confidence, namely that each of them would not experience shame because of Jesus Christ at His arrival.

²⁰⁷ Zane Hodges, *The Epistle of James: Proven Character Through Testing*; page 111; as cited by Wayne Brindle; *The Doctrine of an Imminent Rapture*; Wayne Brindle; *The Popular Handbook on the Rapture*; General Editors: Tim LaHaye, Thomas Ice, Ed Hindson; Harvest House Publishers; Eugene Oregon; 2011

When John speaks of Jesus Christ being revealed and refers to His coming or arrival in 1 John 2:28, he is referring to the rapture or resurrection of the church and subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of the church. John wants the recipients of this epistle to obey his command so that they would possess confidence at the rapture and subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of the church. At the rapture, the church age believer will receive their resurrection and immediately following this, their service will be evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ to determine if they merit rewards for faithful service or do not merit rewards because of unfaithfulness. If the recipients of this epistle continue making it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ by living in fellowship with the Spirit by obeying John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching, they will be servants of Jesus Christ and will receive rewards. If they do not make it their habit of obeying this command, then they will lose rewards. If they lose rewards because they were unfaithful, they will suffer temporary shame and embarrassment.

Therefore, this purpose-result clause in 1 John 2:28 serves as motivation for the recipients of this epistle to remain faithful to John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching. Specifically, it teaches that the rapture of the church and the subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of the church should serve as motivation to remain faithful. Knowing that they must stand before Jesus Christ and give an account for their service should serve as motivation to remain faithful. The imminency of the rapture and subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of their service should motivate the church age believer to make it their habit of living in fellowship with the Trinity. Therefore, John wants to ensure the fact that the recipients of this epistle will receive rewards at the Bema Seat for faithfulness. In fact, the apostle John taught in 2 John 8 that the believer can lose rewards for unfaithfulness.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, each and every one of us are God's children. However, what state each of us will be caused to exist in, has not yet been revealed. Each one of us possess the conviction that whenever this state has been revealed (to us), we will be caused to exist in the same identical state as Him because for the benefit of each of us, we will see Him as He is presently existing. (Authors' translation)

After affirming once again that he and the recipients of this epistle were God's children, the apostle John contrasts their present imperfect state with their future glorified state in a resurrection body. He asserts that what state each of them will be caused to exist in the future, has not yet been revealed to them. He is referring to their future glorified state in a resurrection body when their salvation and sanctification will be completed and they will be perfected meaning they will no longer possess an indwelling sin nature as they do before this transformation.

John then asserts that each of them possess the conviction that whenever this state has been revealed to them, they will be caused to exist in the same identical state as Jesus Christ. Thus, he is reminding them that they will exist in a resurrection body like Jesus Christ whenever this state has been revealed at the rapture. The believer will be identical with Jesus not only because they will possess a glorified resurrection body but also because they will be sinless like Jesus Christ. The present bodies that believers possess are contaminated by the sin nature (Rom. 6:6). However, the resurrection body will be minus the sin nature.

The apostle John then presents the reason for this previous assertion by stating that each of them will see Jesus Christ as He presently exists in a resurrection body. Some interpret this causal clause as teaching that believers will realize that they are already like Jesus, but will not realize it until they see Him as He is. However, it is better to interpret this clause as teaching that the believer will be more like

Jesus Christ than they presently are and this will be accomplished by seeing Him as He really exists at the present time and for all of eternity. This is indicated by the adversative clause which appears earlier at the beginning of verse 2 and asserts that what state the believer will exist in the future, has not yet been revealed to them. It is also indicated by the reference in 1 John 2:28 to Jesus Christ's appearance at the rapture. Thus, John is seeking to distinguish between the present state of believers (sinful and without a resurrection body) and what they will be like in the future (sinless and possessing a resurrection body).

The purpose for which John makes these assertions here in 1 John 3:2 is to encourage the recipients of this epistle to continue making it their habit of experiencing their sanctification. This is indicated by John's statement in 1 John 3:3 in which he asserts that every believer who thus has the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body purifies themselves as Jesus is pure. This purification is that of experiencing sanctification which is a metaphor for experiencing fellowship with God.

Therefore, in 1 John 3:2, the apostle John is guaranteeing all believers that they will receive a resurrection body which is designed to motivate them to continue to remain faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ so as to live in a manner which is consistent with this guarantee. This guarantee is designed to motivate them to continue making it their habit of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. By doing this, they will guarantee that they will live in a manner which is consistent with this guarantee of receiving a resurrection body. It will also simultaneously protect them from the false doctrine.

So in 1 John 3:2, the apostle John is speaking of the believer's sanctification in a perfective sense. Every church age believer will receive a resurrection body regardless if they were faithful or not after their conversion. This glorification is the church age believer receiving their resurrection body. This is called the resurrection or rapture of the church.

1 John 3:3 Correspondingly, each one of us who does at any time possess this confident expectation because of Him, does purify himself just as He Himself is pure. (Author's translation)

The apostle John's assertion here in 1 John 3:3 corresponds to the assertion he makes at the end of 1 John 3:2. In the latter, the apostle John emphatically affirms that each of the recipients of this epistle along with himself were God's children. He then states that what state each of them will be caused to exist in, has not yet been revealed, which refers to all of them being perfected in a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. Next, John asserts that each of them possess the conviction that whenever this state has been revealed to them, they will all be caused to exist in the same identical state as Jesus Christ because they will all see Jesus Christ as He is presently existing. Of course, Jesus Christ is in a glorified state in a resurrection body.

Therefore, John is reminding the recipients of this epistle in 1 John 3:2 that they will all exist in a resurrection body like Jesus Christ whenever this state has been revealed to them at the rapture. He is also reminding them that they will be more like Jesus Christ than they presently are and this will be accomplished by seeing Him as He really exists at the present time and for all of eternity.

Now, here in 1 John 3:3, John makes another assertion with regards to himself and each of the recipients of this epistle. He teaches that each of them does at any time possess this confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body at the rapture because of Jesus Christ does purify himself or

herself just as He Himself is pure. This means that the believer who lives their lives confidently expecting to be perfected at any moment at the rapture will experience their sanctification and won't commit sin just as Jesus Christ never committed any sin.

Therefore, the correspondence between verses 2 and 3 is that a believer possessing the conviction that they will be perfected in a resurrection body is equivalent to possessing the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body because of Jesus Christ. In other words, the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body when Jesus appears at the rapture is equivalent to possessing the conviction that one will receive a resurrection body when Jesus appears at the rapture. Consequently, John is teaching that this confident expectation and conviction that the believer will receive a resurrection body from Jesus at the rapture will cause them to purify themselves in the sense that they will not commit sin just as Jesus is sinless. In other words, they will experience their sanctification as a result of this conviction and confident expectation.

When John asserts in 1 John 3:3 that each believer, who does at any time possess this confident expectation because of Him, he is identifying Jesus Christ as the basis or the reason why they possess the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body. Jesus Christ is the reason why the believer possesses this confident expectation because He was raised from the dead and promised to raise every believer from the dead (cf. John 6:39-40, 44, 54).

Therefore, John is teaching here in 1 John 3:3 that one of the marks which distinguishes a child of God from the children of the devil is that the former will purify themselves from sin because of their conviction and confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. This purification distinguished the recipients of this epistle from the false teachers.

He is also teaching that Jesus Christ is the basis for the believer's sanctification and in addition, their righteousness. He is the ethical perfect standard by which they were to live their lives on planet earth. In other words, Jesus Christ's impeccability is the pattern which the Christian is to follow. They must live their lives like Jesus Christ lived His life. They were to imitate His lifestyle.

The apostle John is also teaching in 1 John 3:3 that fellowship with the Trinity can be described as purifying oneself from sin because one has the confident expectation of receiving the promise of a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. In other words, this purification refers to experiencing sanctification.

Revelation 22:7 And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book. (NASB95)

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. (NASB95)

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. (NASB95)

Three times in Revelation 22, Jesus Christ declares that He is "coming quickly."

“**Quickly**” is the adverb *tachu* (ταχύ), which means “quickly, without delay; in a short time, soon.” BDAG lists the following definitions: (1) pertaining to a very brief period of time, with focus on speed of an activity or event (2) pertaining to a relatively brief time subsequent to another point of time.²⁰⁸

If we interpret this word as meaning “quickly” then it would pose a problem since if we take Jesus’ promises literally, then it appears that He was mistaken when He said He was coming back “quickly.” Its now over two-thousand years since He made this promise. So it appears He is slow and not quick to return. However, most interpreters realize that this Greek adverb means that Jesus could come back “at any moment.” He will come suddenly for His bride.

The purpose of such immanency is that the church may be in a constant state of expectancy, always looking for and waiting for the coming of her Lord from heaven. Not only is the hope of His return a source of comfort and encouragement to the believer, but also it is a very definite incentive for service and for holy living. This is what John is saying in 1 John 3:2-3.

The Rapture in John 14:1-3

John 14:1 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (ESV)

In this passage, the Lord says that He will “**receive us to Himself.**” Compare it with this passage in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, which deals extensively with the rapture.

John Walvoord writes “The revelation given in John 14 is to the point that the departure of Christ from earth to heaven is required in order to prepare a place for them in the Father’s house, used here as an expression equivalent to heaven. The promise to come again is connected with the return of Christ to heaven with the disciples. Christ is promising to take His disciples to the Father’s house when He comes again. It should be carefully determined just what takes place at the time of the event here described: Christ returns to the earthly scene to take the disciples from earth to heaven. This is in absolute contrast to what takes place when Christ returns to establish His kingdom on earth. On that occasion, no one goes from earth to heaven. The saints in the millennial kingdom are on earth with Christ. The only interpretation that fits the statements of John 14 is to refer it to the time of the translation of the church. Then, indeed, the disciples will go from earth to heaven, to the place prepared in the Father’s house. The idea of going to the Father’s house in heaven was quite foreign to the thinking of the disciples. Their hope was that Christ would immediately establish His kingdom on earth and that they would remain in the earthly sphere to reign with Him. The thought of going to heaven first was a new revelation and one that apparently was not comprehended. In Acts 1:6 they were still asking about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. In making the pronouncement in John 14, Christ held before His disciples an entirely different hope than that which was promised to Israel as a nation. It is the hope of the church in contrast to the hope of the Jewish nation. The hope of the church is to be taken to heaven; the hope of Israel is Christ returning to reign over the earth. The passage so clearly teaches that the disciples will go from earth to heaven that those who deny the pretribulation translation of the church are forced to spiritualize this passage and make the expression ‘I will come back’ a coming of Christ for each Christian at the

²⁰⁸ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 993). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

time of his death. Marcus Dods stated, ‘The promise is fulfilled in the death of the Christian, and it has changed the aspect of death.’ It is certainly desperate exegesis to dream up not only a spiritualization of the term ‘I will come back’ but to postulate a personal coming of Christ at the death of each saint, a teaching that is never found explicitly in the Scriptures. Dods himself admitted this is strange doctrine when he added, ‘The personal second coming of Christ is not a frequent theme in this Gospel.’ The peculiar point of view of Gundry, who makes ‘the Father’s house’ the body of believers with reference to the indwelling of Christ, will be considered under the posttribulation arguments. The point is that a coming of Christ to individuals at death is not found in John’s Gospel at all, nor in any other Scripture. Here again is an illustration of the fact that spiritualization of Scripture goes hand in hand with denial of the pretribulation Rapture. Certainly the hope set before the disciples cannot be reduced to the formula ‘When you die you will go to heaven.’ This would not have been new truth. Rather, Christ is promising that when He comes He would take them to heaven where they would be forever with Him, without reference to death. The ultimate objective of the return of Christ is that the disciples may be with Christ forever, ‘that you also may be where I am.’ It is true that saints who die are immediately taken to heaven as far as their immaterial nature is concerned. In Scripture, however, the hope of being with Christ is connected with the translation of the church as if the intermediate state is not a full realization of what it means to be with Christ. Hence in 1 Thessalonians both the living and the resurrected dead ‘will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever’” (1 Thess. 4:17-18). It is true, however, that the intermediate state is described as being ‘with Christ’ (Phil. 1:23) and as being ‘at home with the Lord’ (2 Cor. 5:8). Nevertheless, the full expression of fellowship with Christ and being with Him wherever He goes is conditioned on the resurrection of the body for the dead in Christ and the translation of the living saints.”²⁰⁹

Wayne Brindle writes “John 14:3 is the only verse in the Gospels that is commonly accepted by contemporary pretribulationists and posttribulationists alike as a reference to the rapture. When Jesus said, ‘If I go,’ He was not speaking only of His death and resurrection. His going ‘to the Father’ (v. 12) included a complete departure, in which He went bodily from earth to heaven (cf. Acts 1:9–11). His next statement, ‘I am coming again’ (πάλιν ἔρχομαι is a futuristic present, meaning ‘I will come again’),²¹⁰ must also refer to a literal and bodily return from heaven, not a coming of Christ to individual believers in death²¹¹ or in the person of the Holy Spirit. Again many posttribulationists agree with pretribulationists on this point.²¹² When Christ returns, He will take believers to be with Him forever. In verse 2 the close connection between the ‘dwelling places’ and ‘My Father’s house’ almost certainly locates the ‘dwelling places’ in heaven.²¹³ Twice in verses 2 and 3 Jesus discussed what He will do in his ‘Father’s house’—He will ‘prepare a place’ for believers.²¹⁴ Sometime after that has been accomplished, He will then “come again’ and ‘receive’ (παραλήμψομαι, ‘I will take to myself’) them to

²⁰⁹ Walvoord, John F.. *The Rapture Question* (pp. 71-73). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

²¹⁰ According to Robert Gromacki, “The choice of the present tense rather than the future in a prophetic context probably implies an ever-present possibility of fulfillment, or imminency” (“The Imminent Return of Jesus Christ,” *Grace Theological Journal* 6 [fall 1965]: 18).

²¹¹ The idea that Christ “comes” to believers at the time of their deaths is not found in Scripture at all.

²¹² Moo, “The Case for the Posttribulation Rapture Position,” 178.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 247, n. 9. “In My Father’s house” translates ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς μου. In John 2:16 Jesus used the same words “My Father’s house” to refer to the Jerusalem temple. But the phrase in 14:2 can hardly refer to the temple because Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for His followers and then return for them. “Dwelling places” renders the word μοναί, derived from μένω, “to abide, dwell, remain.” The verb μένω occurs more often in John’s writings than in any other Gospel (forty times in the Gospel of John and twenty-four times in 1 John). Thus it is fitting that Jesus would refer to heaven in this way, as the place where His followers would dwell or abide with Him forever. The singular use of μονή occurs in John 14:23, where Jesus said that He and God the Father will “make Our abode” with the one who loves and obeys Him. Here the word μονή speaks of Jesus’ abiding in fellowship with obedient believers. This of course differs from the “dwelling places” that are in the Father’s house.

²¹⁴ Craig Keener sees these “dwelling places” as “rooms” in the new temple (Ezek. 44:9–16), “where only undefiled ministers would have a place.” He then interprets the reference figuratively as “being in Christ, where God’s presence dwells” (cf. John 2:21; 14:23) (*IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993], 299). A more likely cultural background can be found in the fact that fathers and soon-to-be-married sons normally added small apartments (“dwelling places”) to their homes so that they could be together in an ever-increasing expanded family.

Himself.²¹⁵ Where will He take them? He said He will take them ‘where I am.’ But where exactly is that? Two clues help answer this question. First, Jesus’ double reference to ‘preparing a place for them’ in heaven is irrelevant (even worthless) information if He did not intend to take them there. The foregoing context thus requires the conclusion that He intends to take them to heaven—where He ‘will be’ (εἶμι is also a futuristic present here). Second, Jesus then said, ‘You know the way where I am going’ (v. 4). Unless Jesus was being intentionally devious, it must be assumed that He was still speaking of heaven. In fact, following Thomas’s question about the way (v. 5), Jesus candidly stated that no one is able to go “to the Father” except through Him (v. 6). Thus Christ will go to heaven (His ascension), then return literally and bodily to earth for His people, and take them literally to heaven with Him (at the rapture) to be with Him. Some exegetes object that since the word ‘heaven’ is not in the passage, the emphasis of the text is on Christ’s promise that believers will ultimately (and always) be with Him—wherever that is—so that the promise should not be understood as necessarily implying a rapture ‘to heaven.’²¹⁶ In this view the rapture will occur at the same time as Christ’s coming to the earth, so that the words ‘where I am’ would refer to His being on the earth during the millennium, not in heaven. This explanation, however, does not take into account the preceding context, as well as the conversation that follows it. The apostles had begun to show fear in response to Jesus’ statements about His coming departure. In answer to a question from Peter, Jesus said, ‘Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later,’ to which Peter replied, ‘Lord, why can I not follow You right now?’ (13:36–37). This led Jesus to begin the current discussion with the statement, ‘Let not your heart be troubled’ (14:1). Here Christ clearly spoke of the rapture as an antidote to their fears and as a great hope and encouragement in light of His soon departure to heaven.²¹⁷ Jesus made no mention of suffering or judgment from which the rapture might rescue them, nor did He mention that any signs must precede the rapture. Jesus’ words spoke directly of a reunion of the apostles with their Lord, which will issue in an eternal ‘at-home-ness’ with both Jesus and God the Father. In addition this passage cannot refer to Christ’s second coming to the earth, since at that time Christ will rule on earth rather than return to heaven with His people. In fact, on the occasion of the Second Coming no one is depicted as going from earth to heaven.²¹⁸ The events depicted in Matthew 25 and Revelation 20 are not possible in John 14:1–3, and no intervening event such as a time of tribulation is even hinted at in John 14.”²¹⁹

The Rapture in 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

As we noted, the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 teaches on the rapture or resurrection of the church and describes it as “a mystery,” which we noted means that this prophecy was unknown to the Old Testament prophets of Israel but rather is new revelation given by the Lord to His apostles by the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **51** Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, **52** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. **53** For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on

²¹⁵ “The future παραλήμφομαι, with the explanatory clause ἵνα ... ᾗτε, demands a future meaning for the present ἐρχομαι” (C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, 2d ed. [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978], 457). See also George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 249–51.

²¹⁶ Douglas J. Moo, “Response” to Paul D. Feinberg, in *Three Views on the Rapture*, 100.

²¹⁷ Contrast Jesus’ counsel to those present on earth during the Tribulation to flee from persecution (Matt. 24:15–22).

²¹⁸ See John F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 71.

²¹⁹ Brindle, W. A. (2001). [Biblical Evidence for the Imminence of the Rapture](#). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 158, 139–142.

immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. 55 “O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord. (ESV)

This passage teaches that not all church age believers will die physically but that those alive at the rapture will be “**changed**” meaning that they will receive a resurrection body which will be incorruptible. This passage also teaches that the dead in Christ will be raised first before those alive on the earth which corresponds with Paul’s teaching on the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. It also teaches that the rapture will happen in a “**winking of an eye**” (1 Cor. 15:52). The resurrection of the church will occur “**in a moment**.”

Some expositors have tried to associate the “**trumpet of God**” in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and the “**last trumpet**” in 1 Corinthians 15:52 with the last or seventh trumpet of the Tribulation and with the trumpet of Matthew 24:31. By doing this, they attempt to put the rapture either in the Tribulation or at its end, when the Lord returns to earth. In both of these passages, this trumpet is followed by the resurrection of the church, i.e. the rapture.

There are obvious differences that exist between the “**trumpet of God**” in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and the “**last trumpet**” in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and the last or seventh trumpet of the Tribulation in Revelation 8:7f. and with the “**great trumpet**” of Matthew 24:31.

The trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 should not be equated with Joel 2:1 or with Revelation 8:7f since there are many differences between them. In 1 Corinthians 15:22 the trumpeter is not stated whereas the trumpeter in Matthew 24:31 and the trumpets of Revelation 8 are blown by angels. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 the trumpeter is Christ whereas the trumpeter in Joel is a human being, an Israelite.

The purpose of the “**great trumpet**” in Matthew 24:31 is to have the elect angels gather the living elect on the earth whereas the purpose of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is to gather the living church age believers. With the blowing of the trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Christ Himself and not the elect angels gather living church age believers to Himself whereas in Revelation the purpose of the blowing of the trumpet by angels is to execute judgment during the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

The purpose of the trumpet in Joel 2:1 to assemble Israel and warn them against danger. The trumpet in Joel is an alarm to the nation of Israel that signals that the day of the Lord has begun. In Joel 2, the armies of Israel and her people are being warned of an impending attack.

The result of the blowing of the “**great trumpet**” in Matthew 24:31 results in entrance into the kingdom or millennial kingdom of Christ whereas the result of the blowing of the trumpet in 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the resurrection of church age believers. The result of the blowing of the trumpet of God in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 is also the resurrection of church age believers whereas the result of the blowing of the trumpets by elect angels in Revelation 8 is the execution of judgments during the last

three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week. The result of the blowing of the trumpet in Joel 2 is war and an invasion from an enemy.

Therefore, because of these obvious differences between these trumpets, the trumpets of Revelation 8 and the **"great trumpet"** in Matthew 24:31 and the trumpet of Joel 2:1 do not take place at the same time as the trumpets mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

The **"last trumpet"** of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is thought by some expositors of the Bible to be associated with the trumpet judgments that appear in Revelation 8. Consequently, they place the rapture at the end of the Tribulation period, i.e. Daniel's Seventieth Week.

However, a comparison of the differences between the various trumpets mentioned in Revelation 8, Joel 2:1, Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16, indicates quite clearly that the **"last trumpet"** in 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the very voice of the Lord Jesus Christ calling out the church in resurrection.

The **"last trumpet"** of 1 Corinthians 15:52 and the **"trumpet of God"** in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 both result in the resurrection of the church and the purpose of both are to gather the church to Christ and they are not blown by elect angels. Whereas, the trumpet judgments of Revelation 8 and the **"great trumpet"** in Matthew 24:31 are blown by elect angels and the result of the former is the execution of judgments during the Tribulation whereas the result of the latter is entrance into Christ's millennial kingdom.

Commenting on the meaning of the **"last trumpet"** in 1 Corinthians 15:52, J. Hampton Keathley III, writes, "But what does the Apostle mean by 'the Last Trump'? Because of the adjective 'last,' some seek to associate this with the seventh or last trumpet of Revelation 8 and thus place the rapture at the end of the Tribulation. But as the above comparison shows, this is a distinct signal, evidently the very voice of the Lord Himself for the church. It is not blown by angels and is not for the world. John Eadie, a well-known scholar who wrote at the end of the 1800s wrote: The phrase, 'the last trump' (1 Cor. XV, 52), is supposed ... to imply previous trumpets, at the last of which the Judge descends, while others identify it with the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse; but these notions, the second especially, are exceedingly precarious—the phrase, 'the last trump,' being apparently a popular one, and meaning the trumpet in connection with the End. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Greek Text of the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians (Reprint by James and Klock Christian Publishing Co., Minneapolis, 1977), p. 165) Of course the issue is the end of what? Since this is written to believers of the church age who are waiting for His imminent return, the end is that of the church age, not of the end of the age of Israel, or of all things. In the Old Testament, the blowing of the trumpet was used to accompany the Theophanies, the manifestations of God, as in Exodus 19:16. There it signaled the approach of the Lord at the giving of the Law. For the church this is the end and involves the Christophany, the manifestation of Christ, but at the same time, it will form the beginning of the end in that afterwards (how soon is not revealed), the Tribulation will begin which will be culminated just seven years later by the manifestation of Christ's *parousia*, His presence openly revealed to the world as He descends with His church as described above."²²⁰

Walvoord writes "Paul claimed that this will fulfill prophecy insofar as it relates to the resurrection of the dead. He stated, 'When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with

²²⁰ 1 Thessalonians: An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary, page 91; Biblical Studies Press, 1998

immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” This quotation is from Isaiah 25:8. Paul went on to say, “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The second quotation is from Hosea 13:14. All agree that the rapture of the church is a partial fulfillment of Old and New Testament anticipations of resurrection. To jump to the conclusion that this makes clear that there can be only one fulfillment of it and that this requires identification of the Rapture with the second coming of Christ is going beyond what the text justifies. Any student of quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament soon discovers that fulfillment is sometimes partial; and in this case the resurrection of the church, while a fulfillment of the general promise of resurrection, does not justify the conclusion that all people are raised at the time of the Rapture. For instance, Revelation 20:4 speaks of the resurrection of the tribulation dead and pictures it as occurring considerably later than the event of Christ’s coming from heaven to earth in His second coming. Even if the Rapture were posttribulational, the resurrection of Revelation 20:4 comes later in the sequence of events, as the context demonstrates. The error of posttribulationists here is the assumption of what they are trying to prove, that all resurrections occur at the same time. Another element in the revelation in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 is the exhortation that is attached to the doctrine of the Rapture. In verse 58 Paul stated, ‘Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.’ The doctrine of the Rapture, whenever mentioned in the Bible, is always related to practical application. In John 14:2 it is to the point that we should not be troubled in view of the coming of the Lord. In 1 Thessalonians 4 it is a comforting or encouraging hope. In 1 John 3:2-3 it is a purifying hope. Here the Rapture is used as an exhortation to us to be faithful, standing firm in our faith, letting nothing move us, and giving ourselves at all times fully to the work of the Lord.”²²¹

The Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The apostle Paul describes the rapture or resurrection of the church in detail in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, which is one of the major themes in First Thessalonians since Paul addresses this prophetic subject extensively in this pericope. In this passage, Paul reassures the Christian community in Thessalonica that the dead in Christ would be raised immediately before they are given resurrection bodies when the Lord Jesus Christ returns for His bride, the church at the rapture or resurrection of the church (cf. 1 Thess. 4:14-18).

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of {the} archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. (NASB95)

“**Will be caught up**” is the verb *harpazō*, which refers to the Lord Jesus Christ taking His church forcefully and suddenly out of the world by means of His divine omnipotence.

²²¹ Walvoord, John F.. The Rapture Question (pp. 250-252). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the apostle Paul lists seven events which will take place in connection with the rapture or resurrection of the church. The first is that the Lord Jesus Christ will descend from heaven (verse 16). The second is that when Jesus descends from heaven there will be a shout or cry of command (cf. NET) with the voice of the archangel. This is the shout of resurrection. Remember, Jesus called out with a loud voice when he resuscitated Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-45). The third event is that the dead in Christ will rise first from the dead and receive their resurrection bodies (verse 16). The fourth event is that the believers still alive when the Lord comes back from heaven will rise immediately after the dead in Christ and receive their resurrection bodies (verse 17). The fifth event is that both groups will be caught together with Jesus Christ in the clouds or the earth's atmosphere (verse 17). The sixth event will be living believers on the earth meeting the dead in Christ along with Jesus Christ Himself (verse 17). The seventh and final event will be that every church age believer will remain united to Jesus Christ and each other for the rest of eternity (verse 17). In verse 18, Paul commands the Thessalonian Christian community to encourage one another with this knowledge of the rapture.

The Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 5

The apostle Paul again addresses the subject of the rapture with the Thessalonian Christian community in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. He does this again to reassure them like he did in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

1 Thessalonians 5:1 Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. 7 For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. (ESV)

Notice in verse 2, Paul asserts that the Thessalonians were fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. In verse 3, the non-believers will be thinking they are safe and secure but the day of the Lord will take them by surprise and they will not escape the day of the Lord. Then, in verse 4, he reassures them that they are not in the darkness about the day of the Lord and they will not be taken by surprise it. The day of the Lord refers to the seventieth week of Daniel and in particular the last three and a half years of this seven-year period which Jesus describes in Matthew 24:21 as the "great tribulation." This period is described by the apostle John in Revelation 6-18. During this time, God will exercise His wrath against the inhabitants of planet earth for their rejection of Him and His Son. Then, in 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Paul asserts that the Thessalonians were not destined to experience God's wrath during the day of the Lord. In contrast to the non-believer, they are destined for salvation, which refers to the completion of their salvation when they receive a resurrection body. Therefore, this passage teaches that the rapture will take place before the events of the seventieth week of Daniel.

John Walvoord writes “Paul stated that the day of the Lord will not overtake the Thessalonians as a thief. Why does an event coming as a thief come unexpectedly upon the world but with proper expectation for believers? Paul explained this in verses 4 and 5: ‘But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.’ Here is a crucial point in Paul’s explanation: the thief is going to come in the night, but the believers are declared not to belong to the night or the darkness. The implication is quite clear that believers are in a different time reference; that is, they belong to the day that precedes the darkness. On this basis Paul gave an exhortation. If the Thessalonians are of the day, they are not to be asleep or drugged; rather, they are to be sober or self-controlled, ‘putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet’ (v. 8). Paul concluded in verse 9, ‘For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ In this passage, the believer in Christ is assured that his appointment is not to this time of wrath. In attempting to explain this, the pretribulationist has the obvious advantage: if the church is raptured before this time of trouble, then all that is said in this passage becomes very clear; that is, the period of wrath will not overtake the church as a thief because the church will not be there. If the use of the argument from silence is valid, it would seem here that Paul’s silence on the matter of whether the church must endure this period is again another indication that the church will not even enter the period. When we take the total picture of this passage into consideration, the reason for Paul’s introducing it becomes clearer. Although the events of the day of the Lord do not begin immediately after the Rapture, the time period as such—following the symbolism of a day beginning at midnight—could easily be understood to begin with the Rapture itself. The opening hours of the day of the Lord do not contain great events. Gradually the major events of the day of the Lord unfold, climaxing in the terrible judgments with which the Great Tribulation is brought to conclusion. Taken as a whole, the pretribulation point of view gives sense and meaning to 1 Thessalonians 5 and explains why this is introduced after the Rapture. In effect, Paul was saying that the time of the Rapture cannot be determined any more than the time of the beginning of the day of the Lord; but this is of no concern to believers because our appointment is not the wrath of the day of the Lord but rather the salvation that is ours in Christ. Confirmation is given to this approach to 1 Thessalonians 5 in a study of 2 Thessalonians 2, where the day of the Lord is again introduced, this time in a context in which the Thessalonians misunderstood and needed correction.”²²²

The Rapture in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-13

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-13, the apostle Paul teaches the Thessalonian Christian community that the rapture of the church will precede the day of the Lord. He sought to assure the Thessalonian church that the day of the Lord had not yet begun. He instructs them that “the rebellion” must come first before the day of the Lord can take place. Also, the Antichrist must be revealed for the day of the Lord to take place.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, **2** that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. **3** Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, **4** who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. **5** Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? **6** And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he

²²² Walvoord, John F.. The Rapture Question (pp. 220-221). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

will be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. 13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to reassure the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord had not taking place. The purpose of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 is to identify three events which indicate that the day of the Lord is taking place. In other words, these verses identify that these three events are evidence that the day of the Lord is underway.

The first evidence the apostle gives that the day of the Lord was not present is found in the two important occurrences that had not taken place. A third important and related event will follow in verses 6 and 7. These together provided the proof that they were not then in the day of the Lord.

The question is whether these first two occurrences must take place before the day of the Lord begins, or are they evidences that the day has begun or is present. This question arises because the clause, "For that day will not be here" is not in the Greek text but expresses an ellipsis. This or something similar is needed or must be understood to supply the missing thought. The NIV has "that day will not come," the NASB has "it will not come," and the NET Bible has "that day will not be here." An equally valid possibility is "For that day is not present unless ..." This ellipsis is the main clause (the apodosis) of the conditional sentence (the protasis). The conditional sentence is seen in the words "unless (*ean me,,*, "if not," "except," "unless") the rebellion comes first ..." Thus, Paul says either (1) that day cannot come or (2) the day cannot be present without certain events being in place first. Based on the context and similar grammatical constructions used elsewhere, this author is of the conviction that the ellipsis is "for the day is not present unless ..." I believe this because grammatically similar constructions elsewhere (Matt 12:29; Mark 3:27; John 7:51; Rom 15:24) show these two happenings are conceived of as within the day of the Lord, not prior to it. The day of the Lord had not yet arrived because these two conspicuous phenomena that will dominate the day's opening phase had not yet happened.

Some wonder how the failure of these two to arrive can be a proof of the nonarrival of the day. The answer lies in understanding Paul's reference to these phenomena as his way of identifying the very earliest stage of this eschatological period. The readers had not missed the rapture (1 Thess 4:15-17) and were not in the day of the Lord (v. 2) because these two clear indicators of the day's presence had "not yet" appeared. The absence of these two occurrences, which are so essential to the presence of the day of the Lord in its beginning phase, is the apostle's proof that the Thessalonians were not then in the day of the Lord. Though Paul was not directly discussing the timing of the rapture, the fact he was writing in the interest of the coming of the Lord and the gathering of the Church together to meet Him in the air, the implication is that the rapture must occur before this day begins. Why else would these believers be shaken by the idea that they might then be in the day of the Lord unless they had expected to be taken up to meet the Lord prior to that time? Thus, two events are needed for the day of the Lord to be present.

These are (1) the rebellion that must come first, and (2) the revealing of the man of lawlessness that quickly follows.

Now, in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, “the apostasy” in the NASB95 translation is rendering the noun *apostasía* (ἀποστασία), which appears only twice in the New Testament (cf. Acts 21:21). The word means “rebellion, an abandonment, an apostasy” since the word pertains to rising up in open defiance of authority, with the presumed intention to overthrow it or to act in complete opposition to its demands. The NET, ESV, LEB, TNIV and NRSV all translate this noun “the rebellion.” This word refers to a revolt, a departure, and abandoning a position once held.

Some take this word as referring to the rapture. They contend that this word means “departure” referring to the departure of the church from the earth. However, this word does not have this meaning in the Greek classics (Plut. Galb. 1.5; Plut. Mulier. 16), Septuagint (Josh. 22:22; 2 Chron. 29:19; 1 Macc. 2:15; Jer. 2:19) or the writings of Josephus (Life 43; Wars 7.82, 164). In classical Greek, *hē apostasia* (ἡ ἀποστασία), “the apostasy” was used to denote a political or military rebellion. In the Septuagint, this expression *hē apostasia* (ἡ ἀποστασία), “the apostasy” was used of rebellion against God (cf. Josh. 22:22; Jer. 2:19). In 2 Maccabees 2:15, the word is used of apostasy to paganism. In Acts 21:21, the noun *apostasía* (ἀποστασία) is used of Israel’s spiritual departure from the teaching of Moses. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the rapture of the church does not involve the volition of the individual members of the church since they are forcibly removed from planet earth by the Lord Jesus Christ by means of His omnipotence and this noun *apostasía* (ἀποστασία) has an active sense and not a passive. The latter would correspond to the rapture. Lastly, Paul speaks of the rapture explicitly in 2 Thessalonians 1:1 by describing it as “our gathering together to him.” Now, it would seem very unlikely that the noun *apostasía* (ἀποστασία) in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 would refer to the rapture in light of this designation of the rapture in verse 1.

Edmond Hiebert writes “Within recent times certain evangelical Bible teachers have proposed that *hē apoastasia*, following a secondary meaning of the term, should be rendered ‘the departure,’ meaning the rapture of the church.”²²³ But this interpretation is not in harmony with the nature of the rapture. Nowhere else does the Scripture speak of the rapture as ‘the departure.’ A departure denotes an act on the part of the individual or company departing. But the rapture is not an act of departure on the part of the saints. In the rapture, the church is passive, not active. At the rapture, the church is ‘caught up’ or ‘snatched away,’ an event wherein the Lord acts to transport believers from earth into His presence (1 Thess. 4:16–17). Everything that takes place with the believer at the rapture is initiated by the Lord and done by Him. Paul has just referred to the rapture as ‘our being gathered to him’ (v. 1); why then should he now use this unlikely term to mean the same thing? But to apply the term to the apostasy is to give it its proper meaning, since the apostasy is the action of professed believers. The biblical usage of the term points to something sinful. In Acts 21:21, the only other place where the noun occurs in the New Testament, it definitely asserts the apostasy from Moses. In view of the Old Testament usage of the term, any reader familiar with the Greek Old Testament, or the history of the Maccabees, would understand the word when thus used by itself to mean an apostasy from the faith. This well known meaning of the noun *apostasía* is in accord with the meaning of the cognate noun *apostasion* in Matthew 19:7 and Mark 10:4, which means ‘a certificate of divorce.’”²²⁴

²²³ E. Schuyler English, *Re-thinking the Rapture*, pp. 67–71; John R. Rice, *The Coming Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 188–91; Kenneth S. Wuest, *Prophetic Light in the Present Darkness*, pp. 38–41.

²²⁴ Hiebert, D. E. (1996). *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Revised Edition, pp. 331–332). Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books.

Therefore, “the rebellion” mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to the great rebellion led by the Antichrist during the seventieth week of Daniel. It does not refer to a great apostasy in the church since this event and the other two take place during the day of the Lord, i.e. the seventieth week of Daniel. This “rebellion” is described by Paul in the rest of 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 4, namely, **“and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”** Therefore, since the noun *apostasia* is ambiguous and begs to be defined, the apostle Paul explains what he means by his use of the word. Thus, this “rebellion” is Antichrist opposing God by demanding the human race worship him rather than God. Of course, Satan is behind the Antichrist since Isaiah 14:12-14 teaches that he desires the world to worship him and not God.

Now, in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, the apostle Paul also refers to the Antichrist’s desecrating the temple and declaring himself God and demanding the worship of the world.

The expressions **“the man of lawlessness”** and **“the son of destruction”** is a reference to Antichrist.

Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that Antichrist will **“take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as God”** is a reference to the statement in Daniel 9:27, **“on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate.”**

Revelation 13:14-15 also mentions Antichrist exalting himself as God and receiving the worship of the world as such.

Paul’s statement that the Antichrist **“opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship”** means that he ranks himself superior to all the supreme beings worshiped by the various religions of the world, which will be a fulfillment of Daniel 11:36.

Daniel 7:25 makes mention of the Antichrist putting an end to the sacrificial offering during the final three and a half years of the seventieth week. Daniel 7:7-8 mentions the Antichrist, identifying him as “the little horn.” Daniel 7:23-25 interprets Daniel 7:7-8.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, **“he who now restrains”** refers to the Holy Spirit since He is the only one who has the power to restrain evil. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells the church age believer’s body (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:18-20).

A comparison of these passages with 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 teaches that Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way and for the Holy Spirit to be taken out of the way, every church age believer would have to be removed as well since the Spirit permanently indwells every church age believer.

Walvoord writes “Taken as a whole, 2 Thessalonians makes a major contribution to the doctrine of the Rapture, refuting this early form of posttribulationism. Paul taught in 2 Thessalonians 2 the important fact that the man of sin, or the lawless one, cannot be revealed as such until the Rapture, that is, the removal of the church indwelt by the Holy Spirit. According to the prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, the man of sin is probably to be identified with the final world ruler who will emerge first as the head of a ten-nation confederacy and then will make a covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27) seven years before the second coming of Christ.¹¹ When this covenant is made, it will be an unmistakable

identification of this man as the man of destiny who ultimately will become a world ruler. If this occurs seven years before the second coming of Christ and will be confirmed three and one-half years before the second coming of Christ when he takes the role of world ruler, it should be obvious that the church must be raptured before he is revealed. The truths revealed in 2 Thessalonians 2 are a devastating blow to posttribulationism, labeling it as an early error in the church that later mushroomed and became more evident in the second century of the Christian Era. When carefully examined, the revelation of 2 Thessalonians relating to the Rapture is a confirmation rather than a refutation of a pretribulational return of the Lord for His church.”²²⁵

Resurrection Body

The rapture is something every church age believer should be eagerly anticipating because at that time they will receive their resurrection bodies.

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven—and we also await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 3:21 who will transform these humble bodies of ours into the likeness of his glorious body by means of that power by which he is able to subject all things to himself. (NET)

In Philippians 3:21, Paul teaches the Philippians that the Lord Jesus Christ will transform the believer’s humiliating into conformity with His glorious resurrection body.

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship exists from eternity past in the realm of the heavens, out from which also we ourselves at the present time are eagerly anticipating as Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ 21 who will cause our humiliating body to be outwardly transformed to be identical in essence with His glorious body because of the power that will enable Him to marshal all things created to Himself. (My translation)

The expression “**to be outwardly transformed**” is the third person singular future active indicative form of the verb *metaschēmatizō* (μετασχηματίζω), which refers to the Lord Jesus Christ causing the believer’s physical body to be transformed in outward appearance into a resurrected body at the rapture of the church.

Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the verb transform: (1) To change in form, appearance, or structure, metamorphose (2) To change in condition, nature, or character; convert (3) To change into another substance; transmute.

If we were to paraphrase this definition, we would say that the church age believer’s physical body: (1) Will change in form, appearance, or structure, metamorphose at the rapture or resurrection of the church. (2) Will change in condition, nature, character; convert at the rapture or resurrection of the church. (3) Will change into another substance; transmute at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

The predictive future tense of this verb expresses the certainty that the believer will have his physical body transformed into a resurrection body that is patterned after the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ’s resurrection body.

²²⁵ Walvoord, John F.. The Rapture Question (pp. 244-245). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

The active voice of this verb is a causative active voice where the Lord Jesus Christ as the subject is the cause or ultimate source of the transformation of the believer's physical body into a resurrection body.

“Humiliating” is the noun *tapeinosis* (ταπείνωσις), which describes the believer's physical body, which is mortal and refers to the state of humiliation that the believer experiences in his mortal body because it contains the old sin nature as a result of Adam's original sin in the garden (R. 5:12; cf. 7).

The physical body of the believer is humiliating in comparison to the resurrection body and is being corrupted as a result of the old sin nature (Eph. 4:22) and is subjected to death (1 Cor. 15:42-44) and is thus mortal whereas the resurrection body is immortal. The mortal body of the believer is governed by the old Adamic-nature whereas the resurrection body is governed by the new Christ-nature.

Christ crucified the old Adamic-nature at the cross (R. 6:6) and which Adamic sin nature tempts the soul to commit mental, verbal and overt acts of personal sin and produces evil (Col. 3:9). The mortal body of the believer is in bondage to the sin nature (R. 7:14) and its actions can never please God and wars against the Spirit (R. 8:3; cf. Ga. 5:18-21).

“To be identical in essence” is the adjective *summorphos* (σύμμορφος), which is employed in an eschatological sense and is composed of the preposition *sun*, “with, together with,” and the noun *morphe*, “essence” and thus literally it means “having the same essence or nature,” or “identical in essence or nature.”

The believer's resurrection body will not only look like the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ but it will be in essence, identical to His, composed of flesh, bone and spirit and no blood because it will be minus the old sin nature. It will be composed of the same molecular structure and will function in the same manner as the resurrection body of Christ, which He first modeled after His resurrection. The resurrected body of the Lord Jesus Christ serves as the model for the resurrected body of the believer. Every church age believer will receive a resurrection body at the rapture of the church (1 Cor. 15:50-58; 1 John 3:2).

In Philippians 3:21, **“the power”** is the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια), which refers to the divine omnipotence of God the Son. The humiliating body of the believer will be outwardly transformed to be identical in essence to the glorified resurrected body of Christ at the rapture of the church by means of the omnipotence of God the Son. The same power that raised the humanity of Christ from the dead will raise every church age believer from the dead at the rapture (Rom. 8:11). Therefore, Philippians 3:21 teaches that the omnipotence of the Lord Jesus Christ will be responsible for the believer's new resurrection body and that the believer's physical body is a body of humiliation compared to the resurrection body which is called the “body of His glory” (Phil. 3:21).

The apostle Paul describes the nature of the resurrection body in 1 Corinthians 15:35-49.

1 Corinthians 15:35 But someone will say, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” 15:36 Fool! What you sow will not come to life unless it dies. 15:37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare seed—perhaps of wheat or something else. 15:38 But God gives it a body just as he planned, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. 15:39 All flesh is not the same: People have one flesh, animals have another, birds and fish another. 15:40 And

there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. The glory of the heavenly body is one sort and the earthly another. 15:41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory. 15:42 It is the same with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. 15:43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 15:44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 15:45 So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living person”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 15:46 However, the spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and then the spiritual. 15:47 The first man is from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven. 15:48 Like the one made of dust, so too are those made of dust, and like the one from heaven, so too those who are heavenly. 15:49 And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, let us also bear the image of the man of heaven. (NET)

1 Corinthians 15:52-53 teaches that the believer’s resurrection body will be an imperishable body and not like the one believer’s now have and will be immortal (1 Cor. 15:53). The believer’s resurrection body is a result of our Lord’s victory over death at the cross (1 Cor. 15:57). Our Lord delivered us from the fear of death (Heb. 2:14-15). The believer in a resurrection body will no longer be able to sin because it will be minus the old sin nature which tempts the believer to commit acts of sinmental, verbal and overt. The resurrection body will be an eternal monument to the grace policy of God. All church age believers will receive a resurrection body regardless of whether or not they were faithful in time. The only requirement for receiving a resurrection body is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Faith alone in Christ alone is the means of receiving a resurrection body. It only takes one non-meritorious decision to receive a resurrection body. The resurrection body will be totally governed by the Spirit, made alive and sustained by the eternal living power of the Spirit. The resurrection body of the believer will have the same identical attributes and properties that the resurrection body of Christ has. Paul uses the stellar universe analogy to illustrate the fact that there will be varieties of resurrection bodies in heaven (1 Cor. 15:40-41).

The resurrection body will be composed of flesh and bone and will not have blood as the physical body now has. It will have a different molecular structure which will enable it to walk through walls as our Lord did in John 20:19. It will be able to leave the earth vertically as our Lord did in Acts 1:9. It will be able to travel through space in an instant and appear in heaven. The believer will still be able to eat and drink in a resurrection body (Luke 24:42-43). The resurrection body will never get tired or sick and will be minus the old sin nature. It will be a spiritual body with flesh and bones (1 Cor. 15:35-50).

The resurrection or “rapture” of the church will mark the permanent eradication of the sin nature from the existence of the believer and will be the completion of the believer’s deliverance from the sin nature as well as the believer’s sanctification.

The Rapture and Perfective Sanctification

The rapture or resurrection of the church will complete the believer’s sanctification in the sense that the church age believer will be perfected in a resurrection body at that time, which completes the process of sanctification which God began at the moment of their justification through the baptism of the Spirit.

The church age believer’s “sanctification” is directly related to the baptism of the Spirit. “Sanctification” is a technical theological term for the believer who has been set apart through the

baptism of the Spirit at the moment of conversion in order to serve God exclusively and is accomplished in three stages: (1) Positional (2) Experiential (3) Perfective.

Sanctification deals with conforming the believer to the holiness of God and reproducing it in the believer. The moment the believer was declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit caused the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, His spiritual and physical death, His burial, resurrection and session. It also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The baptism of the Spirit results in positional sanctification and the potential to experience sanctification in time and the guarantee of perfective sanctification at the resurrection of the church (Rom. 6:1-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27).

By positional, I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ since at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ, identifying him with Christ's crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1).

"Positional sanctification" is the believer's "entrance" into the plan of God for the church age resulting in eternal security as well as two categories of positional truth (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:26-27; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Romans 6:3, 8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).

"Retroactive" positional truth is the church age believer's identification with Christ in His death and burial (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:12). In other words, when Christ died God considers the believer to have died with Him.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption. (NASB95)

Colossians 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (NASB95)

"Current" positional truth is the church age believer's identification with Christ in His resurrection, ascension and session (See Ephesians 2:4-6; Colossians 3:1-4). In other words, when Christ was raised and seated at the right hand of the Father, the Father considers the believer to have been raised and seated with Christ as well.

Colossians 3:1 Therefore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each and every one of you have been raised up with Christ and we agree that this is true. Then, continue to make it your habit of diligently seeking after the things above, where Christ is, as an

eternal spiritual truth existing in a state of being seated at God's right hand. 2 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of concentrating on the things above, not on the things on earth 3 because each and every one of you has died. Consequently, the life of each and every one of you is concealed with Christ by means of the power of God the Father. 4 When Christ, the life of each and every one of you, enters into the state of being revealed, then, at that time, each and every one of you will, as a certainty be revealed with Him in a state of glory. (My translation)

"Positional sanctification": (1) What God has done for the church age believer. (2) His viewpoint of the church age believer. (3) Sets up the potential to experience sanctification in time. (4) Provides the believer with the guarantee of receiving a resurrection body.

"Experiential sanctification" is the function of the church age believer's spiritual life in time through obedience to the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God (John 17:17; Romans 6:19, 22; 2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7; 1 Timothy 2:15).

The will of the Father is for the believer to obey the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God that they have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ, which constitutes experiencing sanctification.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

"Experiential sanctification" is the post-justification experience of the believer who is in fellowship with God by confessing any known sin to the Father when necessary followed by obedience to the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the Word of God.

Experiential sanctification is only a *potential* since it is contingent upon the church age believer responding to what God has done for them at the moment of conversion, therefore, only believers who are obedient to the Word of God will experience sanctification in time.

The believer who experiences sanctification is walking in "**newness of life**" and they do this by obeying the teaching of the Word of God, which states that the believer has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ and which teaching is inspired by the Holy Spirit (See Romans 6).

The believer can experience this victory and deliverance by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that they have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ (Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17). This is what Paul did.

The believer's faith in the teaching of the Word of God that they have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ will express itself in obedience, which results in the believer experiencing sanctification.

The believer who appropriates by faith the teaching of the Word of God that they have been crucified, died and buried with Christ will experience deliverance from the lust patterns of the old sin nature.

Galatians 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (NASB95)

The believer is to consider the members of their body to be dead to these lust patterns of the old sin nature since they were crucified at the cross and they have died with Christ.

Colossians 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified so that the believer might not live for the lusts of the old sin nature but for the will of God (See 1 Peter 4:1-3).

Prior to justification, the believer was enslaved to the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature since they were under spiritual death meaning they had no capacity to experience fellowship with God (See Ephesians 2:1-3).

At the moment of conversion, through the baptism of the Spirit, the omnipotence of the Spirit identified the believer with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session (See Romans 6:4-7; Ephesians 2:4-6).

Also, at the moment of conversion, God gave the believer a new divine nature that gives them the capacity to experience deliverance from the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature (See 2 Peter 1:4).

Galatians 3:27 For all of you who were identified with Christ have clothed yourselves with the nature of Christ. (Author's translation)

1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new spiritual species; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB95)

2 Peter 1:4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (NASB95)

1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (NASB95)

The new Christ nature that indwells every believer is the holiness of God and is perfectly holy just as Christ is and thus cannot sin. Believers sin because they choose to obey the temptations of the old sin nature and the lies of Satan's cosmic system. The new Christ nature provides the believer the capacity to experience the holiness of God in their life and Christ-likeness is the production or the result of having a lifestyle of living in the new Christ nature.

The new Christ nature functions when the believer is obedient to the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God and constitutes putting on the new man or the new self or new nature.

Ephesians 4:24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (NASB95)

Fruit bearing, i.e. Christ-like character is the result of experiencing the holiness of God, which is synonymous with “experiential sanctification” since the believer cannot experience fellowship with a holy God unless they are holy.

Sanctification is experiencing the holiness of God or in other words manifesting the character of God through one’s thoughts, words and actions. Since the believer has been crucified with Christ and has died with Him, the believer is commanded to consider himself or herself dead to the sin nature.

Romans 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

Therefore, since the believer has been crucified, died and buried with Christ and has been raised and seated with Him and has been given a new divine nature, they are commanded to abstain from the various lust patterns of the old sin nature, which wage war against the believer’s soul and is to flee them.

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (NASB95)

The believer is prohibited from obeying the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature and is commanded to put on the nature of Christ, which is accomplished by obeying the Word of Christ and this constitutes walking by means of the Spirit (See Romans 6:12-13; 13:14; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 4:17-24).

The believer sins because they choose to disobey the teaching of the Word of God that their sin nature was crucified with Christ at the Cross and thus allows the sin nature to control and influence their soul so that they produce mental, verbal and overt acts of sin (See James 1:13-15).

The believer’s sin nature will not be totally eradicated until they physically die or when the rapture of the church takes place when the believer will receive a resurrection body to replace the body they now have, which contains the old sin nature (See 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Philippians 3:20-21).

In the meantime, the believer has a battle raging within him since they have two natures, which are diametrically opposed to one another and they must choose between the two since the old sin nature wars against the Spirit.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (NASB95)

Having died with Christ and being raised with Christ and possessing the new Christ-nature sets the Christian free from the old Adamic nature. The believer utilizes the new Christ-nature by obeying the Word of God, which constitutes experiencing fellowship with God (1 John 2:3-5) and walking by means of the Spirit since the Spirit speaks to the believer through the Word of God.

Galatians 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (NASB95)

The believer loses fellowship through obeying the sin nature and committing personal sins. However, he is restored through the confession of sin (1 John 1:9).

1 John 1:9 If any of us does at any time confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing. (Author's translation)

This fellowship is maintained by bringing one's thoughts into obedience to the teaching of Jesus Christ, which constitutes obeying the commands of Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by means of the Spirit and Colossians 3:16 to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in their soul since both produce the same results.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior, but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

Therefore, obedience to the Word of God will enable the believer to experience fellowship with God, which is synonymous with experiencing sanctification.

1 John 2:5 But, whoever, at any time does observe conscientiously His Word, indeed, in this one, the love for the one and only God is accomplished. By means of this we can confirm that we are at this particular moment in fellowship with Him. (Author's translation)

This obedience constitutes loving the Lord.

John 14:15 If you love Me, you will observe conscientiously My commandments. (Author's translation)

So, this battle rages between the flesh, the sin nature and the Spirit. The believer's soul is a battleground. The battle in the soul is related to whether they will live for self in the old sin nature or live for God in the new nature. Paul relates this battle in his own life as a believer in Romans 7:14-25.

“Experiential” sanctification is experiencing the holiness or in other words manifesting the character of God through one’s thoughts, words and actions (1 Peter 1:14-16).

“Perfective sanctification” is the perfection of the church age believer’s spiritual life at the rapture, i.e. resurrection of the church, which is the completion of the plan of God for the church age believer (1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Galatians 6:8; 1 Peter 5:10; John 6:40). It is the *guarantee* of a resurrection body and will be experienced by every believer regardless of their response in time to what God has done for them at salvation.

All three stages of sanctification refer to the process of conforming the believer into the image of Jesus Christ, which is the Father’s plan from eternity past (Romans 8:28-30).

The Rapture and Perfective Salvation

The rapture or resurrection of the church will also complete the believer’s salvation in the sense that they will be perfected in a resurrection body at that time.

The doctrine of salvation in the Bible is of course an extremely important one and very often misunderstood. For many Christians salvation is simply understood in relation to justification. In other words, they only think of it in relation to the sinner receiving eternal salvation through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. However, the Scriptures teach that it involves much more than this since they teach that it is accomplished in stages. The first stage occurs at the moment of conversion or in other words, justification. The second occurs when the Christian is experiencing fellowship with God or in other words, experiencing their sanctification. The final stage takes place when the Christian receives their resurrection body at the rapture of the church.

The nature of salvation is also misunderstood by Christians today in the sense that when they think of being saved, they think it is only about receiving eternal life and the forgiveness of sins. They often don’t understand that salvation in the Bible speaks of deliverance. The Scriptures teach that salvation is deliverance from eternal condemnation. It is also a deliverance from being condemned by the Law. Furthermore, it is a deliverance from spiritual death, the sin nature, personal sins, the devil and his cosmic system. At the moment of their conversion or we can say justification the Christian was delivered from all these things in a positional sense. They initially experience this deliverance at their conversion but lose this experience by committing sin. Confession of sin restores them to fellowship which is maintained by obedience to the Word of God. They can experience this deliverance in time after their conversion through fellowship. They will experience this deliverance in a perfective sense when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture of the church.

Our Lord’s death and resurrection provided the entire human race deliverance from the sin nature, spiritual death, personal sins, eternal condemnation, condemnation from failing to keep the Law perfectly, Satan and his cosmic system. The sinner appropriates this deliverance by exercising faith in Jesus Christ which results in the Holy Spirit identifying them with Christ in His death and resurrection.

As we noted, the Christian’s salvation, i.e. his deliverance is also accomplished in three stages: (1) positional (2) experiential (3) perfective or ultimate. Like the church age believer’s sanctification, their deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system is accomplished in three stages:

(1) Positional: At the moment the believer exercised faith alone in Christ alone, they were delivered “positionally” from spiritual death and eternal condemnation, the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 19:9; John 4:22; Acts 4:12; 13:26, 47; 16:17; Romans 1:16; 10:1, 10; 11:11; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 1:13; Philippians 1:28; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:10; 5:9; 6:9; 1 Peter 1:9-10; 2 Peter 3:15; Jude 3; Revelation 7:10).

By “positionally,” I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ, which was accomplished at the moment of conversion through the Baptism of the Spirit when the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit placed the believer in an eternal union with Christ. In other words, the “positional” aspect of the believer’s salvation refers to the past action of God saving us from sin, Satan, his cosmic system and eternal condemnation when they trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The believer’s deliverance positionally sets up the “potential” for them to experience this deliverance in time since this deliverance can only be experienced after justification through obedience to the teaching of the Word of God. It also guarantees the believer’s ultimate deliverance at the rapture, which is based upon the sovereign decision of God rather than the volition of the believer.

(2) Experiential: After justification, the believer can “experience” deliverance from the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that they have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ. This constitutes the believer’s spiritual life after being delivered from spiritual death (2 Corinthians 1:6; 7:10; Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Philippians 2:12; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17; 2 Timothy 2:10; 3:15; Hebrews 2:3, 10; 1 Peter 2:2). In other words, the “experiential” aspect of salvation is used of the believer’s deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system in the present moment.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 4:16 Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. (NASB95)

In this verse, the verb *sozo* refers to Timothy experiencing his deliverance from sin and Satan and his cosmic system by obeying Paul’s previous command to continue making it his habit of persevering in exemplifying Christ-like character, which is the direct result of obeying the first command in 1 Timothy 4:16. Timothy will continue to exemplify Christ-like character by obeying this first command to continue making it his habit of paying attention to himself, i.e. his character and conduct. Consequently, by obeying these two commands he will experience his deliverance from sin and Satan.

The verb also refers to those who adhere to Timothy’s teaching experiencing their deliverance from sin and Satan as well. They will experience this deliverance if Timothy obeys the second command in 1

Timothy 4:16 to continue making it his habit of persevering in teaching sound doctrine. This second command is the direct of the first command, which called for Timothy to continue making it his habit of paying attention to his teaching. Thus, if Timothy teaches sound doctrine, his listeners will experience their deliverance from sin and Satan as well.

(3) Perfective: At the resurrection the believer will be delivered “in a perfective sense” and permanently from the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature when he receives his resurrection body at the rapture of the church, which is imminent (Romans 13:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9; Hebrews 1:14; 9:28; 1 Peter 1:5). In other words, the “perfective” aspect of salvation is used of the believer’s future deliverance from sin, Satan and his cosmic system (Philippians 3:20-21).

Just as in the believer’s sanctification, their deliverance positionally sets up the “potential” for them to experience this deliverance in time since this deliverance can only be experienced after conversion through obedience to the teaching of the Word of God through the enabling power of the Spirit. It also guarantees the believer’s ultimate deliverance at the rapture.

The believer can experience their deliverance from sin, spiritual death, Satan and his cosmic system through the omnipotence of the Spirit by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that they have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ (Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17).

The Scriptures teach that each and every member of the human race is a sinner by nature and practice as a result of Adam’s original sin in the Garden of Eden (Rom. 1:18-3:18; 5:12-21). Adam’s sin gave him and his progeny a sin nature. Also, Adam and his progeny were spiritually dead. Even more terrible the sin nature and spiritual death would result in eternal condemnation in the eternal lake of fire since God is holy and cannot tolerate sin or sinners. Thus, the entire human race was in an absolutely terrible predicament.

However, God in His grace provided the solution for all these problems through His Son Jesus Christ’s spiritual and physical deaths on the cross as well as His resurrection. This deliverance is available to each and every member of the human race since Jesus Christ’s spiritual and physical deaths on the cross and His resurrection were on behalf of each and every member of the human race. The Christian is a sinner who has received this great deliverance through faith in Jesus Christ. In other words, the Christian receives this deliverance as a gift from God based upon the merits of the object of their faith, Jesus Christ.

The Guarantee of a Resurrection Body Motivates Holy Living

As we have noted, the New Testament teaches that the believer’s identification with Jesus Christ in His resurrection guarantees that they will receive a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. They also teach that this guarantee should motivate the believer to experience their sanctification and salvation, or in other words, it should motivate them to make it their habit of living in fellowship with the triune God. This in turn will result in experience the holiness of God in their life. There are several passages in the New Testament which teach this, namely Romans 6:1-23, 13:11-14, Colossians 3:1-17 and 1 John 3:1-3.

Romans 6:1-23

In Romans 6, the apostle Paul teaches the Roman Christians how to resist the desires of the sin nature and live in the new nature. In this passage, he teaches that how to experience their sanctification. He also teaches that they must now appropriate by faith their identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection in order to experience victory over the indwelling Adamic sin nature. Related to this, he teaches the Roman Christian community that their identification with Jesus Christ in His resurrection which guarantees them a resurrection body should motivate them to appropriate by faith this identification in order to experience victory over sin. This will result in experiencing their sanctification which is equivalent to experiencing the holiness of God in one's life.

In Romans 6:1-2a, Paul emphatically rejects the idea that a Christian living under the dominion of the sin nature accentuates the grace of God.

Romans 6:1-2a Therefore, what is the conclusion that we are forced to? Should we persist in living under the dominion of the sin nature in order that grace might increase? Absolutely not! (Author's translation)

In Romans 5:20b, Paul taught that where personal sin increased, God's grace infinitely abounded. Then, in Romans 6:1, he poses the rhetorical question that presents the concept of a believer persisting in living under the dominion of the sin nature in order that God's grace might increase in the sense of giving God more opportunity to manifest His grace through the forgiveness of sins. In Romans 6:2a, he emphatically rejects this idea. Then, in Romans 6:2b, Paul poses another rhetorical question that demands a negative response and rejects the idea of the believer persisting to live in under the dominion of the sin nature in order that God's grace might increase or manifest itself more often.

Romans 6:2b Absolutely not! We, who are indeed of such character and of a particular class of individuals, have died with reference to the sin nature, how shall we still live under its dominion? (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:3, he speaks of the justified sinner being identified with Christ in His spiritual and physical deaths so as to solve the believer's problem of being spiritually dead.

Romans 6:3 Or, are some of you in a state of ignorance concerning the fact that all of us who have been identified with Christ, who is Jesus, have been identified with His death? (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 6:4, he speaks of the justified sinner being identified with Christ in His physical death so as to solve the problem of possessing a sin nature.

Romans 6:4 Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism with respect to His physical death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead ones through the glory of the Father, in the same way, we, ourselves will also walk in the realm of an extraordinary life. (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:5, the apostle teaches that the justified sinner is identified with Christ in His resurrection in order that the believer might receive a resurrection body like the last Adam, Christ so as to replace his sinful body.

Romans 6:5 Therefore, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that we are entered into union with Him, conformed to His physical death. Of course, we believe this is true. Then, certainly, we will also be united with Him, conformed to His resurrection. (Author's translation)

This identification with Christ in His resurrection guarantees the believer a resurrection body. This in turn is to motivate the believer to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His death and resurrection in order to experience their sanctification which is equivalent to experiencing the holiness of God in one's life.

In Romans 6:6, we studied that the believer's old Adamic sin nature has been crucified at the Cross in order that it might be deprived of its power so that the believer might not be its slave.

Romans 6:6 This we are very familiar with through instruction, namely, that our old man was crucified with Him in order that the sinful body would be deprived of its power with the result that we are no longer in a perpetual state of being slaves to the sin nature. (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:7, Paul teaches that the believer is freed from the tyranny of the indwelling old Adamic sin nature because he has died with Christ as a result of having been identified with Christ in His physical death through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 6:7 For you see the one who has died is freed from the power of the sin nature. (Author's translation)

Paul instructs the Roman believers in Romans 6:8 that since they have died with Christ through the baptism of the Spirit, they will as a certainty, in the future, at the resurrection, i.e. rapture of the church live with Christ in the sense that they will receive a resurrection body like Christ.

Romans 6:8 Now, as previously stated, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that we have died with Him. Of course, we have already established that this is true. Then, we do have this absolute confidence that we, as a certainty, will in the future also live with Him. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 6:9, he teaches that physical death no longer has dominion over Jesus Christ because He has been raised from the dead. The implication of this is that if physical death no longer has any control over Christ, then neither does the sin nature, which resides in the physical bodies, have dominion over the believer who is identified with Christ in His physical death and resurrection.

Romans 6:9 Because we know for certain, namely that because Christ was raised from the dead ones, He can never again, as an eternal spiritual truth, die. Death can never again, as an eternal spiritual truth, have dominion over Him. (Author's translation)

Paul in Romans 6:10 instructs the believers in Rome that the Lord Jesus Christ died physically for the destruction of the sin nature but now lives to God.

Romans 6:10 For you see, the physical death that He died, He died for the destruction of the sin nature once and for all but the life that He now lives, He lives forever for the benefit of God the Father. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 6:11, the apostle Paul commands the Roman believers to regard themselves as dead with respect to the sin nature but alive with respect to God in union with Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:11 In the same way, also, on the one hand, all of you without exception make it your habit to regard yourselves as dead ones with respect to the sin nature while on the other hand those who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, alive with respect to God the Father, in union with Christ, who is Jesus. (Author's translation)

To consider oneself as dead to the sin nature and alive to God demands that the believer appropriate by faith their identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection. In other words, to consider oneself as dead to the sin nature and alive to God is equivalent to appropriating faith this identification.

Then, in Romans 6:12, Paul prohibits the believers in Rome from letting the sin nature reign as king in their bodies with the result that they obey its lusts.

Romans 6:12 Therefore, do not make it a habit to let the sin nature reign as king in your mortal body with the result that you habitually obey its lusts. (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:13a, Paul prohibits the Roman believers from placing the members of their bodies at the disposal of the sin nature as instruments of unrighteousness and commands them instead to place the members of their body at the disposal of the Father as instruments of righteousness. Then, in Romans 6:13b, he commands the believers in Rome to place the members of their body at the disposal of the Father as instruments of righteousness.

Romans 6:13 Nor, all of you place the members of your body at the disposal and benefit of the sin nature as instruments, which produce unrighteousness but rather I solemnly charge all of you to place yourselves at the disposal and benefit of God the Father as those who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, alive from the dead ones and in addition your members as instruments, which produce righteousness for the benefit of God the Father and do it now! (Author's translation)

Paul teaches the believers in Rome in Romans 6:14 that the sin nature is not to be their master since they were no longer under law, but under God's grace.

Romans 6:14 For the sin nature, will, as a certainty, never again, have dominion over all of you for all of you, as an eternal spiritual truth, are by no means under the authority and dominion of the Law but rather under the authority and dominion of grace. (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:15, in response to any possible misconceptions regarding his teaching in Romans 6:14 by those Jews who insist that the Law is necessary to restrain sin and those Christians who might

erroneously conclude that grace is a license to sin, Paul emphatically rejects any idea that grace is a license to sin.

Romans 6:15 What shall we conclude then? Should we commit an act of sin because we, as an eternal spiritual truth, are by no means under the authority and dominion of the Law but rather under the authority and dominion of grace? Absolutely not! (Author's translation)

Romans 6:16 emphasizes that there is no compromise with sin now that the Christian is no longer under the Law but under God's grace policy. He is either a slave to the sin nature, which results in temporal spiritual death, i.e. loss of fellowship with God or he is a slave to obedience to the Father's will, which results in the believer experiencing the divine righteousness imputed to him the moment he exercised faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Romans 6:16 Are you totally unaware concerning this fact, namely that the one whom you desire to place yourselves at the disposal of as slaves for obedience, you will be slaves for the benefit of this one whom you desire to obey, either the sin nature resulting in temporal spiritual death or obedience to the Father's will resulting in righteousness? (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:17, Paul thanks God the Father because the Roman believers were once perpetual slaves to the sin nature but then they obeyed the gospel and as a result were delivered positionally from the tyranny of the sin nature.

Romans 6:17 But now, thank God! Because all of you were once in a perpetual state of being slaves to the sin nature but then all of you obeyed from the heart that particular doctrinal standard with respect to which all of you were taught. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 6:18a, he teaches the Christians in Rome that they were freed from the sin nature through their obedience to the gospel. He teaches in Romans 6:18b that they were enslaved to God through their obedience to the gospel.

Romans 6:18 And also, because having been set free from the tyranny of the sin nature, all of you became slaves of righteousness. (Author's translation)

In Romans 6:19, the apostle Paul commands the believers in Rome to present the members of their bodies as slaves to righteousness just as they presented the members of their bodies as slaves to impurity and lawlessness prior to being declared justified through faith in Christ.

Romans 6:19 I am speaking according to your human frame of reference because of the weakness, which is your flesh. Therefore, just as all of you placed your members as slaves at the disposal of and with respect to that which is impurity and in addition with respect to that which is lawlessness resulting in further lawlessness, in the same way, now, I solemnly charge all of you to place your members as slaves at the disposal of and with respect to righteousness resulting in sanctification and do it now! (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 6:20, Paul explain why the Roman Christians should obey the command to place their members as slaves at the disposal of and with respect to God who as to His nature is righteousness.

Romans 6:20 For you see, when all of you were once in a perpetual state of being slaves to the sin nature, all of you were in a perpetual state of being free with respect to righteousness. (Author's translation)

Next, in Romans 6:21, Paul poses a rhetorical question to the Christians in Rome reminding them that prior to their conversion to Christianity that their actions of which they now were ashamed only served to perpetuate their status of being spiritually dead.

Romans 6:21 Therefore, what benefit were all of you at that time in a perpetual state of possessing because of those things, which all of you are now at the present time ashamed of? In fact, the result produced by these things is, as an eternal spiritual truth spiritual death. (Author's translation)

Then, the apostle Paul in Romans 6:22 teaches that because the Roman Christians have been freed from the sin nature and enslaved to God, the benefit that they now possess is that of being a servant of God rather than the sin nature, which results in sanctification and eternal life.

Romans 6:22 But now, at the present time, because all of you have been set free from the tyranny of the sin nature and because all of you have become slaves to God the Father all of you at the present time possess your benefit (of being a servant of God) resulting in sanctification and the result, eternal life. (Author's translation)

Notice that Paul is teaching that the believer will experience not only eternal life but also their sanctification as a result of appropriating by faith their identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection. This act of faith demands considering oneself dead to the sin nature and alive to God because one's identification with Him in these two events in Jesus Christ's life.

Romans 6:23, Paul teaches that the wages of sin is spiritual death resulting in physical death and ultimately the second death in the eternal lake of fire but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23 For you see the sin nature pays out spiritual death however God the Father graciously gives eternal life in the Person of Christ, who is Jesus, our Lord. (Author's translation)

Romans 13:11-14

In Romans 13:11-14, the apostle Paul teaches the Roman Christian community that they must practice the command to love their neighbor as themselves in light of the imminency of the resurrection of the church when each one of them will receive a resurrection body.

Paul in Romans 13:11 commands his Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of loving their neighbor as themselves as a result of what he taught in Romans 13:8-10 that loving one's neighbor fulfills the requirements of the Mosaic Law.

In this passage, he teaches that they are to continue obeying this command because they are well aware of the significance of the period of history in which they were living in, namely, they were living in the church age preceding the imminent return of Christ at the rapture. This period he teaches is

characterized by urgency and opportunity for them, demanding immediate action on their part in that they can gain rewards for obeying the command to love your neighbor as yourself.

The apostle also teaches in this passage that it is now already the moment for his readers to be awake spiritually. To awake from spiritual sleep refers to the confession of sins to be restored to fellowship with God and maintaining that fellowship by obedience to the Word of God.

Lastly, he teaches that it is now already the moment for Paul's readers to be awake spiritually because their deliverance from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system at the rapture of the church is now nearer to taking place than when they first became Christians.

Romans 13:11 So then, all of continue making it your habit of practicing this because all of you are well aware of the significance of this particular period of history characterized by urgency and opportunity, demanding immediate action, namely that, it is now already the moment for each and every one of you to be awake from sleep because our deliverance is now nearer to taking place than when we believed. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 13:12 Paul informs his readers that the night has drawn to a close and the day is approaching. He then draws an inference from these two statements by exhorting his readers to lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:12 The night has drawn to a close. Indeed, the day is approaching. Therefore, let us for the duration continue to lay aside for ourselves the activities, which characterize the kingdom of darkness. Indeed, let us for the duration continue to clothe ourselves with the weapons, which characterize those belonging to the kingdom of light. (Author's translation)

This passage contains four sections. The first statement “**the night has drawn to a close**” teaches that the period in which the church age believer is not in his or her resurrection body and is living during a period of history in which Satan is the god of this world has drawn to a close.

The second statement “**the day is approaching**” emphasizes with Paul's readers that the period of time when each and every one of them is living in their resurrection body and is permanently delivered from living in Satan's cosmic system is approaching or is imminent. This period begins for the believer with the rapture of the church and will never end and will go on throughout eternity future.

The third statement is an exhortation “**Therefore, let us for the duration continue to lay aside for ourselves the activities, which characterize those who belong to the kingdom of darkness**” which is making an inference from these previous two statements.

This inferential exhortation involves the confession of sin (1 John 1:9) to be restored to fellowship with God since the noun *ergon*, “**deeds**” refers to activities and the noun *skotos*, “**darkness**” refers to those who belong to the kingdom of darkness. They were to continue to confess their sins, keeping short accounts with God the Father during this interim period prior to being permanently delivered by the return of Christ at the rapture.

The fourth and final statement in Romans 13:12 “**Indeed, let us for the duration continue to clothe ourselves with the weapons, which characterize those who belong to the kingdom of light**” speaks

of the believer appropriating by faith his union and identification with Christ. This statement speaks of the act of the church age believer exercising faith in the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God that they are crucified with Christ, died, buried, raised and seated with Him.

The expression “**armor of light**” refers to the Christian's union and identification with Christ but from the perspective that it gives the believer victory over spiritual and physical death, personal sins, the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system.

The believer's identification with Christ in His crucifixion, spiritual and physical deaths, burial, resurrection and session when appropriated by faith gives them the victory experientially over spiritual and physical death, the sin nature, personal sins and Satan and his policy of evil promoted and propagated by his cosmic system.

In this final statement in Romans 13:12 Paul is contrasting those who belong to the kingdom of light and those who belong to the kingdom of darkness. This antithesis between light and darkness used often by the apostle in his writings (2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:8, 11; Colossians 1:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:4-5, 8) and is used by John (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35; 1 John 1:5; 2:8-9).

The apostle Paul in Romans 13:13 exhorts his readers to unite with him in conducting their lives properly as those who exist in the day, not by means of drunken parties, licentious promiscuity and jealous contention.

Romans 13:13 Let us for the duration continue to conduct our lives properly as those who, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist in the state of being in the day, not by means of drunken parties, not by means of licentious promiscuity, not by means of jealous contention. (Author's translation)

“**The day**” refers again to the period of time when each and every church age believer is living in his or her resurrection body and is permanently delivered from living in Satan's cosmic system. This period begins for the believer with the rapture of the church and will never end and will go on throughout eternity future. Therefore, when Paul exhorts his readers to unite with him in conducting their lives as those who exist in the day he means that they are to conduct themselves as those who are positionally resurrected with Christ and delivered from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system. They are also to conduct themselves as those who exist in the day ultimately meaning they are to conduct themselves as those who will ultimately be resurrected and will be permanently delivered from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system at the rapture.

Then, to complete the verse he lists three pairs of vices that Christians are to avoid. They are not to conduct their lives by means of drunken parties, licentious promiscuity and jealous contention.

In Romans 13:14, the apostle Paul in this passage issues a command and a prohibition.

Romans 13:14 But rather, I solemnly charge all of you to make it your top priority to clothe yourselves with the Lord, who is Jesus, who is Christ. Also, all of you continue the discipline of not allowing yourselves to make provision with regards to the lusts produced by the flesh. (Author's translation)

In the command, Paul solemnly charges the Roman Christians to clothe themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. This refers to appropriating by faith the teaching of the Spirit in the Word of God that the Christian is union with Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, His spiritual and physical deaths, His resurrection and session. Then, in the prohibition, he wants his readers to continue not allowing themselves to make provision with respect to the desires produced by the flesh, i.e. the sin nature.

Colossians 3:1-14

In Colossians 3:1-4, the apostle Paul taught the Colossian Christian community that they are identified with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection. Then, in Colossians 3:5-14, he brings out the implication of this identification with regards to their lifestyle.

Colossians 3:1 Therefore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each and every one of you have been raised up with Christ and we agree that this is true. Then, continue to make it your habit of diligently seeking after the things above, where Christ is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in a state of being seated at God's right hand. (Author's translation)

The first class conditional statement in Colossians 3:1 is an inference from the protasis of a first class conditional statement in Colossians 2:20, which was designed to persuade the faithful Christians in Colossae to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His death. The purpose of doing so was to reject the teaching of the Judaizers who misinterpreted, misapplied, and misused the Mosaic Law and communicated their own man-made traditions. The apodosis of this first class condition presents the logical inference from the protasis which serves to persuade the Colossians to reject the teaching of the Judaizers. The first class condition is thus serving to persuade the Colossians to respond to the conclusion found in the apodosis that they must reject the false teaching of the Judaizers based upon the premise since this teaching is impotent when dealing with the indwelling Adamic sin nature.

Now, in Colossians 3:1, we have another first class conditional statement which is designed to persuade these faithful Christians in Colossae to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His resurrection in order to live the Christian way of life. This first class condition is tied to the one in Colossians 2:20 with the latter speaking of the Colossians' identification with Christ in His death and the former with His resurrection. Both form the basis of the Christian way of life. Christ died and was raised in order for the Christian to live a life of holiness, to grow to spiritual maturity and to produce good works which are pleasing to the Father.

Thus, the protasis of a first class condition in Colossians 3:1 is resuming Paul's thought from Colossians 2:20 where he uses a first class conditional statement to persuade them to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His death. This identification freed them from the power of the sin nature, Satan, and his cosmic system and the Law. This is why Paul used this identification to address the problem of the Judaizers teaching regarding the purity regulations of the Law.

Now, in Colossians 3:1, Paul is linking this identification with Christ in His death with the Colossians' identification with Christ in His resurrection. The latter linked them with the new creation and the life of God. Therefore, Paul is persuading the Colossians that they must appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His resurrection to live the Christian way of life while simultaneously

appropriating by faith their identification with Christ in His death to deal with the false teaching of the Judaizers. So the inference in Colossians 3:1 indicates that the Colossians have died with Christ, “therefore,” they have been raised with Christ. He says this same exact thing in Romans 6:5 and 8.

Just as Jesus Christ’s death is meaningless without His resurrection so the Christian’s identification with Christ in His death is meaningless without their being identified with Him in His resurrection. The reason for this is that His resurrection vindicated Him in the sense that it demonstrated the Father had accepted His work on the cross to deal with the problem of personal sins, the sin nature, spiritual and physical death, enslavement to Satan and his kingdom, and condemnation from the Law. Therefore, for this reason, the reference to the Colossians’ identification with Christ in His resurrection in Colossians 3:1 is an inference from the protasis in Colossians 2:20 which affirmed the Colossians’ identification with Christ in His death. There is no victory over sin and Satan without the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Some have argued that the inference in Colossians 3:1 is from Paul’s teaching recorded in Colossians 2:12-13 since both identifications are mentioned in the verses. This has merit. Others are convinced it is an inference from Paul’s teaching in Colossians 2:20-23. This would mean that the Colossians were to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ based upon the fact that the Judaizers’ insistence on adherence to the dietary regulations of the Law are impotent to deliver them from sin since they have died with Christ with reference to the Law. This too has merit. Others are of the conviction this is an inference from Colossians 2:8-23. This would mean that since the Judaizers’ teaching is powerless to deliver from sin and Satan, the Colossians were to seek the things above. This too has merit. However, Paul draws an inference in Colossians 2:16 from his teaching in Colossians 2:8-15. Also, the command in Colossians 2:18 is inferred implicitly from Colossians 2:16-17. So, it is more likely that Colossians 3:1 is an inference from his teaching in Colossians 2:20 and specifically his reference to the Colossians’ identification with Christ in His death. When Paul refers to dying with Christ, he never does so without also mentioning being raised with Christ. This is illustrated in Colossians 2:12-13 and in Romans 6:3-5. Identification with Christ in His death is powerless to deliver from sin and Satan by itself without identification with Christ in His resurrection since the latter demonstrated the Father had accepted His death to solve the problem with sin and Satan.

The first class conditional statement in Colossians 3:1 indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. The protasis asserts “if and let assume that it is true for the sake argument that each and every one of you Colossians have been raised up with Christ.” This is a responsive first class condition. This would mean that the Colossians would agree with Paul’s premise since they were familiar with his teaching regarding their identification with Christ in His resurrection since Epaphras communicated this teaching to them. Also, he referred to this identification in Colossians 2:12-13 as well as their identification with Christ in His death. The apodosis is “then continue to make it your habit of diligently seeking after the things above, where Christ is, as an eternal spiritual exists in a state of being seated at the right hand of God.” The relationship between the protasis and the apodosis is evidence and inference. The evidence is that the Colossians have been identified with Christ in His resurrection through the baptism of the Spirit. The inference is that the Colossians must keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

These faithful Christians in Colossae whom Paul was addressing in this epistle were already obeying this command in Colossians 3:1. This is indicated by two passages in this epistle. First, if you recall, in Colossians 1:3-5, the apostle Paul informed these faithful Christians in Colossae that he gave thanks to the Father in prayer for them after hearing about their faith in Jesus Christ and that they were practicing

the love of God with one another. Then, in Colossians 2:5, he asserts that he was rejoicing over the fact that they were disciplined and specifically their dedication which was produced by their faith with regards to their union and identification with Jesus Christ.

So, in Colossians 3:1, with the first class conditional statement, Paul is seeking to persuade the Colossians to continue remaining faithful to the gospel and continue rejecting the teaching of the Judaizers as well as to live the Christian way of life. He does this by reaffirming something both he and the Colossians were both convinced of, namely that they were identified with Christ in His resurrection. So, based upon the fact that they were identified with Christ in His resurrection, Paul wants the Colossians to continue making it their habit of diligently seeking after the things above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. What Paul is commanding the Colossians to do is to continue making it their habit of diligently, earnestly, and tenaciously seeking after Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and present session at the right hand of the Father. This would involve appropriating by faith this identification with Christ.

“The things above” is a reference to the spiritual values and holy standards which characterize God and His people and which standards are met by the believer when they appropriate by faith their identification with Christ. It is also related to the spiritual blessings associated with the believer’s union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session.

Thus, Paul is exhorting the Colossians to make every effort to experience their sanctification which would be the result of appropriating by faith their identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This would fulfill a two-fold purpose: (1) To experience the spiritual blessings associated with this union and identification resulting in the glorification of the Father and spiritual growth. (2) To experience and manifest God’s holy standards and values in the Christian’s life.

So, he is teaching the Colossians that they must live their lives on earth consistent with whom God made each of them to be. In other words, they must live their lives on earth in a manner which is consistent with their union and identification with Christ.

Colossians 3:2 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of concentrating on the things above, not on the things on earth. (Author’s translation)

The apostle Paul solemnly issues the faithful Christians in Colossae another command in addition to the previous one in Colossians 3:1 which required them to continue making it their habit of diligently seeking after the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of the Father. Now, here in verse 2, he is ordering them to continue making it their habit of concentrating on or being preoccupied with the things above. Then, he follows this with a prohibition to continue making it their habit of not concentrating on the things on earth.

“The things above” in verses 1 and 2 are a reference to the spiritual values and holy standards which characterize God and His people and which standards are met by the believer when they appropriate by faith their identification with Christ. It is also related to the spiritual blessings associated with the believer’s union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session. Thus, in verse 1, Paul is exhorting the Colossians to make every effort to experience their sanctification which would be the result of appropriating by faith their identification with Christ in His

crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This would fulfill a two-fold purpose: (1) To experience the spiritual blessings associated with this union and identification resulting in the glorification of the Father and spiritual growth. (2) To experience and manifest God's holy standards and values in the Christian's life.

Now, here in verse 2, Paul is exhorting the Colossians to focus their thinking upon these holy or godly standards and values and spiritual blessings related to their union and identification with Christ. On the flip side of this, he does not want them to concentrate on the ungodly standards and values of Satan's cosmic system which govern life on planet earth. So, the command and prohibition in verse 2 emphasizes the critical importance of the Colossians focusing their thinking upon godly standards and values as well as spiritual blessings and rejecting the ungodly standards and values of Satan's cosmic system which promote godless materialism.

Thus, Paul is exhorting the Colossians in verse 2 to focus their thinking on their sanctification. He wants them to concentrate on and be preoccupied with experiencing their sanctification. If they are focusing on the right thing, and upon the godly standards and values associated with their union and identification with Christ, they will be able to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This in turn will enable them to experience the spiritual blessings associated with this union and identification resulting in the glorification of the Father and spiritual growth. It will also enable them to experience and manifest God's holy standards and values in their lives. However, if they are concentrating on or preoccupied with the ungodly standards and values of Satan's cosmic system which govern life on planet earth, then, they will not appropriate by faith their union and identification with Christ.

Concentrating upon heavenly matters involves every aspect of the heart which is composed of a self-conscious, conscience, mentality, emotion and volition. The heart is that aspect of the soul, which circulates thought or mental activity and is where one's frame of reference and memory center resides. It is also the place where one's vocabulary and the classification of thoughts reside as well as the conscience where the norms and standards reside. A person's entire mental attitude circulates in the heart as well as the subconscious where various categories of things that shock or impress from adversity, sin, failure or disappointment are located. Also, it contains the volition, which enables a person to make decisions.

Therefore, to obey Paul's command in verse 2 would require that the Colossians focus their mental activity upon the godly standards and values associated with their union and identification with Christ. It would require them to exercise their volition by appropriating by faith this union and identification which would result in obedience to the commands and prohibitions of Scripture. Their frame of reference and memory center would be saturated with God's Word and thus His holy standards and values if they focus their thinking on this union and identification with Christ. Their vocabulary and the classification of thoughts as well as their conscience where the norms and standards reside would contain godly standards and values by this concentration upon godly matters.

We must understand that this command in verse 2 does not mean that Paul is not saying that the Colossians should neglect their responsibilities on planet earth related to their families and jobs or civil responsibilities. He is not detracting from the importance of the material world and earthly concerns and responsibilities. However, he is rejecting them having a mind-set whose attention, focus and affections are totally immersed with matters on earth. In fact, if the Christian focuses their attention upon the godly

standards and values associated with their union and identification with Christ so that they appropriate by faith this union and identification, it will produce godly character and conduct. This in turn will benefit them in all their relationships with people as well as their responsibilities. It will make them better husbands, wives, children, employers, employees and citizens of their nation.

Colossians 3:2 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of concentrating on the things above, not on the things on earth 3 because each and every one of you has died. Consequently, the life of each and every one of you is concealed with Christ by means of the power of God the Father. (Author's translation)

In Colossians 3:2, the apostle Paul issued the faithful Christians in Colossae a command and a prohibition. The former required that each and every one of them continue making it their habit of concentrating on the things above. The latter required that they not concentrate upon the things on the earth.

“**The things on the earth**” is a reference to the totality of ungodly standards and values of Satan’s cosmic system. On the other hand, “**the things above**” are a reference to the spiritual values and holy standards which characterize God and His people and which standards are met by the believer when they appropriate by faith their identification with Christ. It is also related to the spiritual blessings associated with the believer’s union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session.

Thus, in Colossians 3:2, Paul is exhorting the Colossians to focus their thinking upon these holy or godly standards and values and spiritual blessings related to their union and identification with Christ. On the flip side of this, he does not want them to concentrate on the ungodly standards and values of Satan’s cosmic system which govern life on planet earth. So, the command and prohibition in verse 2 emphasizes the critical importance of the Colossians focusing their thinking upon godly standards and values as well as spiritual blessings and rejecting the ungodly standards and values of Satan’s cosmic system and their promotion godless materialism.

Therefore, Paul is exhorting the Colossians in verse 2 to focus their thinking on their sanctification. He wants them to concentrate on and be preoccupied with experiencing their sanctification. If they are focusing on the right thing, and upon the godly standards and values associated with their union and identification with Christ, they will be able to appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This in turn will enable them to experience the spiritual blessings associated with this union and identification resulting in the glorification of the Father and spiritual growth. It will also enable them to experience and manifest God’s holy standards and values in the Christian’s life. However, if they are concentrating on or preoccupied with the ungodly standards and values of Satan’s cosmic system which govern life on planet earth, then, they will not appropriate by faith their union and identification with Christ.

Now, here in Colossians 3:3, the apostle Paul presents the reason for the command and prohibition in Colossians 3:2 by asserting that the Colossians have died with Christ which speaks of their identification with Christ in His death through the baptism of the Spirit. Then, he presents the logical result of this identification with Christ in His death by asserting that the eternal life of the Colossians is concealed with Christ by means of the omnipotence of the Father. Thus, they are to continue making it their habit of concentrating on the things above and not on the things on earth because they have died with Christ

and consequently their eternal life is concealed with Christ as well by means of the omnipotence of the Father.

The reference to the eternal life of the Colossians being hidden with Christ is a reference to their identification with Christ in His resurrection. This interpretation is supported by Paul's teaching in Romans 6:4 in which he asserts that the Christian has been buried with Christ through baptism in His death so that as Christ was raised from the death through the glory of the Father so to the Christian might walk in new life. Also, in Romans 6:8, he asserts that if the Christian has died with Christ, they will also live with Him. So, the Christian's possession of eternal life is directly related or is the result of their being identified with Christ in His resurrection. They were identified with Christ in His death and resurrection so that they might possess and experience eternal life.

"With Christ" refers of course to the Colossians' identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. When Paul asserts that the Colossians' life was hidden with Christ, he is teaching that their identification with Christ in His death and resurrection which provides them eternal life is spiritual, eternal and invisible to the naked eye. It expresses the idea that the full meaning of the Christian's life has not yet been revealed to them and has not yet been manifested. It also implies that they have eternal security meaning that they can never lose their salvation. The Christian's salvation is safe and secure since it is bound up in their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father and what the Father has brought together through faith in His Son Jesus Christ, no man or angel could ever tear asunder.

Paul's statements in Colossians 3:3 regarding the Colossians' identification with Christ in His death and resurrection echo his statements in Colossians 2:12, 20 and 3:1. In Colossians 2:12 he mentions both identifications but in Colossians 2:20 he only mentions their identification with Christ in His death and in Colossians 3:1 he mentions only their identification with Him in His resurrection. The latter as we noted is inferred from the former. Just as Jesus Christ's death is meaningless without His resurrection so the Christian's identification with Christ in His death is meaningless without their being identified with Him in His resurrection. The reason for this is that His resurrection vindicated Him in the sense that it demonstrated the Father had accepted His work on the cross to deal with the problem of personal sins, the sin nature, spiritual and physical death, enslavement to Satan and his kingdom, and condemnation from the Law. Therefore, for this reason, the reference to the Colossians' identification with Christ in His resurrection in Colossians 3:1 is an inference from the protasis in Colossians 2:20 which affirmed the Colossians' identification with Christ in His death. There is no victory over sin and Satan without the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, the life of each and every one of you, enters into the state of being revealed, then, at that time, each and every one of you will, as a certainty be revealed with Him in a state of glory. (Author's translation)

Colossians 3:4 is a temporal clause which teaches that the revelation of Jesus Christ to the Colossians will take simultaneously with the Colossians being revealed with Christ in a state of glory. This temporal clause is used to present the assertion that Christ will be revealed visibly to the Colossians, but the exact time of that occurrence cannot be established since it is known only to the Father. However, Paul's emphasis is not the particular time when this takes place but rather that this will take place. So, the emphasis with this temporal clause is to encourage the Colossians that they will be

revealed in glory with Christ when He does appear to them. Again, the emphasis is not if Christ will appear to them but that He will appear to them and this will result in their being glorified with Him in a resurrection body. The emphasis is that when Christ enters in the state of being revealed, they will enter into the state of being glorified in a resurrection body.

If you recall, the command in Colossians 3:2 required that each and every one of the Colossians continuing making it their habit of concentrating upon the things above. This verse also contained a prohibition which required that they continue making it their habit of not concentrating upon the things on the earth. The causal clause in verse 3 asserts that the Colossians had died with Christ. Consequently, he asserts that their life is concealed with Christ by means of the Father's power. Now, here in verse 4, Paul asserts that when Christ is revealed, then the Colossians will also be revealed with Him in a state of glory. Consequently, the Colossians, and this is true for all church age believers, must continue to remain faithful to the gospel by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. If the church age believer is guaranteed a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church when Christ appears to the church, then they must continue to live their lives in the meantime in a manner which is consistent with this future event which will take place in all of their lives.

Jesus Christ is described as being the life of the Colossians. He is the Colossians' life for at least two reasons. First, He is eternal life and He indwells the Colossians (cf. Colossians 1:27). Secondly, they are identified with Christ in His resurrection which provides them the guarantee of receiving a resurrection body like His (cf. Colossians 2:12-13; 3:1, 3).

Eternal life which is the life of God and is received as a gift by the sinner the moment they exercise faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. Each and every church age believer possesses eternal life since they are indwelt by all three members of the Trinity who all inherently are eternal life. Also, each and every church age believer is identified with Christ in His resurrection which provides them the guarantee of a resurrection body like His. Eternal life is experienced by the justified sinner after conversion through obedience to the teaching of the Word of God. Specifically, it is experienced by the believer after conversion when they appropriate by faith their identification with Christ in His death and resurrection and which faith expresses itself by considering oneself dead to sin, Satan and the Law and alive to God.

When Paul speaks of the Colossians being revealed with Christ in a state of glory, he is speaking of the Colossians living in a glorified condition and in particular, living in a resurrection body. The Colossians' identification with Christ in His resurrection (cf. Colossians 2:12-13; 3:1, 3) and the fact that Christ indwells the Colossians (cf. Colossians 1:27) guarantees that they will receive a resurrection body. This guarantee is what Paul is asserting with the Colossians here in Colossians 3:4.

Interestingly, in Colossians 2:12-13, 3:1 and 3, Paul asserts that the church age believer is raised with Christ. This was a past action of identifying them with Christ in His resurrection at their conversion through the baptism of the Spirit. This speaks of the positional aspect of their salvation and sanctification. Then, in Colossians 3:3, he asserts that the believer is concealed with Christ, which speaks of the present status of the believer which implies the believer must live their life in a manner consistent with this fact. Paul develops the experiential aspect of their salvation and conversion in Colossians 3:5-4:6. Lastly, here in Colossians 3:4, Paul asserts that the Colossians will as a certainty be raised with Christ in the future. This speaks of the perfective aspect of their salvation and sanctification.

This guarantee of a resurrection body is designed to motivate the Colossians to continue to remain faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ so as to live in a manner which is consistent with this guarantee. This guarantee is designed to motivate them to continue making it their habit of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. By doing this, they will guarantee that they will live in a manner which is consistent with this guarantee of receiving a resurrection body. It will also simultaneously protect them from the false doctrine of the Judaizers.

So, in Colossians 3:4, the apostle Paul is speaking of the Colossians' sanctification in a perfective sense. Every church age believer will receive a resurrection body regardless if they were faithful or not after their conversion. This glorification is the church age believer receiving their resurrection body. This is called the resurrection or rapture of the church.

In Colossians 3:5-17, the apostle Paul brings out the ethical implications of this union and identification.

Colossians 3:5 Therefore, I solemnly charge each and every one of you to put to death the members of that which belongs to your earthly nature with regards to the practice of sexual immorality, sexual impurity, sexual lust, evil desire as well as that which is greed which is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as idolatry. 6 These things are the reason why the wrath exercised by God the Father, as an eternal spiritual truth is and will be directed against the people characterized by disobedience. 7 Each and every one of you also lived your lives among them at one time when each and every one of you were continually living among them. 8 But now, I also solemnly charge each and every one of you, for your own benefit to lay aside each and every one of the following: destructive, uncontrolled anger, malice, slander, filthy language from the mouth of each and every one of you. 9 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of not lying to one another because each and every one of you for your own benefit have stripped off the old man with its practices. 10 Likewise, each and every one of you have clothed yourselves with the new man which is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in the state of desiring to be replenished for the purpose of an experiential knowledge in conformity with the image produced by the One who created him. 11 In the sphere of which, absolutely no distinctions are, as an eternal spiritual truth existing between Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free person. But rather, Christ as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being everything as well as in each and every person. 12 Therefore, because each and every one of you are elected by God the Father, holy as well as divinely loved, I solemnly charge the clothing of yourselves with compassion which is the product of deep seated affections, kindness, humility gentleness, patience. 13 Simultaneously, continue making it your habit of tolerating one another, while also continuing to make it your habit of graciously forgiving each other. Whenever anyone possesses a complaint against anyone just as the Lord in fact graciously forgave each and every one of you for His own glory, so also in the same way, each and every one of you must continue to make it your habit of graciously forgiving each other. 14 Specifically, based upon these things, I solemnly charge each and every one of you to clothe yourselves with divine-love which is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the perfect bond of unity. 15 Consequently, the peace produced by the teaching of the one and only Christ must continue to habitually rule within your hearts. For which purpose, each and every one of you were effectually called into union with one body. Therefore, each and every one of you must continue to make it your habit of being characterized by thankfulness. 16 The teaching originating from and about the one and only Christ must continue

to exist in a state of dwelling abundantly among each and every one of you. Each of you must execute this command by continuing to make it your habit of providing instruction, specifically by providing instruction for one another with regards to proper conduct. Each of you must provide this instruction by means of a wisdom which is absolute, by means of psalms, hymns, spiritual songs. Each of you must execute the command by continuing to make it your habit of singing with gratitude with your entire being for the benefit of God the Father. 17 Indeed, whenever any of you, at any time, should do something, whatever, anything, by means of a word or by means of an action, each of you must continue to make it your habit of doing each and every one of these things in a manner consistent with the Lord's name, who is Jesus. Simultaneously, each of you continue to make it your habit of giving thanks to the one and only God who is the Father through Him. (Author's translation)

In Colossians 3:5, Paul solemnly issues a command which requires that the Colossians put to death the members of that which belongs to their earthly nature with regards to the practice of immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed. The Colossians must put to death the members of their bodies with regards to the practice of immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed based upon the fact that they have died with Christ and have been raised with Him. In other words, the command in verse 5 is issued based upon the fact that the Colossians are identified with Christ in His death and resurrection.

When Paul issues this command, he is doing so with a sense of urgency. Consequently, the Colossians must also have a sense of urgency with regards to this command. They must obey this command without reservation or delay since their fellowship with God and experiencing their sanctification is contingent upon doing so. Their spiritual growth is contingent upon obeying this command.

Putting to death the members of that which belongs to the Colossians' earthly nature would demand that they completely cease from practicing sexual immorality, sexual impurity, sexual lust, evil desire and greed based upon the fact that they are identified with Christ in His death and resurrection. It would constitute appropriating by faith their identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. Ceasing completely from practicing such sins would result in their living in a manner consistent with this identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.

By obeying this command in Colossians 3:5, the faithful believers in Colossae would be appropriating by faith their identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial. Therefore, he is spelling out for the Colossians and for all Christians in every generation of the church age what is involved in appropriating by faith one's identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial. To appropriate by faith one's identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial would demand the believer putting to death the members of their human body with regards to any thought, word or action which would manifest their sin nature. To appropriate by faith one's identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial would demand the believer considering the members of their human body as dead to the sin nature and alive to God.

To consider oneself as dead to the sin nature and alive to God demands that the believer submit to the Lordship of Christ over their life. Their union and identification with Christ means that they are under the headship of Christ and thus no longer under the headship of Adam. Consequently, they must behave in a manner which is consistent with being under the headship of Christ. To consider oneself as dead to the sin nature and alive to God or to put off the old Adamic nature and to put on the new Christ

nature involves the Christian submitting to being under the headship of Christ. To appropriate by faith one's union and identification with Christ would involve the Christian adopting God's viewpoint of them which is that they are in union with Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This results in conduct which is consistent with this union and identification with Christ.

Faith is submitting to the Father's will for one's life. It is submitting to the sovereign will of God. It manifests itself in obedience to the commands and prohibitions in the Word of God. The Father's will for the church age believer is that they are crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with His Son at His right hand. The believer who agrees with this by viewing himself or herself as identified with Christ in these events in our Lord's life is appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ. If a believer does not adopt this view of himself or herself, they will automatically live according to the lusts of their sin nature. It is only when the Christian is thinking properly about themselves that they can experience victory over sin. It is only when the Christian has adopted God's viewpoint of them that they can experience victory over sin. It is thus only through faith that they can experience victory since this victory is contingent upon the Christian appropriating by faith this union and identification with Christ and this is accomplished by considering themselves dead to the sin nature and alive to God.

The Colossians' behavior or conduct was to be governed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and specifically the good news that they have the victory over sin and Satan through their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. The Judaizers attempted to persuade the Colossians to live according to the commands and prohibitions of the Mosaic Law and specifically to live by means of the purity regulations of the Law. Observance of these purity laws in addition to the rest of the ceremonial aspect of the Law would constitute the sanctification of the Israelite who possessed a covenant relationship with God as a result of being declared justified by faith in the Lord. However, the church age believer's sanctification and moral purity is based upon something superior. It is based upon the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of Christ at the right hand of the Father. The Colossians would continue to experience moral purity and their sanctification when they appropriate by faith this union and identification with Christ. This is why Paul wanted them to continue to reject the teaching of the Judaizers. What the Colossians are in fact, is to manifest itself in their conduct. They are to live their lives in a manner which is consistent with who God made them to be through their union and identification with Christ. What they are positionally in Christ is to become their experience and faith is the key to this taking place.

The emphasis with putting to death the members of one's body parts in relation to these various sinful vices is not upon the body parts but upon the conduct or actions related to the use of these body parts.

The command here in Colossians 3:5 echoes the command in Romans 6:11. In fact, Paul's teaching in Colossians 3:1-5 echoes much of his teaching in Romans chapter 6. Romans 6 provides much greater detail of what Paul is teaching the Colossians in Colossians 3:1-5.

Titus 2:13

Titus 2:1 You, however, continue making it your habit of communicating those things which are consistent with sound doctrine. 2 Older men are to be characterized as level-headed, dignified,

sound-minded by being characterized as sound in the Christian faith, in the uniqueness of divine-love, in the uniqueness of godly perseverance. 3 Likewise, older women are to be characterized as reverent ones in the area of conduct, not slanderers, not enslaved to much wine, teachers of good 4 in order that they would be able to train younger women to be lovers of their husbands, lovers of their children 5 sound-minded ones, pure ones, homemakers, performers of divine good, those who voluntarily obey their own husbands so that the Word originating from God will not be slandered. 6 Likewise, you continue making it your habit of exhorting younger men to be sound-minded 7 while in each and every circumstance continuing to make it your habit of showing yourself to be an example of integrity, dignity, sound speech, irreproachableness who produces excellent works by means of the teaching 8 in order that the one who is from the opposition would be put to shame because they possess absolutely nothing bad to say about us. 9 Slaves are to make it their habit of voluntarily obeying their own masters in each and every task so as to be pleasing, by not talking back 10 by not stealing. But rather, by making it their habit of voluntarily demonstrating complete trustworthiness, namely performing divine good in order that they would be modeling the teaching of God, our Savior in each and every task. 11 For the grace originating from God has been manifested offering salvation for the benefit of each and every member of the human race. 12 It simultaneously instructs us that we are to live in a self-controlled manner, righteously as well as godly during this present age while rejecting that which is characterized as ungodliness, specifically, that which is characterized as worldly desires. 13 The means of doing this which benefits ourselves is by making it our habit of anticipating the confident expectation which is characterized by transcendent happiness, specifically, the appearing of the Glory who is our great God as well as Savior, namely Jesus Christ. (Author's translation)

In Titus 2:2-14, Paul addresses the proper godly conduct of the Christian community on the island of Crete. Then, in Titus 2:11, he presented the reason why he wanted these various groups in the Christian community to reflect godly standards in their lives which is the result of applying his apostolic instruction. He reminds the Christian community on the island of Crete that the grace of God has appeared through the person and work of Jesus Christ whose death and resurrection provided the offer of salvation to each and every member of the human race. The grace of God refers to the incarnation of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ as well as His earthly life, teaching, substitutionary spiritual and physical death's on the cross as well as His resurrection from the dead, which provided eternal salvation for all mankind.

Next, in Titus 2:12, Paul continues this thought by teaching that while the grace of God has been manifested offering salvation for the entire human race, it is also simultaneously instructing all Christians to live in a self-controlled manner, righteously as well as godly during this present age while at the same time teaching them to reject ungodliness and specifically worldly desires.

Now, here in Titus 2:13, the apostle continues his thought from verse 12. He teaches that the Christian is to live in a self-controlled manner, righteously as well as godly during this present age while rejecting ungodliness and specifically worldly desires by anticipating the appearing of Jesus Christ at the rapture of the church. This appearance is a confident expectation for the Christian and is characterized by transcendent happiness since the Lord Jesus Christ will give the Christian their resurrection body at this particular time. This will complete their sanctification and salvation.

J. Hampton Keathley III has an excellent comment, he writes "In summary, the motivation for good works, so much a theme of the book of Titus, looks both ways—to the past and to the future. We should

be motivated to faithful service and good works as we (1) reflect back on what Christ has done for us and why, and (2) as we wait expectantly for His blessed and glorious appearance for us. This glorious coming is one of the prominent themes of the New Testament. Realizing the impact the return of the Savior could have on his audience who were going through trials, James wrote, ‘You also be patient and strengthen your hearts, for the Lord’s coming is near. Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged. See, the judge stands before the gates!’ (Jam. 5:8-9). Likewise, urging his readers to live godly lives by setting their sights on both the Lord’s return and on his past work, Peter wrote, 1:13 Therefore, get your minds ready for action, by being fully sober, and set your hope completely on the grace that will be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed. 1:14 Like obedient children, do not comply with the evil urges you used to follow in your ignorance, 1:15 but, like the Holy One who called you, become holy yourselves in all of your conduct, 1:16 for it is written, “You shall be holy, because I am holy.” 1:17 And if you address as Father the one who impartially judges according to each one’s work, live out the time of your temporary residence here in reverence. 1:18 You know that from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, you were ransomed—not by perishable things like silver or gold, 1:19 but by precious blood like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, Christ. 1:20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was manifested in these last times for your sake. 1:21 Through him you now trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God (1 Pet. 1:13-21). In 1 John, the apostle John had the same dual emphasis (the past and present work of Christ) as a motivation to a godly life through fellowship with the Lord: 2:28 And now, little children, remain in him, so that whenever he appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from him in shame when he comes back. 2:29 If you know that he is righteous, you also know that everyone who practices righteousness is fathered by him. 3:1 (See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called God’s children—and indeed we are! For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know him. 3:2 Dear friends, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. But we know that whenever it is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. 3:3 And everyone who has this hope focused on him purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure). 3:4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; indeed, sin is lawlessness. 3:5 And you know that Jesus was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin....3:8 The one who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was revealed: to destroy the works of the devil.”²²⁶

First John 2:28

1 John 2:28 Correspondingly, each one of you dear children must now continue to make it your habit of living in fellowship with Him so that each one of us would possess confidence whenever He has been revealed. Consequently, each one of us would not experience shame because of Him at His arrival. (Author’s translation)

In this command in 1 John 2:28, “**little children**” refers to the entire Christian community in the Roman province of Asia who had remained faithful to John’s apostolic teaching and had not been deceived by proto-Gnostic teachers. He uses this term as a term of endearment for his spiritual children in this Christian community.

Also, the word “**now**” in this command is emphasizing the circumstances of the recipients of this epistle when they read it indicating that John wants his readers to immediately take action upon his command to continue making it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ.

²²⁶ Keathley III, J. Hampton, *The Letter to Titus: An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary*, pages 60-61; Biblical Studies Press, 2000; www.bible.org

Now, the command in 1 John 2:28 required that each of the recipients of this epistle continue making it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ. The recipients of this epistle were already obeying this command since the apostle John affirms in 1 John 2:12-14 that the recipients of this epistle were remaining faithful to his apostolic teaching and thus were already obeying this command which he more than likely had taught them many times in the past.

In this command in 1 John 2:28, “**Him**” is not referring to the Holy Spirit even though the Spirit is mentioned in 1 John 2:27. Rather, it is referring to Jesus Christ which is indicated by the rest of the statements which appear in 1 John 2:28.

The result clause which follows this command in 1 John 2:28 states that the referent of this intensive pronoun will appear, which cannot be the Father or the Spirit but rather the Son since He is the only member of the Trinity who became visible by becoming a human being (cf. John 1:18).

Furthermore, this appearance is a reference to Jesus Christ appearing at the rapture or resurrection of the church to remove the church from the earth prior to Daniel’s seventieth week (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-57; Phil. 3:20-21). This appearance at the rapture or resurrection of the church is also called in 1 John 2:28 the Lord’s “coming.”

Also, the shame mentioned in 1 John 2:28 speaks of the shame the unfaithful believer will experience at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church as a result of losing rewards because of unfaithfulness (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12). This evaluation of the church will be conducted by Jesus Christ according to Paul’s teaching in 2 Corinthians 5:10.

1 John 2:6 echoes this command in 1 John 2:28 since they both contain the same language and speak of the recipients of this epistle living in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:6 The one who at any time does say he is living in fellowship with Him, he must himself also conduct his life in the same manner as this One conducted His life. (Author’s translation)

This command which John issues the recipients of this epistle in 1 John 2:28 is followed by a purpose-result clause which presents both the purpose and the result for John issuing this command. It emphasizes that the recipients of this epistle continuing to make it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ would accomplish the Spirit inspired purpose for which John issued the previous command to do so here in verse 28.

This purpose-result clause teaches that as a result of obeying this command, both John and the recipients of this epistle would possess confidence whenever Jesus Christ has been revealed. John then presents the result of possessing this confidence, namely that each of them would not experience shame because of Jesus Christ at His arrival.

Notice in this purpose-result clause that John switches from the second person plural which means “all of you” or “each one of you” to the first personal plural, which is “we” or “each one of us.” This is called an “inclusive we” which simply means that John wants to emphasize his unity or solidarity with the recipients of this epistle in order to stress with them that he too must continue to obey this command which he issues in 1 John 2:28.

When John speaks of Jesus Christ being revealed and refers to His coming or arrival in 1 John 2:28, he is referring to the rapture or resurrection of the church and subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of the church. John wants the recipients of this epistle to obey his command so that they would possess confidence at the rapture and subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of the church. At the rapture, the church age believer will receive their resurrection and immediately following this, their service will be evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ to determine if they merit rewards for faithful service or do not merit rewards because of unfaithfulness. If the recipients of this epistle continue making it their habit of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ by living in fellowship with the Spirit by obeying John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching, they will be servants of Jesus Christ and will receive rewards. If they do not make it their habit of obeying this command, then they will lose rewards. If they lose rewards because they were unfaithful, they will suffer temporary shame and embarrassment.

Therefore, this purpose-result clause in 1 John 2:28 serves as motivation for the recipients of this epistle to remain faithful to John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching. Specifically, it teaches that the rapture of the church and the subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of the church should serve as motivation to remain faithful. Knowing that they must stand before Jesus Christ and give an account for their service should serve as motivation to remain faithful. The imminency of the rapture and subsequent Bema Seat Evaluation of their service should motivate the church age believer to make it their habit of living in fellowship with the Trinity. Therefore, John wants to ensure the fact that the recipients of this epistle will receive rewards at the Bema Seat for faithfulness. In fact, the apostle John taught in 2 John 8 that the believer can lose rewards for unfaithfulness.

2 John 8 All of you begin and continue to protect yourselves in order that all of you will not lose the things which we have worked hard for but instead obtain a full reward. (Author's translation)

First John 3:1-3

In 1 John 3:1-3, the apostle John also teaches that the guarantee of a resurrection body, which the child of God will receive at the rapture or resurrection of the church is to motivate the believer to live holy and godly lives on planet earth.

1 John 3:1 I solemnly charge each one of you to carefully consider what kind of love the Father has exercised toward each of us, namely each one of us have been effectually called to be God's children. Indeed, every one of us are existing in this state. For this reason, the world never at any time recognizes any of us: because it never recognized Him. (Author's translation)

The apostle John solemnly issues the recipients of this epistle another command which required that each one carefully consider what kind of love the Father has exercised towards himself and the recipients of this epistle. He then identifies for them what they should carefully consider, namely they should carefully consider that each of them have been effectually called to be God's children. John then emphatically affirms this to be the case. He is in other words, reassuring the recipients of this epistle in emphatic terms that they are in fact children of God.

This reference to being God's children here in 1 John 3:1 advances upon and elaborates upon what John taught in 1 John 2:29. In this verse he taught that if each of the recipients of this epistle possess the conviction that God the Father is righteous, then each of them know experientially that any person who

at any time does practice that which is truly righteousness has been fathered by God. Therefore, the reference to being fathered by God in 1 John 2:29 is being further developed here in 1 John 3:1.

Now, when John orders the recipients of this epistle to “carefully consider” being effectually called to be children of God, he wants them to do so in order to make personal application. Specifically, he wants them to carefully consider this effectual calling in order that they would continue to experience their sanctification which is equivalent to experiencing fellowship with the Trinity. This interpretation is indicated by 1 John 3:2-3. In verse 2, John reminds the recipients of this epistle that they will be transformed in a resurrection body at the rapture and will manifest the fact that they are children of God to the entire world at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. In verse 3, he teaches them that every person in the Christian community who possesses this conviction about this transformation in the future will purify themselves which speaks of experiencing sanctification.

In 1 John 3:1, the apostle John teaches that God’s love was the reason why He effectually called them to be His children. This love is an attribute of each member of the Trinity and was exercised by the Trinity towards John and the recipients of this epistle as well as all believers throughout the church age. Thus, the believer in Jesus Christ is the beneficiary of this love. God’s love was therefore exercised by each member of the Trinity towards the recipients of this epistle.

Therefore, the noun *agapē*, “love” refers to the work of the Father in eternity in electing and predestinating those sinners declared justified by Him through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. It also refers the Father’s work in declaring them justified through faith in His Son. This word also speaks of the love of the Son exercised on the cross when He suffered a substitutionary spiritual and physical death on the cross which provided the recipients of this epistle their salvation. It also refers to the work of the Son in sending the Spirit to perform His conversion and post-conversion work on behalf of the justified sinner. This leads us to the Spirit in that noun *agapē* refers to the conversion and post-conversion work of the Spirit which He exercised His love on behalf of the recipients. The work of each member of the Trinity resulted in the believer becoming a child of God.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, each and every one of us are God’s children. However, what state each of us will be caused to exist in, has not yet been revealed. Each one of us possess the conviction that whenever this state has been revealed (to us), we will be caused to exist in the same identical state as Him because for the benefit of each of us, we will see Him as He is presently existing. (Authors’ translation)

The apostle John in 1 John 3:2 affirms once again as he did in 1 John 3:1 that he and each of the recipients of this epistle were God’s children. As was the case in 1 John 3:1, the term “**children**” (*teknion*) in 1 John 3:2 is used in a figurative sense of those sinners who have been declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and through the Spirit have been regenerated, adopted and placed in union with Christ and identified with Him in His death and resurrection. The word emphasizes the Christian’s relationship with God from the perspective of the spiritual birth, i.e. regeneration.

After affirming once again that he and the recipients of this epistle were God’s children, the apostle John contrasts their present imperfect state with their future glorified state in a resurrection body. He asserts that what state each of them will be caused to exist in the future, has not yet been revealed to them. He is referring to their future glorified state in a resurrection body when their salvation and

sanctification will be completed, and they will be perfected meaning they will no longer possess an indwelling sin nature as they do before this transformation.

John then asserts that each of them possess the conviction that whenever this state has been revealed to them, they will be caused to exist in the same identical state as Jesus Christ. Thus, he is reminding them that they will exist in a resurrection body like Jesus Christ whenever this state has been revealed at the rapture. The believer will be identical with Jesus not only because they will possess a glorified resurrection body but also because they will be sinless like Jesus Christ. The present bodies that believers possess are contaminated by the sin nature (Rom. 6:6). However, the resurrection body will be minus the sin nature.

The apostle John then presents the reason for this previous assertion by stating that each of them will see Jesus Christ as He presently exists in a resurrection body. Some interpret this causal clause as teaching that believers will realize that they are already like Jesus, but will not realize it until they see Him as He is. However, it is better to interpret this clause as teaching that the believer will be more like Jesus Christ than they presently are, and this will be accomplished by seeing Him as He really exists at the present time and for all of eternity. This is indicated by the adversative clause which appears earlier at the beginning of verse 2 and asserts that what state the believer will exist in the future, has not yet been revealed to them. It is also indicated by the reference in 1 John 2:28 to Jesus Christ's appearance at the rapture. Thus, John is seeking to distinguish between the present state of believers (sinful and without a resurrection body) and what they will be like in the future (sinless and possessing a resurrection body).

What John asserts in 1 John 3:2 is echoed by Paul in his writings.

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see in a mirror indirectly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I have been fully known. (NET)

2 Corinthians 3:10 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (ESV)

Colossians 3:1 Therefore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each and every one of you have been raised up with Christ and we agree that this is true. Then, continue to make it your habit of diligently seeking after the things above, where Christ is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in a state of being seated at God's right hand. 2 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of concentrating on the things above, not on the things on earth 3 because each and every one of you has died. Consequently, the life of each and every one of you is concealed with Christ by means of the power of God the Father. 4 When Christ, the life of each and every one of you, enters into the state of being revealed, then, at that time, each and every one of you will, as a certainty be revealed with Him in a state of glory. (Author's translation)

The purpose for which John makes these assertions here in 1 John 3:2 is to encourage the recipients of this epistle to continue making it their habit of experiencing their sanctification. This is indicated by John's statement in 1 John 3:3 in which he asserts that every believer who thus has the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body purifies themselves as Jesus is pure. This purification is that of experiencing sanctification which is a metaphor for experiencing fellowship with God.

Therefore, in 1 John 3:2, the apostle John is guaranteeing all believers that they will receive a resurrection body which is designed to motivate them to continue to remain faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ so as to live in a manner which is consistent with this guarantee. This guarantee is designed to motivate them to continue making it their habit of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. By doing this, they will guarantee that they will live in a manner which is consistent with this guarantee of receiving a resurrection body. It will also simultaneously protect them from the false doctrine.

So, in 1 John 3:2, the apostle John is speaking of the believer's sanctification in a perfective sense. Every church age believer will receive a resurrection body regardless if they were faithful or not after their conversion. This glorification is the church age believer receiving their resurrection body. This is called the resurrection or rapture of the church.

1 John 3:3 Correspondingly, each one of us who does at any time possess this confident expectation because of Him, does purify himself just as He Himself is pure. (Author's translation)

The apostle John's assertion here in 1 John 3:3 corresponds to the assertion he makes at the end of 1 John 3:2. In the latter, the apostle John emphatically affirms that each of the recipients of this epistle along with himself were God's children. He then states that what state each of them will be caused to exist in, has not yet been revealed, which refers to all of them being perfected in a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. Next, John asserts that each of them possess the conviction that whenever this state has been revealed to them, they will all be caused to exist in the same identical state as Jesus Christ because they will all see Jesus Christ as He is presently existing. Of course, Jesus Christ is in a glorified state in a resurrection body.

Therefore, John is reminding the recipients of this epistle in 1 John 3:2 that they will all exist in a resurrection body like Jesus Christ whenever this state has been revealed to them at the rapture. He is also reminding them that they will be more like Jesus Christ than they presently are and this will be accomplished by seeing Him as He really exists at the present time and for all of eternity.

Now, here in 1 John 3:3, John makes another assertion with regards to himself and each of the recipients of this epistle. He teaches that each of them does at any time possess this confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body at the rapture because of Jesus Christ does purify himself or herself just as He Himself is pure. This means that the believer who lives their lives confidently expecting to be perfected at any moment at the rapture will experience their sanctification and won't commit sin just as Jesus Christ never committed any sin.

Therefore, the correspondence between verses 2 and 3 is that a believer possessing the conviction that they will be perfected in a resurrection body is equivalent to possessing the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body because of Jesus Christ. In other words, the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body when Jesus appears at the rapture is equivalent to possessing the conviction that one will receive a resurrection body when Jesus appears at the rapture. Consequently, John is teaching that this confident expectation and conviction that the believer will receive a resurrection body from Jesus at the rapture will cause them to purify themselves in the sense that they will not commit sin just as Jesus is sinless. In other words, they will experience their sanctification as a result of this conviction and confident expectation.

When John asserts in 1 John 3:3 that each believer, who does at any time possess this confident expectation because of Him, he is identifying Jesus Christ as the basis or the reason why they possess the confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body. Jesus Christ is the reason why the believer possesses this confident expectation because He was raised from the dead and promised to raise every believer from the dead (cf. John 6:39-40, 44, 54).

Therefore, John is teaching here in 1 John 3:3 that one of the marks which distinguishes a child of God from the children of the devil is that the former will purify themselves from sin because of their conviction and confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. This purification distinguished the recipients of this epistle from the false teachers.

He is also teaching that Jesus Christ is the basis for the believer's sanctification and in addition, their righteousness. He is the ethical perfect standard by which they were to live their lives on planet earth. In other words, Jesus Christ's impeccability is the pattern which the Christian is to follow. They must live their lives like Jesus Christ lived His life. They were to imitate His lifestyle.

The apostle John is also teaching in 1 John 3:3 that fellowship with the Trinity can be described as purifying oneself from sin because one has the confident expectation of receiving the promise of a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. In other words, this purification refers to experiencing sanctification.

1 John 3:2-3 teaches that prophecy purifies the believer. Specifically, it teaches that the conviction regarding the prophecy of the rapture motivates them to experience their sanctification. So not only is the confident expectation of the Lord's return at the rapture a source of comfort and encouragement to the believer, but also it is a very definite incentive for holy living.

Roy Zuck writes "Knowing that the Lord may come at any moment influences believers to lead lives pleasing to the Lord. Immediately after referring to the 'blessed hope' Paul referred to the Lord's desire 'to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good' (Titus 2:14). As believers look forward to the new heaven and the new earth, they should 'make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with Him' (2 Peter 3:14). John affirmed that when Christ 'appears, we shall be like Him,' and then he added, 'Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure' (1 John 3:2-3)."²²⁷

Distinctions Between Rapture and Second Advent

It is important to understand that the Bible teaches that there are distinctions between the rapture and the Second Advent of Christ. Those who don't believe in a "pre-tribulation" rapture of the church also fail to see the distinctions between the Second Advent of Christ and the rapture and thus attribute passages dealing with the latter to the former.

For example, the "rapture" precedes the Tribulation whereas the "Second Advent" follows it as indicated by the chronology presented in the book of Revelation. The "rapture" delivers the church from the Tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9) while the "Second Advent" delivers Israel from Satan,

²²⁷ Campbell, D. K. (1991). [Foreword](#). In C. Bubeck Sr. (Ed.), *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (pp. 229-230). Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook.

Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. Jesus Christ will not judge the inhabitants of the earth at the “rapture” while He will do so at His “Second Advent” (Dan. 12:1-2; Matt. 25:21-36; Ezek. 20:37-38).

The “rapture” is a time of joy (Titus 2:13) whereas the “Second Advent” will be a time of mourning (Zech. 12:10-14; Rev. 1:7). The “rapture” takes place before the day of wrath or day of the Lord (1 Thess. 5:1-11; Rev. 3:10). However, the “Second Advent” ends the day of the Lord (Matt. 24:29-36). The “rapture” is seen only by the church and is therefore invisible to the world while the “Second Advent” is the visible manifestation of Christ on the earth (Revelation 1:7). The Lord meets the church in the earth’s atmosphere at the “rapture,” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) whereas the Lord physically lands on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem at His “Second Advent.” (Zechariah 14:4). When the “rapture” takes place, believers are taken to the Father’s house by the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:1-3) while during the “Second Advent” resurrected saints do not see the Father’s house. The Lord claims His Bride at the “rapture” and takes her to heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-17; John 14:1-3). However, He returns with her at the “Second Advent” (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; Rev. 19:1-20:6). The “rapture” results in the resurrection of the church (1 Thess. 4:13-18) while the “Second Advent” results in judgment of the inhabitants of planet earth (Ezek. 20:33-38; Matt. 25:31-46). Signs do not precede the “rapture” whereas visible signs precede the “Second Advent” (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21:10-31). The “rapture” completes God’s program for the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-58) while the “Second Advent” is related to God’s program for Israel (Matthew 24).

The “rapture” is a mystery (1 Corinthians 15:51-57), not known to Old Testament saints whereas the “Second Advent” is prophesied throughout the Old Testament canon. The “rapture” is imminent (1 Thess. 5:1-2; James 5:7-9; Rom. 13:11-12) while on the other hand the “Second Advent” cannot take place until seven years after the start of the seventieth week when Antichrist establishes a treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27). The “rapture” leaves creation unchanged whereas the “Second Advent” entails a change in creation from corruption to perfect environment (Romans 8:18-22). The “rapture” does not fulfill God’s covenants to Israel whereas the “Second Advent” marks the beginning of their fulfillment through Christ’s millennial reign. At the “rapture” there is no mention of Satan. However, at the “Second Advent” Satan will be imprisoned for a thousand years (Rev. 19:20-20:3). The church is nowhere found during the events of the Tribulation period recorded in Revelation 6-18 but appears as Christ’s bride in heaven in Revelation 19:1-10 and comes back with Christ at His Second Advent as recorded in Revelation 19:11-21.

The Rapture in Relation to the Day of the Lord

Next, we will note the relationship between the day of the Lord and the rapture. Specifically, we will demonstrate that the Scriptures teach that the rapture will precede the day of the Lord. But before, we do, we must determine what is the day of the Lord?

The origin of the concept of “the day of the LORD” is uncertain. It may have originated in the ancient Near Eastern idea of the sovereign’s day of conquest, where a king would boast that he had concluded an entire military campaign in a single day (see D. Stuart, “The Sovereign’s Day of Conquest,” *BASOR* 221 [1976]: 159–64). In the OT the expression is applied to several acts of divine judgment, some historical and others still future (see A. J. Everson, “The Days of Yahweh,” *JBL* 93 [1974]: 329–37). In the OT the phrase first appears in Amos (assuming that Amos predates Joel and Obadiah), where it

seems to refer to a belief on the part of the northern kingdom that God would intervene on Israel's behalf and judge the nation's enemies. Amos affirms that the Lord's day of judgment is indeed approaching, but he declares that it will be a day of disaster, not deliverance, for Israel. Here in Zephaniah, the "day of the Lord" includes God's coming judgment of Judah, as well as a more universal outpouring of divine anger.²²⁸

One of the major lines of prophecy running throughout the Old Testament and continuing through the New Testament is the prophetic truth related to the "Day of the Lord." It is a critical phrase in understanding God's revelation regarding the future of planet earth, the city of Jerusalem, the nation of Israel as well as the Gentiles. The writers of the New Testament use this phrase based on their understanding of the Old Testament prophets. This phrase was used by the prophets of Israel in the Old Testament when they were speaking of both near historical as well as future eschatological events. The New Testament writers understood this and applied the phrase to both the judgment which will terminate the tribulation period of Daniel's Seventieth week as well as the judgment which will bring the creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

The term "Day of the Lord" occurs in the following passages: Isa. 2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezek. 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18 (twice), 20; Obadiah 15; Zeph. 1:7, 14 (twice); Zech. 14:1; Mal. 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10.

The phrases "that day" or "the day" or "the great day" also refer to the day of the Lord and appear more than 75 times in the Old Testament.

The term "Day of the Lord" and the phrases "that day" or "the day" or the "great day" are used with reference to Daniel's Seventieth Week (Isaiah 13:5-6; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 29, 31; 38:10-19; 39:11, 22; Obadiah 14-15; Zephaniah 1:14, 18; 2:2-3; Zechariah 12:3-4, 6, 8-9; Malachi 4:5), the Second Advent of Christ (Zechariah 12:11; 14:4, 6, 8), millennium (Ezekiel 45:22; 48:35; Joel 3:18; Zechariah 14:9; Zephaniah 3:11), and the creation of the new heavens and earth (2 Peter 2:10).

Now, if you notice that there are only four passages in the New Testament in which "the day of the Lord" appears (Acts 2:20; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10). However, this phrase is used often by the writers of the Old Testament. Thus, Paul and Peter's understanding of the day of the Lord was based upon their understanding of this use of the phrase in the Old Testament.

Now a survey of the use of the phrase "the day of the Lord" in both the Old and New Testaments reveal that it is used with reference to the contemporary history of the writer (cf. Is. 13:6; Joel 1:15). However, it is also used in relation to the future such as Daniel's Seventieth Week (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2) and the creation of the new heavens and new earth (2 Pet. 3:10).

When the writer uses the phrase with regards to God's judgments, it is often accompanied by a pronouncement of God's blessing (cf. Zech. 14:1-21). This phrase "the day of the Lord" is used of a period of time when God will judge nations (Obad. 15; Zeph 2). Other times it is used with regards to God judging the nation of Israel (Joel 1:15) or Jerusalem (Zeph. 3:1-12). Interestingly, often this judgment of Israel and Jerusalem is followed by a pronouncement of the restoration of Israel with the Messiah dwelling in her midst as her king (Zeph. 3:14-20).

²²⁸ Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

The phrase “day of the Lord” occurs nineteen times in the Old Testament and occurs only in six minor and two major prophets. It occurs five times in Joel (1:15; 2:1; 2:11, 31; 3:14). Joel’s prophecy can be described as having a near fulfillment with the locust plague taking place in Joel’s day. It also can be described as having a far view in that it will be fulfilled during the tribulation period of Daniel’s Seventieth Week and Jesus Christ’s subsequent millennial reign. Joel equates the invading armies during the tribulation with the locust plague that Israel suffered in his day. Chapter one deals with the locust plague in Joel’s day while chapter two describes the invading armies of Israel during the tribulation period of Daniel’s Seventieth Week. Joel 2:30-32 is referring to Jesus Christ’s Second Advent in which He will deliver Israel from Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. Joel 3:1-16 predicts the future judgment of the nations during the tribulation while Joel 3:17-21 predicts the future restoration of Israel and the millennial reign of Christ.

The phrase “the day of the Lord” also appears twice in the book of Amos (5:18, 20). The prophecy of Amos is directed to the historical situation in his day which is indicated by the fact that he wrote to the ten northern tribes in 7:10 and to King Jeroboam predicting his future exile to Assyria in 5:27, 6:14, 7:19 and 17. Amos was predicting the fall of Samaria which took place in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs. 17). The prophet emphasizes the inevitability of this destruction in Amos 5:19-20. The prophet also predicts the Lord intervening on Israel’s behalf (9:11-15). So, Amos only uses the phrase “the day of the Lord” in a near sense meaning that his use of the phrase is only contained in a prophecy which was exclusive to the historical situation in his day.

The phrase “the day of the Lord” occurs twice in Isaiah (13:6, 9). However, the first reference to “the day of the Lord” appears in Isaiah 2:12. In Isaiah 2:2-4, there is a prophecy regarding the future establishment of God’s kingdom. In verses 5-9 of this chapter there is a reference the sinful state of Israel during Isaiah’s day. Then, in verses 10-22, he issues a prophecy regarding the far future of judgment. It appears that this prophecy will be fulfilled during the Seventieth Week of Daniel and subsequent millennial reign of Christ rather than God judging Israel through Assyria and Babylon since Isaiah 2:1-2 predicts that Zion will be the world capital and Isaiah 2:2-4 predicts that God will judge between the nations and there will be no more war.

In Isaiah chapter 13 is a prophecy regarding Babylon. Isaiah 13:1-8 addresses God’s use of Babylon as His instrument to destroy Israel (13:5-6). The fulfillment of “day of the Lord” with regards to this did not take place for a little over one hundred years. So, the reference to “the day of the Lord” in Isaiah 13 speaks of a near fulfillment which was fulfilled by Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar (605-587 B.C.). But it does appear that this prophecy speaks of far eschatological fulfillment as indicated by Isaiah 13:9-16 which describes even the stars of the stellar universe being affected by God’s judgment of the world for its evil. The description of God’s judgment in these verses echoes Matthew 24:29, Revelation 6:12-13 and Joel 2:31 which speak God’s judgment of the world during the tribulation portion of the Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

“The day of the Lord” is found in Ezekiel twice (13:5; 30:3). Ezekiel wrote his book in the midst of the fulfillment of the near judgment. He was taken captive to Babylon in 597 B.C. He wrote in 592 B.C. six years after the second deportation of Jews to Babylon. In Ezekiel 13, the prophet spoke against false prophets (1-16) and prophetesses (17-23). In this chapter, we have a reference to the time from the beginning of Judah’s deportation in 605 B.C. to the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. Thus, Ezekiel like Amos is speaking of only a near reference to the day of the Lord in his day.

In Ezekiel 30, the prophet refers to “the day of the Lord” in the context of the destruction of Egypt (29:19-20) which was fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt. All the nations who were in alliance with Egypt also were defeated by Babylon. There is thus no far eschatological reference to all the nations.

Zechariah makes a reference to the day of the Lord in chapter 14 of this book. The prophecy in this chapter deals entirely with the far eschatological fulfillment rather than a near one since the Assyrian and Babylonian judgments from God were already history. Zechariah 14:1-2 is a prophecy regarding the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week. Zechariah 14:3-8 is a prophecy regarding the Second Advent of Jesus Christ which ends Daniel’s Seventieth Week. Zechariah 14:9-21 is a prophecy regarding the subsequent millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

The day of the Lord is found in Malachi 4:5 which also will have a far eschatological fulfillment during the tribulation period.

This great theme appears in the book of Zephaniah (1:7, 14). The reference to “the day of the Lord” in Zephaniah 1:7 had a near fulfillment since Zephaniah 1:8-13 describes the situation in this prophet’s day in Judah. However, in Zephaniah 1:14, the context would indicate that “the day of the Lord” will have a far eschatological fulfillment since Zephaniah 1:15-18 speaks of God judging the inhabitants of the earth which He will do during the Seventieth Week of Daniel.

The prophetic theme of the day of the Lord appears here in Obadiah 15 where it is used of God’s judgment of Edom which was literally fulfilled in human history. This is indicated by the fact that Obadiah 15 presents two reasons for the indictments against Edom in verses 10-15.

To summarize, many of “the day of the Lord” prophecies have already been fulfilled in history in several different ways: (1) Assyrian deportation of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. (Amos 5:18, 20), (2) locust plague in Joel’s day (Joel 1:15), (3) Babylonian exile of Judah between 605-587 B.C. (Zeph. 1:7; Ezek. 13:5), (4) Babylonian defeat of Egypt in 587 B.C. (Ezek. 30:3), (5) destruction of Edom (Obad. 1-14).

There are several “day of the Lord” prophecies which will be fulfilled during the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week (Zeph. 1:14; Joel 2:1; 2:11, 31; 3:14; Zechariah 14:1-2; Is. 13:6-16). There are some that will be fulfilled through the Second Advent of Jesus Christ (Zech. 14:3-8) and His subsequent millennial reign (Zech. 14:9-21; Joel 3:17-21).

There are certain features with regards to all of these “day of the Lord” prophecies. First, there is God’s judgment of sin and His sovereignty over the nations including Israel. There is also the concept of imminency in regards to those prophecies having a near fulfillment (Joel 1:15; Is. 13:6; Zeph. 1:7; Ezek. 30:3) as well as those having a far eschatological fulfillment (Obad. 15; Joel 3:14; Zeph. 1:14). There was also the idea of God’s blessing on the nations and Israel and her future restoration under her Messiah and King.

Therefore, we can conclude that the phrase “the day of the Lord” prophecies described the immediate future as well as those events taking place during the Seventieth Week of Daniel and Christ’s Second Advent and millennial reign. Thus, in far eschatological sense, the “day of the Lord” is “not” a literal twenty-four period but rather, it is an extended period of time. It begins with God’s dealing with

Israel after the rapture of the church that takes place prior to Daniel's Seventieth Week. It extends through the Second Advent of Jesus Christ and His millennial reign, culminating with the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. However, the day of the Lord could also be a period of time taking place during the prophet's own lifetime or not too long after.

As we noted, in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-13, the apostle Paul teaches the Thessalonian Christian community that the rapture of the church will precede the day of the Lord. He sought to assure the Thessalonian church that the day of the Lord had not yet begun.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, **2** that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. **3** Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, **4** who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. **5** Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? **6** And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. **7** For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. **8** Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; **9** that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, **10** and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. **11** For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, **12** in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. **13** But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to reassure the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord had not taking place. The purpose of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 is to identify three events which indicate that the day of the Lord is taking place. In other words, these verses identify that these three events are evidence that the day of the Lord is underway.

As we noted, the noun *apostasia*, "the rebellion" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to the great rebellion led by the Antichrist during the seventieth week of Daniel. It does not refer to a great apostasy in the church since this event and the other two take place during the day of the Lord, i.e. the seventieth week of Daniel. This "rebellion" is described by Paul in the rest of 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 4, namely, **"and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."** Therefore, since the noun *apostasia* is ambiguous and begs to be defined, the apostle Paul explains what he means by his use of the word. Thus, this "rebellion" is Antichrist opposing God by demanding the human race worship him rather than God. Of course, Satan is behind the Antichrist since Isaiah 14:12-14 teaches that he desires the world to worship him and not God.

Now, in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, the apostle Paul also refers to the Antichrist's desecrating the temple and declaring himself God and demanding the worship of the world.

The expressions “**the man of lawlessness**” and “**the son of destruction**” is a reference to Antichrist.

Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that Antichrist will “**take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as God**” is a reference to the statement in Daniel 9:27, “**on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate.**”

Revelation 13:14-15 also mentions Antichrist exalting himself as God and receiving the worship of the world as such.

Paul’s statement that the Antichrist “**opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship**” means that he ranks himself superior to all the supreme beings worshiped by the various religions of the world, which will be a fulfillment of Daniel 11:36.

Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that Antichrist will “**take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as God**” is a reference to the statement in Daniel 9:27, “**on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate.**”

Daniel 7:25 makes mention of the Antichrist putting an end to the sacrificial offering during the final three and a half years of the seventieth week. Daniel 7:7-8 mentions the Antichrist, identifying him as “the little horn.” Daniel 7:23-25 interprets Daniel 7:7-8.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, “**he who now restrains**” refers to the Holy Spirit since He is the only one who has the power to restrain evil. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells the church age believer’s body anointing (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:18-20).

A comparison of these passages with 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 teaches that Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way and for the Holy Spirit to be taken out of the way, every church age believer would have to be removed as well since the Spirit permanently indwells every church age believer.

The Rapture of the Church in Relation to Daniel’s Seventieth Week

Related to the subject of the day of the Lord is the seventieth week of Daniel. In fact, the Scriptures teach that the day of the Lord will take place during the seventieth week of Daniel. The relationship between the rapture and the seventieth week. As we will note, some teach that the rapture will take place before the seventieth week while some assert that it will take place in the midway point of this seven year period. Others maintain it will take place after the seventieth week.

John H. Fish III writes “Evangelicals are agreed on the *fact* of the rapture of the church. Christ will come again to receive us to Himself. The dead in Christ will rise first, and then we who are alive will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:13–18; 1 Cor. 15:51–52). This should be the blessed hope of every believer. We will be with Christ. We will be changed to be like Him. This hope should sustain us in trials, encourage us in death, and stir us up to holy living in life. The *fact* of the rapture cannot be disputed by evangelicals.”²²⁹ What has been a matter of intense

²²⁹ There are some who are imprecise in their terminology and will say that they no longer believe in the rapture. What is usually meant is that they no longer believe in the pretribulational rapture. But all who believe the Bible must believe that the church will be *caught up* to meet Christ in the air when He comes again. This is the plain assertion of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The word *rapture* comes from the Latin of the word which is rendered in English *caught up*.

debate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is the time of the rapture in relation to other end time events. Premillennialists who hold to a future interpretation of Daniel's Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:24–27) and a futuristic interpretation of the book of Revelation see the coming of Christ in power and glory preceded by a time of tribulation and judgment here on the earth. The issue is whether the church will go through any, part of, or all of this tribulation.²³⁰ Pretribulationists believe the rapture will occur before the tribulation so that the church will escape the entire period. Midtribulationists see the church on earth during the first 3 1/2 years, but delivered from the last half. Posttribulationists believe the church will go through the entire period. A fourth view is that of the partial rapturists who hold that the godly and faithful will be raptured and escape the tribulation, but carnal Christians will be left to endure the trials.”²³¹

Before we note the various views of the rapture in relation to the seventieth week, we must first understand what is the seventieth week and its purpose or purposes?

As most students of the Bible and in particular biblical prophecy know, the prophecy of the seventieth week of Daniel helps to compose the prophecy of the seventy weeks which is recorded in Daniel 9:24-27.

In the Hebrew text of Daniel 9:24, the phrase “**seventy weeks**” literally reads, “seventy sevens,” which refers to years and “not” days as clearly indicated through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture. First of all, Daniel was reading Jeremiah's prophecy regarding Israel's Babylonian exile, which was to last 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-14). Furthermore, 2 Chronicles 36:21 speaks of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the Babylonian exile and it indicates quite clearly that the exile would last 70 years.

These 70 weeks in Daniel 9:24 cannot possibly be 70 weeks in the ordinary, literal sense or 490 days for the number has an obvious relation to the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy in Jeremiah 25:11 and 2 Chronicles 36:21. Finally, the context clearly indicates that Daniel is referring to years and not days since Daniel 9:2 indicates that Jeremiah's prophecy of Israel's Babylonian captivity would be 70 years.

The 70 years of captivity were the specific penalty for violating 70 sabbatic years, which would be 70 sevens, a total of 70 years. Seven days are in one week and every seventh year was a Sabbath rest and seventy sevens brought them to the year of Jubilee which is noted in Leviticus 25:8-12. The provisions for the land's Sabbath rest are recorded in detail in Leviticus 25:2-4, 26:32-35, 43 but in those 490 years, Israel had violated exactly 70 sabbatic years so they would go into captivity for 70 years to make amends.

The 490 could not designate days (about 1 1/3 years) for that would not be enough time for the events prophesied by Daniel 9:24-27 to occur and the same is true of 490 weeks of seven days each (i.e. 3,430 days, about 9 1/2 years). Also if days were intended one would expect Daniel to have added the phrase “**of days**” after “70 sevens” for in Daniel 10:2-3 he wrote literally, “three sevens of days”. Also, it is important to understand that the length of a prophetic year was “not” 365 days but rather 360 days since the solar year, which we live by, of 365.25 days was unknown to the nations in the Old Testament but the Jewish year of biblical times was lunar-solar and had only 360 days. This is borne out in

²³⁰ The debate on this issue is essentially confined to premillennialists. Amillennialists and postmillennialists do not accept a literal seven-year period of tribulation before the second advent of Christ and therefore find this discussion irrelevant.

²³¹ [*Emmaus Journal*](#), 1(1), 20–22 (1991)..

Revelation in John's vision of the Great Tribulation period since it describes the last 3 ½ years as precisely 1260 days (Rev. 12:6) and "**forty-two months**" of 30 days each (13:5). The "**time, times and half a time**" in Daniel 7:25 corresponds to these two passages in Revelation. Therefore, the "seventy weeks of Daniel" refer to 490 prophetic years of 360 days.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 constitutes the key to all prophetic interpretation and thus is the backbone of biblical prophecy and outlines the future of the nation of Israel. The prophecy of the seventy weeks is extremely important because it affirms the literal, grammatical, and historical method of interpreting of prophecy. It also clearly demonstrates the truth of the Scriptures. It also supports the idea that the church is a mystery meaning she was not known to Old Testament prophets like Daniel. The prophecy makes clear that this prophecy is directly related to the nation of Israel and its future. It also makes clear that Israel has a future and refutes replacement theology which contends the church has replaced Israel. Furthermore, the prophecy of the seventy weeks presents the chronology of prophecy.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 also refutes the attempt of liberal scholars to question the date of writing for Daniel's prophecies. Liberal scholars have assigned a second century B.C. date for the book of Daniel since they don't believe in predictive prophecy. They say Daniel wrote after the events recorded in the book that bears his name.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 further supports the biblical doctrine that God is sovereign. It also demonstrates that God is omnipotent in that He can bring to pass that which He declares will take place in history. It also demonstrates the fact that He is omniscient and knows what will take place in history before it happens.

There are several important factors regarding this prophecy. First of all, it is directly related to the nation of Israel and not the church. It also has to do with the city of Jerusalem. Secondly, there are two different princes mentioned in the prophecy. They are distinct from each other and should not be taken as referring to the same individual. In verse 25, the first prince is mentioned who is called "Messiah the prince." The second appears in verse 26 and he is called the "prince who is to come." Thirdly, the prophecy has a specific time period, namely 70 weeks or in other words 490 prophetic years.

Another important factor regarding the prophecy of the seventy weeks is that it is divided into three parts. The first contains 7 weeks or 49 prophetic years. The second is 62 weeks or 434 prophetic years. The third is one week or 7 prophetic years. The seventy weeks begins at a specific point in history, namely "**from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem**" (verse 25). At the end of the 69 weeks or 483 prophetic years the Messiah is said to appear (verse 25). After the 69th week, the Messiah is said to be "cut off" and Jerusalem and the temple will once again be destroyed but this time by the people of the prince who is to come.

The seventieth week also has a fixed point. It begins with the prince who is to come forging a seven-year treaty with the nation of Israel. In the middle of this seven year period, this prince of the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering in the temple.

There is disagreement among scholars as to whether or not there is a gap of an indefinite period of time between the completion of the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth. Also, as we have pointed out, dispensationalism in contrast to other interpretive approaches views Israel's rejection of her Messiah and

His death as taking place after the sixty-ninth week and the completion of the six divine objectives mentioned in verse 24 are left for the seventieth week. Those who argue that the seventieth week follows immediately after the sixty-ninth week historically apply the divine objectives in verse 24 to the church, which they then view as the new Israel. However, adherents to dispensationalism which strictly adheres to the literal method of interpreting prophecy recognize a distinction between God's program for the church and His program for Israel. Thus, dispensationalists view the fulfillment of the seventieth week is yet future.

There are several major factors which support the view that there is a time gap between the fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth. First, the six divine objectives which appear in Daniel 9:24 must be fulfilled within the seventy weeks. However, these have emphatically not been fulfilled historically. For instance, the objective of anointing the most holy place has not taken place within the 490 years. The holy place was destroyed in Daniel 9:26 but then in Daniel 9:27 we see it rebuilt since sacrifices were allowed under the "firm covenant." However, this temple does not presently exist. Therefore, one must see a future fulfillment during the seventieth week in Daniel 9:27, which thus necessitates a time gap, which corresponds to the church age as we noted.

A second major factor supporting a time gap is that Daniel 9:26 says that the Messiah will be cut off after the sixty-nine weeks and not during the seventieth week. Thirdly, the "he" in Daniel 9:27 refers to "the prince who is to come" in Daniel 9:26, if one follows the rules of grammar which would support the view that the nearest antecedent for the "he" in verse 27 is "the prince who is to come" in Daniel 9:26. Connected to this third point, is that if the "he" in Daniel 9:27 is the Messiah, then one cannot reconcile the fact that the temple sacrifices continued until 70 A.D. over thirty years after the crucifixion of Christ. Furthermore, the "he" in Daniel 9:27 breaks the covenant. At what point did Christ make a covenant with the Jews and then break it? There is nothing in the New Testament which would even suggest this.

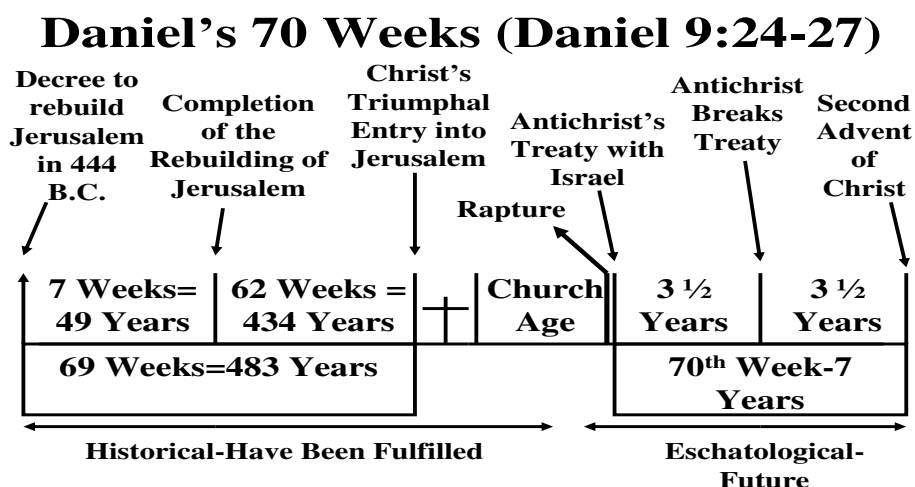
Another major factor which supports the time gap is that the events mentioned in the last three and a half years of Daniel 9:27 fit perfectly with the events described in the book of Revelation. Furthermore, if the first sixty-nine weeks have been literally fulfilled in history, then we would expect the seventieth week to be as well. Of course we have not seen a literal fulfillment in history of the seventieth week. We have not seen a Roman dictator make a seven-year treaty with Israel and then break it in the middle of this seven year period. Nor, have we seen in history a Roman dictator put a stop to the sacrifices in the temple. In fact, no temple is standing in Israel today. However, Christ's first advent and presentation of Himself to the nation of Israel as her king has taken place literally in history as recorded in the gospels and thus fulfilling literally Daniel 9:25. We have also seen the fulfillment of Daniel 9:26 and the cutting off of the Messiah after this presentation, which is recorded in the gospels. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Romans as predicted in Daniel 9:26. Thus, it follows that if Daniel 9:25-26 were fulfilled literally in history, then we can expect the same for Daniel 9:27.

As we will note, this prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27 refers to four hundred ninety prophetic years of Israel's history. Sixty-nine of these seventy weeks, four hundred eighty-three prophetic years, has been fulfilled in human history. However, the seventieth week has not but will take place after the rapture of the church and will begin with Antichrist's peace treaty with Israel and will last seven years and will end with the Second Advent of Christ.

This prophecy of Daniel's took place in the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, in 538 B.C., when Daniel was between 85 and 90 years of age, 66 years after he had been exiled to Babylon under

Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C. As a result of his prophetic abilities, Daniel was elevated from the position of a captive slave to ultimately becoming the prime minister of the Babylonian empire, which at that time, ruled the world. However, the Babylonian empire was overthrown by Medo-Persian Empire, which paved the way for the liberation of the Jewish captives who had been in exile since Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of Jerusalem in 606 B.C.

Medo-Persian Empire under Darius honored Daniel who served Darius' successor Cyrus, which takes us to the days that Daniel received the prophecy regarding the 70 prophetic weeks regarding the future of the nation of Israel and Her Messiah. Daniel has now seen a new great world power emerge and is wondering about the future and especially the future of his own people who are in exile in Babylon.



Daniel 9:24: The Six-Fold Purpose for the Seventy Weeks

Daniel 9:24 “Seventy units of seven years have been decreed for the benefit of your people as well as for the benefit of your holy city in order to put an end to the rebellion and in addition to bring sin to an end as well as to atone for iniquity likewise to bring about everlasting righteousness as well as to seal up prophetic vision and in addition to anoint the most holy place.” (Author's translation)

The angel Gabriel begins to give Daniel an answer to his prayer, which ultimately is above and beyond what Daniel asked for. Remember, Daniel was interceding for the Jewish exiles in Babylon because of Jeremiah's prophecy recorded in Jeremiah 25:11-12 and 29:10-14. He was praying that God's will for Israel, as revealed in Jeremiah's prophecy would be accomplished. Daniel's prayer for the Jewish exiles as recorded in Daniel 9:3-19 makes clear that this is what Daniel was praying for. However, Daniel 9:24-27 makes clear that Gabriel provides him with more information with regards to the future of the nation of Israel than he asked for. Therefore, the prophecy of the seventy weeks not only answered Daniel's prayer that the Jewish exiles would return from Babylon to their homeland after seventy years but also provided Daniel a comprehensive understanding of God's program for the nation of Israel. The prophecy not only made clear that Jerusalem would be rebuilt but that her Messiah would appear but would be rejected. She would be disciplined again for rejecting her Messiah and Jerusalem

would once again be destroyed. The nation would also be deceived into entering into an agreement with a Roman dictator who will stop the sacrifices in the temple but would be destroyed in the end by God.

So the prophecy of the seventy weeks tells Daniel that Israel would continue to rebel against God and would thus again be disciplined by Him severely. However, this corporate apostasy would come to an end. Her corporate sin would be dealt with, which we know was dealt with through the cross of Jesus Christ. Everlasting righteousness would be experienced in Israel. All that God predicted with regards to the nation of Israel would come to pass.

Gabriel begins by telling Daniel that seventy sevens have been decreed for his people as well as his holy city. The first challenge we have is the meaning of the seventy weeks. Is it referring to weeks of days or years? There are several factors which support the interpretation that the seventy weeks are years and not days. First of all, Daniel was reading Jeremiah's prophecy regarding Israel's Babylonian exile, which was to last 70 years. Furthermore, 2 Chronicles 36:21 speaks of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the Babylonian exile and it indicates quite clearly that the exile would last 70 years. Thus we can see that these 70 weeks in Daniel 9:24 cannot possibly be 70 weeks in the ordinary, literal sense or 490 days for the number has an obvious relation to the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy in Jeremiah 25:11 and 2 Chronicles 36:21. The context clearly indicates that Daniel is referring to years and not days since Daniel 9:2 indicates that Jeremiah's prophecy of Israel's Babylonian captivity would be 70 years.

The 70 years of captivity were the specific penalty for violating 70 sabbatic years, which would be 70 sevens, a total of 70 years. Seven days are in one week and every seventh year was a Sabbath rest and seventy sevens brought them to the year of Jubilee which is noted in Leviticus 25:8-12. The provisions for the land's Sabbath rest are recorded in detail in Leviticus 25:2-4, 26:32-35, 43 but in those 490 years, Israel had violated exactly 70 sabbatic years so they would go into captivity for 70 years to make amends.

The 490 could not designate days (about 1 1/3 years) for that would not be enough time for the events prophesied by Daniel 9:24-27 to occur and the same is true of 490 weeks of seven days each (i.e. 3,430 days, about 9 1/2 years). Also if days were intended one would expect Daniel to have added the phrase "**of days**" after "70 sevens" for in Daniel 10:2-3 he wrote literally, "three sevens of days".

It is also important to understand that the length of a prophetic year was "not" 365 days but rather 360 days since the solar year, which we live by, of 365.25 days was unknown to the nations in the Old Testament but the Jewish year of biblical times was lunar-solar and had only 360 days. This is borne out in Revelation in John's vision of the Great Tribulation period since it describes the last 3 1/2 years as precisely 1260 days (Rev. 12:6) and "**forty-two months**" of 30 days each (13:5). The "**time, times and half a time**" in Daniel 7:25 corresponds to these two passages in Revelation. Therefore, the "seventy weeks of Daniel" refer to 490 prophetic years of 360 days.

Notice that Gabriel informs Daniel in Daniel 9:24 that this decree of seventy weeks of years or 490 prophetic years was for the benefit of Daniel's people and his holy city. Daniel's people is an obvious reference to the nation of Israel, and not the church since the church was unknown to Daniel and were simply not his people. The church age was unknown to the Old Testament prophets since it was mystery revealed only through the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles. Daniel's holy city is a reference to Jerusalem of course. Therefore, this prophecy has no relation to the church whatsoever.

Gabriel proceeds to describe for Daniel the six-fold objectives of the seventy sevens or seventy units of seven years (490 prophetic years). The first three deal with the corporate sin of the nation of Israel, which will be brought to an end at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ since at that time there will be a national regeneration of Israel as a result of the majority in Israel exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. This faith appropriates the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Thus, the basis for the first three is the substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ on the cross. The first three objectives will take place on the Day of Atonement which takes place at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. The last three deal with the millennial kingdom, which will be established at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

“To put an end to the rebellion” speaks of the corporate rebellion of the nation of Israel against God being brought to an end on the Day of Atonement which will occur at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. This phrase does not refer to the cross of Jesus Christ since the nation of Israel continued to rebel against God after the cross. However, the cross of Christ is the basis for this rebellion being brought to an end. Rather it refers to the Day of Atonement which will occur at the Second Advent since at that time the rebellion against God by the nation of Israel will come to an end since at that time there will be a national regeneration in Israel.

“To bring sin to an end” also speaks of the corporate sin of the nation of Israel being brought to an end on the Day of Atonement which again will occur at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. This phrase does not refer to the cross of Jesus Christ since the nation of Israel continued to sin and rebel against God after the cross. However, the cross of Christ is the basis for Israel’s sin being brought to an end. Rather it refers to the Day of Atonement occurring at the Second Advent since at that time the corporate sin of Israel will be brought to an end since at that time there will be a national regeneration in Israel. At the Second Advent the majority in Israel will exercise faith in Jesus Christ for eternal salvation and will be regenerated and receive the forgiveness of their sins. So at the Second Advent the corporate sin of Israel will be brought to an end.

“To atone for iniquity” is again another reference to the corporate sin of the nation of Israel but this time being atoned for on the Day of Atonement which again will occur at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. This phrase does not refer to the cross of Jesus Christ since the nation of Israel continued to sin and rebel against God after the cross. However, the cross of Christ is the basis for Israel’s sin being atoned for. Therefore, this third objective refers to the Day of Atonement which will take place at the Second Advent. At that time the corporate sin of Israel will be atoned for in the sense that the majority in Israel will exercise faith in Jesus Christ which appropriates the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Therefore, we can see that the first three objectives for the seventy sevens or weeks (490 prophetic years) refers to the corporate or national sin of the nation of Israel being brought to an end on the Day of Atonement which will take place at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. At that time the majority in the nation of Israel will exercise faith in Jesus Christ so as to appropriate His finished work on the cross which He accomplished during His first advent (Jeremiah 31:33-34; Ezekiel 37; Zechariah 12; Romans 11:25-27). Thus, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross affects the national regeneration and restoration of the nation of Israel.

The implication of these first three objectives is that the seventieth week has yet to take place in history and is still yet future since these three objectives and the last three are all to be fulfilled

within the seventy weeks. At this time in history, the nation of Israel is still in rejection of Jesus Christ and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ has yet to take place.

Another implication which would be obvious to Daniel based upon his knowledge of the Mosaic Law is that God would provide a future sacrifice, which would satisfy the demands of His holiness that sin and sinners be judged. This sacrifice would be future from Daniel's perspective in the sixth century B.C. and would deal with the corporate sin of his people. The sin of his people could never come to an end without a sacrifice to satisfy God's holiness. In other words, these first three objectives mentioned by Gabriel in Daniel 9:24 could never be accomplished or fulfilled without a sacrifice which would completely satisfy the demands of God's holiness. The blood of the animal sacrifices stipulated in the Mosaic Law could not satisfy but only the blood of Christ.

"To bring in everlasting righteousness" refers to the righteousness which will be manifested by regenerate Israel during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The millennial kingdom will be characterized by righteousness.

"To seal up prophetic vision" denotes that all that God communicated to Israel through the prophets regarding her future and the future of planet earth will come to pass or in other words, will be completely fulfilled. This has not been fulfilled yet because much prophecy has yet to be fulfilled. For example Daniel's the rapture of the church, the Seventieth Week, the Second Advent of Christ, the resurrection of Old Testament Israel, the national regeneration of Israel, and Christ's millennial reign on earth have yet to be fulfilled. We have yet to see fulfilled in history the Gog/Magog rebellion, the destruction of the present heavens and earth, the Great White Throne Judgment and the creation of the new heavens and earth have yet to come to pass.

"To anoint the most holy place" refers to the millennial temple being anointed as a symbolic act of dedicating this temple to the worship of the Lord. This is yet future since we have yet to see the millennial reign of Christ take place in history. In fact, there is no temple standing in Israel today. This sixth and final infinitive clause refers to all the prophetic, supernatural revelations from God, which was communicated to Israel through the prophets like Daniel. It speaks of all the revelation which Israel had communicated to her by the prophets and which revelation was inspired by the God the Holy Spirit and revealed the Father's will for the nation of Israel and planet earth.

To summarize the first three divine objectives for the seventy sevens or weeks (490 prophetic years) deal with the Day of Atonement which will take place at the Second Advent of Christ. The last three deal with our Lord's literal one thousand year bodily reign as King over all the earth in which He will rule from Jerusalem over the nations. Notice the order in that the Second Advent precedes the millennial kingdom. Thus, Daniel is premillennial.

Also, each of these objectives has yet to be fulfilled in history and is thus awaiting fulfillment in the future. The Second Advent of Christ has not taken place and neither has His subsequent millennial reign on the earth which are being referred to by these six objectives.

Daniel 9:25: The Beginning of the Seventy Weeks and End of Sixty-Ninth Week

Daniel 9:25 "Therefore, please know, yes please carefully consider: From the issuing of the command to restore, yes to rebuild Jerusalem until an anointed one, a prince, there will be seven

units of seven years and sixty-two units of seven years. It will be restored, yes it will be rebuilt with a public square as well as a defensive trench even during distressful times.” (Author’s translation)

Gabriel desires that Daniel know and carefully consider the exact time when these seventy units of seven years or 490 prophetic years would begin and when the sixty-ninth week would end as a result of these seventy units of seven years being decreed for Israel and Jerusalem.

“From the issuing of the command to restore, yes to rebuild Jerusalem” was the fourth of four decrees made by Persian rulers in reference to the Jews: (1) Cyrus’ decree in 538 B.C. (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13). (2) Darius’ I decree in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6:1; 6-12). (3) Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26). (4) Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree in 444 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

The first three decrees say nothing about the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem itself since the first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to finances for animal sacrifices at the temple but the fourth decree granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls.

“From the issuing of the command to restore, yes to rebuild Jerusalem” informs Daniel as to when the seventy weeks or seventy units of seven years (490 prophetic years) begin. It will begin with the restoration and rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.

The decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah in 444 B.C. to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8) is the decree being referred to here in Daniel 9:25, which marks the beginning of the seventy weeks or the seventy units of seven years (490 prophetic years). This is indicated by the fact that this decree makes a direct reference to the restoration of the city of Jerusalem (2:3, 5) and of the city gates and walls (2:3, 8).

Also, Artaxerxes wrote a letter to Asaph to give materials to be used specifically for the walls (2:8). Furthermore, the book of Nehemiah and Ezra 4:7-23 indicate that the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem was done during tremendous adversity just as Gabriel predicted to Daniel here in Daniel 9:25. Therefore, the only decree that adequately fits the criteria listed in Daniel 9:25 is the decree of Artaxerxes in 444 B.C. which is mentioned in the book of Nehemiah. This decree marks the beginning of the seventy weeks.

“It will be restored, yes it will be rebuilt with a public square as well as a defensive trench even during distressful times” tells Daniel that Jerusalem will be built during times of great adversity. This was fulfilled during the days of Nehemiah as recorded in the book which bears his name.

“Until an anointed one, a prince, there will be seven units of seven years and sixty-two units of seven years” marks the end of sixty-nine units of seven years or sixty-nine weeks which is 483 prophetic years and was fulfilled in history when the Lord Jesus Christ presented Himself to Israel as her Messiah (Luke 19:28-44).

The **“anointed one, a prince”** is reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. The **“seven units of seven years”** or **“seven weeks”** is 49 years, which refers to the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:12-15). The

“sixty-two weeks” or “sixty-two units of seven years” is 434 years. The “seven weeks” is to be added to the “sixty-two weeks,” which equals 483 years.

So we can see that the first seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks that followed it ran consecutively with no time between them and totaled 483 years. This has been fulfilled in history in that it extended from March 5, 444 B.C to March 30, 33 A.D. This would be 173,800 days and remember a year is 360 days.

In order to understand how 444 B.C. to A.D. 33 can equal 483 years, we must understand that the Jewish calendar had 360 days per year, thus 483 years times 360 days equals 173,880 days. The Gregorian Calendar contains 365 days a year and under this 444 B.C. to A.D. 33 would be 476 years since only one year expired between 1 B.C. and A.D. 1.

A total of 476 years divided by four (a leap year every four years) gives 119 additional days but three days must be subtracted from 119 because centennial years are not leap years, though every 400 years is a leap year. Thus, 476 years times 365 days equals 173,740 days and if we add 116 days in leap years and 24 days (March 5-30), we have 173,880 days.

If we multiply the sixty-nine weeks by seven years for each week by 360 days, would give us a total of 173,800 days. There are 476 solar years between 444 B.C. and 33 A.D. Now, if we multiply 476 by 365.24219879 or by 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45.975 seconds as Hoehner suggests one arrives at the number 173,855 days, 6 hours, 52 minutes, 44 seconds or 173,855 days. There are 25 days to be accounted for between 444 B.C. and 33 A.D. If we add 25 days to March 5, 444 B.C., we arrive at March 30, 33 A.D., which was amazingly Nisan 10, 33 A.D. This was the day of the Lord Jesus’ triumphal or tearful entry into Jerusalem to present Himself to Israel as her king.

Luke 19:44 records the Lord Jesus Christ telling the Jews in His day that the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed because they did not recognize the day of their visitation meaning they did not recognize Him as their Messiah on the day He presented Himself as Israel’s king. If the Jews studied the prophecy in Daniel 9:25, they would have been able to calculate the exact day when their Messiah arrive. Thus, they would have recognized Jesus of Nazareth as their king since He presented Himself on the last day of the 483 year! From a literal understanding of this prophecy in Daniel 9:25, they would have seen that Jesus fulfilled this prophecy to the exact day.

Daniel 9:26: The Events Between the Sixty-Ninth and Seventieth Week

Daniel 9:26 “Then, after the sixty two-units of seven years, the Messiah will be executed so that He possesses nothing. Next, the people of the coming leader will destroy the city as well as the sanctuary. Indeed its end will take place with a flood. Yes, there will be war up to the end. Desolations have been decreed.”

Gabriel now proceeds to inform Daniel of events which will transpire after the four hundred eighty-third prophetic year. The first event that will take place is the execution of the Messiah so that He possesses nothing. This was fulfilled in history by Jesus of Nazareth when He was executed as a criminal by Rome through crucifixion. The fact that the Messiah would possess nothing as a result of this execution was also fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth since it denotes that He did not establish in bodily form His millennial kingdom on the earth. The millennial reign of Christ did not take place as a result of

Israel rejecting Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah and King (John 1:11). Thus, Gabriel's statement here in Daniel 9:26 makes crystal clear there is a time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week.

Remember the sixty-two weeks are sixty-two units of seven years or four hundred thirty-four prophetic years. They immediately follow the first seven weeks which are seven units of seven years or forty-nine prophetic years. There is no time gap in between the seven units of seven years or first seven weeks and the sixty-two units of seven years or four hundred and thirty-four prophetic years. They are to be added together in this prophecy and thus constitute sixty-nine weeks which are sixty-nine units of seven years or four hundred eighty-three prophetic years. Here in Daniel 9:26, Gabriel informs Daniel that the execution of the Messiah will take place "after" the sixty-two weeks, i.e. the sixty-two units of seven years or four hundred thirty-four prophetic years. Thus, the execution is "after" the sixty-nine weeks, i.e. the sixty-nine units of seven years which are four hundred eighty-three prophetic years. The seventieth week does not begin until the treaty between the prince who is to come and Israel is established. The execution of the Messiah comes before this treaty. Therefore, those interpreters who argue there is no time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week are in error. Consequently, the seventieth week is still yet future.

There are several major factors which support the view that there is a time gap between the fulfillment of the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth. First, the six divine objectives which appear in Daniel 9:24 must be fulfilled within the seventy weeks. However, these have emphatically not been fulfilled historically. For instance, the objective of anointing the most holy place has not taken place within the 490 years. The holy place was destroyed in Daniel 9:26 but then in Daniel 9:27 we see it rebuilt since sacrifices were allowed under the "firm covenant." However, this temple does not presently exist. Therefore, one must see a future fulfillment during the seventieth week in Daniel 9:27, which thus necessitates a time gap, which corresponds to the church age as we noted.

Another major factor supporting a time gap is that the "he" in Daniel 9:27 refers to "the prince who is to come" since in Daniel 9:26, if one follows the rules of grammar which would support the view that the nearest antecedent for the "he" in verse 27 is "the prince who is to come" in Daniel 9:26. Connected to this third point, is that if the "he" in Daniel 9:27 is the Messiah, then one cannot reconcile the fact that the temple sacrifices continued until 70 A.D. over thirty years after the crucifixion of Christ. Furthermore, the "he" in Daniel 9:27 breaks the covenant. At what point did Christ make a covenant with the Jews and then break it? There is nothing in the New Testament which would even suggest this.

Another major factor which supports the time gap is that the events mentioned in the last three and a half years of Daniel 9:27 fit perfectly with the events described in the book of Revelation. Furthermore, if the first sixty-nine weeks have been literally fulfilled in history, then we would expect the seventieth week to be as well. Of course we have not seen a literal fulfillment in history of the seventieth week. We have not seen a Roman dictator make a seven-year treaty with Israel and then break it in the middle of this seven year period. Nor, have we seen in history a Roman dictator put a stop to the sacrifices in the temple. In fact, no temple is standing in Israel today. However, Christ's first advent and presentation of Himself to the nation of Israel as her king has taken place literally in history as recorded in the gospels and thus fulfilling literally Daniel 9:25. We have also seen the fulfillment of Daniel 9:26 and the cutting off of the Messiah after this presentation, which is recorded in the gospels. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Romans as predicted in Daniel 9:26. Thus, it follows that if Daniel 9:25-26 were fulfilled literally in history, then we can expect the same for Daniel 9:27.

So in Daniel 9:26, the first event that will take place after the four hundred eighty-third prophetic year, which ended with Jesus Christ presenting Himself to Israel as their king, is that the Messiah will be executed so that He possesses nothing. Gabriel then proceeds to tell Daniel that there will also be a second event following the execution of the Messiah, namely the people of the coming leader will destroy the city as well as the sanctuary. Gabriel then advances upon this statement by informing him that Jerusalem's end will take place with a flood, which is a metaphor for sudden destruction by war. Like the first event, this second event has been fulfilled in history as well. In 70 A.D. the Roman armies under Titus laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed this city as well as Herod's temple. This destruction was not only in fulfillment of the prophecy here in Daniel 9:26 but fulfilled the Lord Jesus Christ's prophecy of the destruction of this city (Luke 19:43-44) and temple (Matthew 24:2; Luke 21:6).

In A.D. 70 less than 40 years after Christ's prophecy, the Roman legions of Titus besieged Jerusalem, killing more than one million of her inhabitants, and totally fulfilling Christ's prophecy in Luke 19:44. The bloodthirsty cry of the people in Matthew 27:23, "Let Him be crucified" and in Matthew 27:25, "let His blood be on us, and on our children" had its tragic fulfillment for 40 years later the Roman legions led by Titus sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Herodian Temple and slaughtered the citizens of Jerusalem.

Notice, in Daniel 9:26 that Gabriel informs Daniel that it will be the people and not the coming leader who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple. Remember Antichrist does not destroy Jerusalem or the Temple according to the book of Revelation. Zechariah 12 and 14 teach that Jerusalem will be under attack but some Jews will continue to fight in the city until the Second Advent of Christ.

The coming leader is a reference to Antichrist. It is not a reference to Jesus Christ since He is not a Roman. Furthermore, the Messiah is said to be executed in the first statement in verse 26. So this coming leader comes after the execution of the Messiah.

The coming leader is also not a reference to the Roman general Titus who led the siege against Jerusalem in 70 A.D. since the emphasis in the passage is upon "the people." It is stated this way because this prophecy would link the Roman destruction with the event which took place in 70 A.D. while simultaneously setting up Antichrist to be linked to the first "he" in Daniel 9:27 and the seventieth week. The coming leader also cannot be Antiochus Epiphanes IV since he did not destroy Jerusalem or the temple.

Therefore, this second event mentioned in Daniel 9:26 makes clear that the people and the coming leader will not appear on the pages of history at the same time. Daniel 9:27 also make it crystal clear that the coming leader is the future persecutor of the nation of Israel during the seventieth week or seventieth unit of seven years.

So the phrase "**the people of the coming leader**" simply means that this coming leader will originate from the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the Herodian temple in 70 A.D.

Now, we know from the prophecies in Daniel chapter seven that Antichrist will be a Roman. This is indicated by the fact that "the little horn" in this chapter comes from the fourth beast, which history makes clear is a reference to the Roman Empire. In Daniel 7:19-26, the little horn is described as waging war against God's people up to the time of the Second Advent of Christ, which corresponds to the depiction of the Antichrist in Revelation (Daniel 7:11, 20-26; 8:25; Revelation 13:1-10; 19:20).

The description of the little horn in Daniel 7:8 and 20 indicates that the Antichrist will start off as an insignificant world ruler among ten other rulers of kingdoms but will defeat three of these ten kingdoms and emerge as a world ruler. The eyes of the little horn speak of the faculty of careful observation implying that the Antichrist will be extremely intelligent. The boastful speaking indicates that the Antichrist will be a great speaker who in the judgment of God is arrogant in his words. In Daniel 7:25, the interpreter tells Daniel that the little horn will speak out against God Himself so when Daniel says that the little horn was speaking boastfully in Daniel 7:8 and 20, it is in relation to God.

The Scriptures give the Antichrist many titles and names: (1) **“The beast”** (Revelation 13:1-2) (2) **“The prince that will come”** (Daniel 9:26-27) (3) The **“man of lawlessness”** (2 Thessalonians 2:3-10) (4) The **“scarlet beast”** (Revelation 17:3) (5) The willful king (Daniel 11:36-40) (6) **“The man of sin”** (2 Thessalonians 2:3), (7) **“The son of perdition”** (2 Thessalonians 2:3) (8) The Desolater (Daniel 9:27). He will not appear until the Day of the Lord has begun (2 Thessalonians 2:2) and his manifestation is being hindered by the Restrainer (2 Thessalonians 2:6-7) and this appearance will be preceded by the rapture of the church (2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Antichrist will be a Gentile since he arises from the sea according to Revelation 13:1 and since the sea depicts the Gentile nations according to Revelation 17:15, he must be of Gentile origin. He will arise from the Roman Empire, since he is a ruler of the people who destroyed Jerusalem (Dan. 9:26). Antichrist is the head of the last form of Gentile world dominion, for he is like a leopard, a bear, and a lion (Revelation 13:1; compare Daniel 7:7-8, 20, 24; Revelation 17:9-11) and as such he is a political leader.

Daniel 7:21-22 reveals the following regarding the little horn: (1) He will persecute the saints of the Most High and is thus a person and Daniel 7:24 says that he is a king. (2) He will overcome the nation of Israel and will bring that nation under his authority (Revelation 12:13-17; 17:7). (3) He will be judged by God (Revelation 19:19-20) and Israel will thus enter into her millennial reign.

Daniel 7:23 reveals that the little horn will have a world-wide kingdom (Compare Revelation 13:7) and it will be an overwhelming conquest, which anticipates a coming one-world government under a worldwide dictator.

Daniel 7:25 corresponds to Revelation 13:1-10 and gives us three more additional facts about the little horn: (1) He will oppose God’s authority as indicated by the phrase **“He will speak out against the Most High”** (Compare Revelation 13:6). (2) He will oppress born-again Israel as indicated by the statement **“wear down the saints of the Highest One”**. (3) He will introduce an entirely new era in which he will abandon all previous laws and institute his own system as indicated by the statement **“he will intend to make alterations in times in law”** (Compare Daniel 11:36-37; 2 Thessalonians 2:4).

Daniel 9:27 says that Antichrist will pretend to be Israel’s benefactor and make a treaty with her but will turn against her in the mid way point of Daniel’s Seventieth Week and will persecute Israel and occupy Jerusalem for three and a half years. He will make a seven-year treaty with the leaders of Israel, which will begin the final seven prophetic years called the seventieth week and during the middle of this seventieth week after three and a half years, he will break the treaty and stop the sacrifices in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and declare himself God. Nothing in history corresponds to the events described during this seventieth week. The Second Advent of Christ has yet to take place.

Daniel 7:26 refers to the Supreme Court of Heaven, (God the Father) passing down the decision to remove the little horn's power, which will take place at the Second Advent of Christ, which terminates Daniel's Seventieth Week (See Revelation 19:11-20:6).

The Antichrist will seek to prevent Christ's rule on the earth by attempting to destroy God's covenant people Israel but his reign will be short, only three and a half years and will be terminated with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ who at that time will establish His millennial reign on earth in fulfillment of God's covenant promises to Israel. The prophecy in Daniel chapter seven concerning the little horn will take place in the future since no such ruler has attained world-wide rulership over a one-world government, no such ruler has subdued three of ten kings who were ruling at once and no such ruler has persecuted Israel for three and a half years and no such ruler has been destroyed by the return of Jesus Christ!

Thus, history has made clear that the first two events which are prophesied to take place after the sixty-ninth week or four hundred eighty-third prophetic year have been fulfilled in history. The sixty-ninth week ended with Jesus Christ presenting Himself to Israel as her king. They rejected him as recorded in the gospels. Then Gabriel predicts that between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week the Messiah would be executed. This too was fulfilled by Jesus Christ when He was crucified as a criminal by the Romans at the instigation of the Jewish leaders. The second event predicted to take place by Gabriel between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week is the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple by a nation. This too was fulfilled in 70 A.D by the Romans in fulfillment of the prophecies communicated by Jesus Christ to His disciples.

Daniel 9:26 comes to an end with an emphatic clause. Gabriel advances upon his statement that Jerusalem's end will come with a flood and intensifies it by informing Daniel that there will be war up to the end of the seventieth week for the city of Jerusalem. Then very solemnly he tells him that desolations have been decreed by God for Jerusalem. Therefore, the elect angel is informing Daniel that Israel and her capital city will continue to suffer terribly right up to the end of the seventieth week. Gabriel is telling us here in the church age that Israel and its capital city will suffer terribly from the Roman invasion in 70 A.D. right up to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which terminates the seventieth week and the time of the Gentiles.

The Times of the Gentiles will come to an end upon the completion of these four hundred ninety prophetic years. The times of the Gentiles refers to an extended period of time when the Gentiles are the dominant world powers and Israel is subject to those powers. It extends from the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C. and continues through the Tribulation (Revelation 11:2) and ends with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

This period of history includes the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the church age and the Tribulation period. This phrase does not rule out temporary Jewish control of Jerusalem as has occurred in the past during the Maccabean era (164-63 B.C), the first Jewish revolt against Rome (A.D. 66-70), the second Jewish revolt (A.D. 132-135) and now since 1967 and the Six-Day War. However, this control is only temporary because Revelation 11:1-2 predicts at least another three-and-one-half years of Gentile domination during the last half of Daniel's Seventieth Week, also known as the Tribulation. Therefore, any Jewish takeover of the city of David before the Second Advent of Christ must be therefore viewed as a temporary one and does not mean that "the times of the Gentiles" has ended since

it can only end with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which will forever stop Gentile powers waging war against Israel.

In Luke 21:24, the Lord Jesus Christ makes mention of “the times of the Gentiles” in relation to the Tribulation period in His Olivet Discourse. There are two great prophecies that appear in Daniel chapter two and chapter seven, which present to us the prophetic outline of the Gentiles during the Times of the Gentiles. The prophecy that appears in Daniel chapter two, views the Times of the Gentiles from the perspective of man whereas the prophecy in Daniel chapter seven, views it from God’s perspective. These two prophecies also reveal that there will be a revived form of the Roman Empire during the Tribulation period under Antichrist, which will be destroyed by the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The expression “**the fullness of the Gentiles**” in Romans 11:26 is not the same as the expression used by our Lord in Luke 21:24, namely, “**the times of the Gentiles.**”

The apostle Paul in Romans 11:26 cites Isaiah 59:20 to support his assertion that there will be a national regeneration of Israel and to teach that it will take place at Christ’s Second Advent.

Romans 11:26 And then, in the following way, all Israel will be delivered just as it stands written for all of eternity, “The Deliverer will arrive out from Zion. He will remove totally and completely the godless ones from Jacob.” (Author’s translation)

Romans 11:26 teaches that at the Second Advent of Christ and immediately after the full number of Gentiles that have been elected by the Father in eternity past have been saved there will be a national regeneration of Israel.

Therefore, in Romans 11:26, the apostle Paul cites Isaiah 59:20 to support his assertion that immediately after the full number of Gentiles that have been elected by the Father in eternity past have been saved there will be a national regeneration of Israel at Christ’s Second Advent.

So “**the fullness of the Gentiles**” in Romans 11:25 and the “**times of the Gentiles**” in Luke 21:24 both end with the Second Advent of Christ. However, the former deals with the number of Gentiles who will be saved whereas as the latter is political dealing with the political control of Jerusalem.

Gabriel is thus teaching with these last two statements in Daniel 9:26 that from the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in 70 A.D by the Romans up to the end of the seventieth week, war and desolation will characterize the experience of the Jews and their capital city. The Jews revolted against the Romans in 135 A.D. but this was put down decisively. From this time on Israel ceased to exist as a political entity. The Muslims exercised control over Palestine from 1100 to 1291. By 1517, it has fallen to the Ottoman Turks. The first Zionist settlement in Palestine was established in 1882. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 stated Britain’s support of a national Jewish homeland in Palestine. The British occupied Palestine in 1918.

Hitler’s persecution of the Jews in Europe increased Jewish migration to Palestine during the 1930’s and 40’s. Relations between Arabs and Jews deteriorated during this time. After World War II, the United States supported the Zionist state. The United Nations voted in 1947 to partition Palestine. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed and war broke out between Israel and Egypt, Transjordan (later Jordan), Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. Israel however was victorious. Israel was attacked

again in 1967 and 1973 and in each instance, they were victorious. The State of Israel has not been attacked since 1973. However, Israel's relation to her neighbors continues to be strained.

So we can see that Gabriel's last two statements in Daniel 9:26 have come to pass in history. The Jewish people ceased to exist in Jerusalem and Palestine from 70 A.D. until recently when in 1948 they became a nation again and from the time they were reinstated in the land, they have suffered through several wars.

In Daniel 9:26, Gabriel makes clear that there is a time gap between the end of the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth week since he informs Daniel that there will be three major events taking place between these two weeks before the seventieth week begins. The seventieth week begins with Antichrist's treaty with Israel. The first event will be the execution of the Messiah which was fulfilled by Jesus Christ's crucifixion. The second event will be the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple by the people of the coming leader. This was fulfilled in 70 A.D. when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. The last event is that there will be war up to the end of the seventieth week for the Jewish people and their capital city. Desolations have been decreed by God for Jerusalem. This too has been fulfilled in history.

The Event Marking the Beginning of the Seventieth Week

Daniel 9:27 “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (NASB95)

“**And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week**” is composed of the conjunction *wa* (ו), “**and**,” which is followed by the third person masculine singular hiphil active perfect form of the verb *gā·ḥār* (גָּחַר), “**he will make**” and then we have the feminine singular form of the noun *b^erit* (בְּרִית), “**a covenant**” which is followed by the preposition *le* (ל) “**of**” and its object is the articular masculine plural form of the adjective *rāḇ* (רַב), “**the many**” and then we have the masculine singular noun *šā·ḥū^a* (שָׁחֻ), “**week**” which is modified by the singular cardinal number *’ē·ḥāḏ* (אֶחָד), “**one**.”

The conjunction *wa* means “then” since it is introducing a statement that marks the next event that will take place after the three events recorded in Daniel 9:26 which will take place after the sixty-ninth week. The conjunction *wa* introduces a statement which says that the coming leader from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple will establish a covenant with the leaders of the nation of Israel for one week, which is seven years. Therefore, this conjunction is marking this event as taking place sometime after the three events mentioned in verse 26.

The verb *gā·ḥār* and the other derivatives of the same root are associated with might and strength and often in the context of war. It is usually translated “to be strong, to prevail,” or “to have strength.” In the qal, the word usually means “to be superior to” or “to prevail” (cf. Exodus 17:11; Lamentations 1:16). This verb can also be used to denote the strength of something (cf. Job 21:7; Genesis 7:18ff., 24). It occasionally is used in the comparative with the preposition *min* and can “to be stronger.” The preposition *’āl* sometimes follows *gā·ḥār* to mean “to prevail over” (cf. 2 Samuel 11:23). In the piel

stem, the verb has a causative meaning in the sense of causing someone to become strong. It is used in the hithpael stem in Isaiah 42:13 when the Lord demonstrates Himself to be mighty against His enemies.

The verb *gā·bār* occurs only once in the hiphil stem, namely here in Daniel 9:27 where it means “to establish a strong or firm relationship with a particular group of people.” Here it refers to the prince who comes from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple “establishing a strong or firm relationship with” the nation of Israel during the seventieth week. The verb means that these two parties will enter into a strong relationship with each other which is bound by a treaty.

The third person masculine singular form of the verb *gā·bār* refers to the coming leader mentioned in Daniel 9:26 who will be from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple. The rules of grammar would support the view that the nearest antecedent for the “he” in verse 27 is “the prince who is to come” in Daniel 9:26.

The hiphil stem of the verb *gā·bār* is factitive meaning that the subject of this verb causes its direct object to enter the state described by the same verb in the qal. The subject of this verb is coming leader who comes from the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple who history tells us were the Romans. The Daniel 7 and Revelation teach us that the coming leader is the Antichrist. The leadership of Israel is the direct object. Therefore, this stem indicates that the Antichrist as the subject will cause the leadership of Israel to enter into a firm or strong covenant with him for seven years. This would imply that he will convince the leadership of Israel that it would be in their best interests to enter into a treaty with him.

The perfect conjugation of this verb is a future perfect expressing a future state resulting from an action that will have been completed by that time. The future state is the covenant relationship between the coming leader from Rome who will be the Antichrist and the nation of Israel. This will result from these two parties agreeing to have a strong or firm relationship with each other, which will mark the beginning of the seventieth week.

The noun *b^erīt* is used most often in the Old Testament to express the covenant concept. Here in Daniel 9:27, it denotes a compact or agreement between two parties binding them mutually to undertakings on each other’s behalf. Here of course one party is the coming leader from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple who Daniel 7 and Revelation reveal will be the Antichrist. The second party is the nation of Israel.

Here in Daniel 9:27 the noun *b^erīt* refers to a treaty between the future Roman dictator of the final stage of the Roman Empire who we know is the Antichrist and the leadership of Israel at that time. This word means that there will be an alliance of friendship between the ten-nation European Confederacy and the nation of Israel.

The articular masculine plural form of the adjective *rāb* functions as a substantive as indicated by its articular construction which is a substantiver converting this adjective into a noun. Thus, the word literally means “the great ones” but the idea here in Daniel 9:27 would be “the leaders, the commanders” referring to the individuals in Israel who will constitute the highest authorities or in other words, the political and military leadership in the Israeli government.

This word *rāḥ* is also the object of the preposition *lē* which is marking this word as the direct object of the verb *gā·ḥār*. It could also be interpreted as a marker of disadvantage meaning that it was to the detriment of Israel that her leadership during the seventieth week will enter into a treaty with the Antichrist.

The masculine singular noun *šā·bū^a* means “a unit of seven years” and is modified this time by the singular form of the cardinal number *’ē·ḥād*, which means “one” in contrast to more than one. Therefore, these two words mean “one unit of seven years” or seven prophetic years with a year being 360 days according to the Jewish calendar. These two words are epexegetical meaning that they identify for the reader the exact length of the treaty.

The Coming Leader Will Break the Treaty in the Middle of the Week

“**But in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering**” is composed of the conjunction *wa* (ו), “**but**,” which is followed by the masculine singular construct form of the noun *ḥā·šî* (חֹשֶׁךְ), “**the middle of**” and then we have the articular masculine singular noun *šā·bū^a* (שָׁבוּעַ), “**week**” which is followed by the third person masculine singular hiphil active imperfect form of the verb *šā·ḥāṭ* (שָׁחַט), “**he will put a stop to**” and then we have the masculine singular noun *zē·ḥāḥ* (זֶחֶךְ), “**sacrifice**” which is followed by the conjunction *wa* (ו), “**and**” which is followed by the feminine singular form of the noun *min·ḥā(h)* (מִן־חֶלֶב), “**grain offering**.”

This time the conjunction *wa* means “but” since it is used in an adversative sense meaning that it is introducing a statement which stands in direct contrast to Gabriel’s previous statement to Daniel that the coming ruler mentioned in Daniel 9:26 who will come from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple in war will establish a firm seven year treaty with the leaders of Israel. Therefore, *wa* is marking a contrast between this coming leader establishing this treaty with Israel and breaking this treaty. The clear implication is between war and peace. The breaking of the treaty results in the Armageddon campaign which will begin with the breaking of this treaty and will end with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. That war is the result of the breaking of this treaty is indicated by the statement to follow “**and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.**” This war will last for three and a half years. So the contrast is between Israel experiencing false peace under this treaty with the coming ruler and experiencing war as a result of this ruler breaking it.

The verb *šā·ḥāṭ* means “to put an end to something, to stop” something from taking place. Here it is used of the coming leader who comes from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple putting an end to the sacrifices and grain offering in the temple. The third person masculine singular form of the verb *šā·ḥāṭ* refers once again to the coming leader mentioned in Daniel 9:26 who will be from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple. The rules of grammar would support the view that the nearest antecedent for the “he” in verse 27 is “the coming leader” in Daniel 9:26.

The hiphil stem of the verb is factitive meaning that the subject of this verb causes its direct object to enter the state described by the same verb in the qal. The subject of this verb is coming leader who comes from the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. History tells us the people were the Romans and Daniel chapter seven and the book of Revelation tells us the coming leader is the Antichrist. The sacrifices and grain offerings in the temple are the direct object. Therefore, this stem

indicates that the Antichrist as the subject will cause the sacrifices and grain offerings in the temple to enter into a state of being stopped. The imperfect conjugation refers to a completed action as part of a temporal sequence. It is expressing this event of the Antichrist stopping the sacrifices and grain offerings to be performed in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem as taking place in the future from the perspective of Daniel in the sixth century B.C.

The noun *zē·bāh* means “sacrifice” referring to an animal being killed as an act of worship and to propitiate deity. These sacrifices made clear to the Israelites that they could only approach God who is holy to worship Him and have fellowship with Him by means of a blood animal sacrifice. This word refers to the various sacrifices mentioned in the book of Exodus and Leviticus.

The noun *min·hā(h)* means “offering” refers to a gift usually in the form of sacrifice offered to God with the intent of propitiating Him. It refers to the various sacrifices mentioned in the book of Exodus and Leviticus which were offered to God.

The conjunction *wa* is used to join the nouns *zē·bāh* and *min·hā(h)* in order to communicate one idea, which is called “hendiadys.” This figure takes place when two nouns or verbs are used to express one idea or concept and it literally means “one by means of two” and takes place when the author uses two words but only one idea is intended. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns or verbs, and are always joined together by the conjunction “and” and are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic. Here Daniel 9:27, the noun *min·hā(h)* intensifies the meaning of the noun *zē·bāh*. The latter speaks of the sacrifices mentioned in the Mosaic Law whereas the former describes these sacrifices as offerings to God. Thus, these two words speak of one item and not two. Therefore, these two words express one idea, namely that of a sacrificial offering.

The noun *h^ā·šî* means “in the middle of” referring to the halfway point of a period of time. The construct state of this word means that it is governing the word which follows it and expresses a genitive relation with this word, which is the masculine singular noun *šā·bū^a* which means “a unit of seven years.” The genitive relation is an enumerated genitive which occurs when the construct term is a number or unit of measure and the genitive specifies what is counted or measured by the construct term. The construct term *h^ā·šî* is a unit of measure and *šā·bū^a* specifies what is being counted or measured by the former. The articular construction of *šā·bū^a* is anaphoric meaning that it was used in the previous statement and is retaining the same referent and meaning here in this clause. Therefore, these two words mean “in the middle of a unit of seven years” or “in the middle of a week” which constitutes three and a half years of 360 days according to the Jewish calendar.

On the Wing of Abominations the Coming Leader Will Destroy

“**And on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**” is composed of the conjunction *wa* (ו), “**and**,” which is followed by the preposition *‘āl* (לע), “**on**” and its object is the feminine singular construct form of the noun *kā·nāp* (כנף), “**the wing of**” which is followed by the masculine plural form of the noun *šiq·qûš* (שִׁקּוּשׁ), “**abominations**” and then we have the masculine singular piel active participle form of the verb *šā·mēm* (שִׁמֵּם), “**one who makes desolate.**”

The conjunction *wa* means “while” since it is functioning as a temporal marker meaning it is introducing a statement which records an event taking place roughly simultaneously with another point of time. The word is introducing a statement which says that the coming leader, from the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, which history records as Rome, will on the wing of abomination cause desolation or destruction. Therefore, the conjunction indicates that this event will occur roughly simultaneously with this coming leader causing the sacrificial offering to stop in the middle of the seventieth week.

The noun *šiq-qûš* appears 28 times in the Old Testament and is only used in connection with idolatrous practices. Sometimes the word refers to idols in general as “abominable” or “detestable” things in God’s sight (2 Chronicles 15:8; Jeremiah 16:18; Ezekiel 5:11). Other times it can refer to specific pagan deities such as Milcom, Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Molech (1 Kings 11:5, 7; 2 Kings 23:13).

Antiochus Epiphanes IV in the second century B.C. fulfilled the prophecy found in Daniel 11:31 regarding the abomination that causes desolation. The Antichrist during the seventieth week will fulfill the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 and 12:11 of the abomination which causes desolation by setting up a statue of himself in the temple and demanding that it be worshipped. Revelation 13:14-15 teaches that the false prophet will set up an image of the Antichrist and will compel the whole world to worship it.

This abomination of desolation also involves the Antichrist taking his seat in the temple and displaying himself as being God according to what Paul taught the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 2:4. The noun *šiq-qûš* is in the plural in Daniel 9:27 and thus means “abominations.” Thus, the actions of the Antichrist demanding the world worship an image of himself and sitting in the temple and displaying oneself as being God constitutes these abominations.

The noun *kā-nāp* refers to “a wing.” Wings portray covering, protection and care. The word is used in a figurative sense of the believer under the wings of God, i.e. His care and protection (Psalm 36:7; 57:1). Wings are also used to describe armies (Isaiah 8:8). It is used in poetic phrases for birds (Proverbs 1:17; Ecclesiastes 10:20). It is used in other poetic senses such as the wings of the wind (Psalm 18:10; 104:3) and wings of the morning (Psalm 139:9). The noun *kā-nāp* can also mean “edge” or “extremity” such as the edge of a garment (1 Samuel 15:27; Zechariah 8:23). It can also be used for the extremity of the earth (Isaiah 24:16).

In Daniel 9:27, the noun *kā-nāp* is clearly related to the “abominations of desolation.” It more than likely describes the place where it will occur in relation to the temple standing during the seventieth week.

This word in Daniel 9:27 has been the source of controversy for centuries since it has produced a large list of different interpretations both among Jewish and Christian expositors of this verse. The Jewish commentator Abarbanel translated the word “because” and applying abominations to the sins of the Jewish nation meaning “because” of the abominations of the Jews, the city and the temple were desolate. Rabbi Avraham bar Chiya argued that the cause of the abomination and desolation were the Gentile nations and rendered the clause “to the corners of the world the nations will spread abomination and desolation. Radak renders the word “spread” after the imagery of wings. He said that “the abominations will cause people to be astonished.”

There is also no consensus among Christian expositors of *kā·nāṭ* in Daniel 9:27. It has been rendered “in its place,” “on their base,” “lord of wing,” or “winged one.” Some have translated the word “rapid flight” viewing it as figurative of an image of an eagle which was placed above. The KJV Bible renders the noun “overspreading” whereas some translate it “pinnacle of [the temple]” or “horns [of the altar]” or “winged [statue or solar disk].”

In Daniel 9:27, the noun *kā·nāṭ* is a dual noun indicating that though the word is in the singular, two things are being referenced. This use of the noun appears in Exodus 25:20 where it is used of the wings of the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant. Here in Daniel 9:27, it is a reference to the wings of the cherubim which overshadow the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. It signifies the place in which this abomination of desolation will take place. This is suggested by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 in that he teaches the Thessalonians that the Antichrist will take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. This would seem to indicate that Antichrist will sit on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant since the divine presence in the Old Testament was said to be seated on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat. This act would certainly constitute an abomination in the judgment of God.

Furthermore, the previous clause refers to the Antichrist stopping the sacrificial offerings in the temple. This is followed by a temporal clause that signifies that this stopping of the sacrifices by Antichrist will take place about the same time he takes his seat on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim and declares himself as God. So the reference to the sacrifices and abominations which are related to Antichrist desecrating the temple would seem to suggest that the noun *kā·nāṭ* has some reference to the temple as well.

As we noted earlier, seating himself between the cherubim and displaying himself as God would constitute one form of abomination. The other is setting up of an image of himself in the Holy of Holies to be worshipped by the world. Revelation 13:14-15 teaches that the false prophet will set up an image of the Antichrist and will compel the whole world to worship it.

In Daniel 9:27, the noun *kā·nāṭ* is the object of the preposition *‘āl*, which means “between” referring to the spatial position determined by the location of related objects around it with an emphasis that this position is in the middle of these objects. The objects in view are the wings of the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant. The position of the coming leader who is the Antichrist, and the little horn in Daniel chapter seven will be “between” these wings.

The construct state of the noun *kā·nāṭ* means that it is governing the word which follows it and expresses a genitive relation to this word, which is the noun *šiq·qûš*, “**abominations**.” The genitive relation is a genitive of result meaning that *šiq·qûš* presents the result of the construct term *kā·nāṭ* indicating that between the wings, which results in abominations.

The verb *šā·mēm* refers to the desolation or desecration of the temple during the middle of the seventieth week as the result of the Antichrist sitting between the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant and declaring himself as God. It refers to the sinful actions of the Antichrist making desolate the holy place since these actions defiled and made it ceremonially unclean.

This verb in the polel stem is a factitive polel which indicates that the Antichrist will cause the temple to enter into the state of being desecrated in the sense that the sinful actions of the Antichrist will defile the temple and make it ceremonially unclean.

The participle form of this verb functions as a predicate adjective meaning that it is making the assertion that this coming leader who we know is the Antichrist will cause the desecration of the temple as causing its desecration.

The End of the Coming Leader is Decreed

“Even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” is composed of the conjunction *wa* (וּ), **“even,”** which is followed by the preposition *‘ad* (עד), **“until”** and its object is the feminine singular form of the noun *kā-lā(h)* (כָּלֵה), **“a complete destruction”** which is followed by the conjunction *wa* (וּ) (waw), which is not translated and followed by the feminine singular niphil passive participle form of the verb *hā-rāš* (רָאָה), **“one that is decreed”** and then we have the third person feminine singular qal active imperfect form of the verb *nā-tāḳ* (נָתַק), **“is poured out”** which is followed by the preposition *‘al* (עַל) (al), **“on”** and its object is the masculine singular qal active participle form of the verb *šā-mēm* (שָׂמַם), **“the one who makes desolate.”**

This time the conjunction *wa* means “in fact, indeed” since it is emphatic meaning that it is advancing upon and intensifying the previous temporal clause that between the wings of the cherubim on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant, the Antichrist will cause the temple to be desecrated or desolate. This conjunction is introducing a statement which says that this will continue until the decreed end is poured out on the Antichrist. The advancement and the intensification is that Antichrist will not only desecrate the Temple by displaying himself as God but will do so for three and a half years until the seventieth week is ended by the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The noun *kā-lā(h)* means “complete destruction” in the sense of a full end or consummation, the ultimate end. The word refers to the complete destruction of the Antichrist whose end will consummate or finish not only Daniel’s seventieth week but also the Times of the Gentiles. His end will be brought about by the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The noun *kā-lā(h)* is also the object of the preposition *‘ad*, which is a temporal marker indicating that something occurs up to the time indicated by its object or sometimes during the time indicated by its object. Therefore, this prepositional phrase indicates that Antichrist will continue to desecrate the Temple by displaying himself as God between the cherubim “until” his complete destruction by the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The verb *hā-rāš* means “to be decreed” referring to the fact that the Antichrist’s desecration of the temple during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week has been decreed by God in eternity past to take place. The niphil stem expresses the fact that the Antichrist’s complete destruction at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ has been acted upon by God decreeing for it to take place. The participle conjugation of this verb is functioning as a substantive participle.

The conjunction *wa* is used to join the noun *kā-lā(h)* and the substantive participle form of the verb *hā-rāš* in order to communicate one idea, which is called “hendiadys.” This figure takes place when two

nouns or verbs are used to express one idea or concept and it literally means “one by means of two” and takes place when the author uses two words but only one idea is intended. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns or verbs, and are always joined together by the conjunction “and” and are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic. Here Daniel 9:27, the substantive participle form of the verb *ḥā-rāṣ* intensifies the meaning of the noun *kā-lā(h)*. Therefore, these two words express one idea, namely a decreed complete destruction of the Antichrist.

The verb *nā-tāk* means “to pour out” but is used in a figurative sense of the causing of an event to take place as a figurative extension of pouring out a mass or liquid, implying the event will have a degree of intensity. Here it refers to God pouring out judgment against the Antichrist in the sense of causing him to receive judgment which will take place at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The *qal* stem of the verb is fientive expressing the action of God judging the Antichrist for his rebellion against Him. The imperfect conjugation refers to a completed action as part of a temporal sequence. The imperfect conjugation of the verb describes this event of God judging the Antichrist as a result of being decreed by God in eternity past. It describes this event as taking place in the future from the writer’s perspective. It is expressing this event as taking place in the future from the perspective of Daniel in the sixth century B.C.

The verb *šā-mēm* refers to the desolation or desecration of the temple as the result of the Antichrist sitting between the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant and declaring himself as God. It refers to the sinful actions of the Antichrist making desolate the holy place since these actions defiled and made it ceremonially unclean.

This time the verb means “the desolater” since it functions as a substantive participle. It is also in the *qal* stem this time which is stative meaning that the Antichrist will exist in the state of being a desolater when he is brought to his demise at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

This word is also the object of the preposition *‘āl*, which is functioning as a marker of opposition meaning that this decreed complete destruction of the Antichrist will be poured out “against” this desolater or desecrater at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The Antichrist’s Treaty with the Leadership of Israel

Daniel 9:27 “Then, he will establish a firm covenant with the leaders, which will be one unit of seven years. However, he will cause the sacrificial offering to stop in the middle of this unit of seven years while between the wings which results in abominations, he will cause desecration. Indeed until a decreed complete destruction is poured out against the desecrater.” (Author’s translation)

Daniel 9:27 presents to the reader the next prophetic event that will take place after the three events recorded in Daniel 9:26, which will take place after the sixty-ninth week or in other words after the four hundred and eighty-third prophetic year. In Daniel 9:26, we read that Gabriel informed Daniel that the first event which will take place after the sixty-ninth week will be the execution of the Messiah. Consequently the Messiah will possess nothing. This was fulfilled in history with the crucifixion of

Jesus Christ. He did not establish His kingdom on earth at that time because He was rejected by the nation of Israel. The second event is that the people of the coming leader will destroy the city of Jerusalem as well as the temple by waging war. This was also fulfilled in history when the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem and the Herodian temple in 70 A.D. Then Gabriel tells Daniel that there will be war up to the end of the seventieth week. Desolations have been decreed by God for Israel and its capital city which has been fulfilled in history as well. Now, here in verse 27 Gabriel says that the coming leader from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple will establish a covenant or treaty with the leaders of the nation of Israel for one week, which is seven years.

This treaty mentioned in Daniel 9:27 will mark the beginning of the seventieth week. Therefore, Daniel 9:27 teaches that the seventieth week comes sometime after the rapture but does “not” begin with the rapture. So, while the rapture will precede the seventieth week, it does “not” begin the seventieth week but rather the signing of the peace treaty between Antichrist and the leadership in Israel will begin it.

The third person masculine singular form of the verb *gā-bār* has sparked controversy among interpreters of Daniel 9:27. The nearest antecedent is the prince who will come from the people who will destroy Jerusalem and the temple by waging war. It does not refer to Jesus Christ. The rules of grammar would support the view that the nearest antecedent for the “he” in verse 27 is “the prince who is to come” in Daniel 9:26. If one interprets the “he” in Daniel 9:27 as the Messiah, then one cannot reconcile the fact that the temple sacrifices continued until 70 A.D. over thirty years after the crucifixion of Christ. Furthermore, the “he” in Daniel 9:27 breaks the covenant. At what point did Christ make a covenant with the Jews and then break it? There is nothing in the New Testament which would even suggest this. Would Christ break a covenant He has made? Thus the individual establishing the covenant with Israel is not a reference to Christ but to a prince who is yet to come, who we know is the Antichrist.

So the coming leader mentioned in Daniel 9:26 and here in Daniel 9:27 with the third person masculine singular form of the verb *gā-bār* is a reference to Antichrist. It is not a reference to Jesus Christ since Jesus Christ was not a Roman. Furthermore, the Messiah is said to be executed in the first statement in verse 26. So this coming leader comes after the execution of the Messiah.

The coming leader is also not a reference to the Roman general Titus who led the siege against Jerusalem in 70 A.D. since the emphasis in Daniel 9:26 is upon “the people.” It is stated this way because this prophecy would link the Roman destruction with the event which took place in 70 A.D. while simultaneously setting up Antichrist to be linked to the first “he” in Daniel 9:27 and the seventieth week. The coming leader also cannot be Antiochus Epiphanes IV since he did not destroy Jerusalem or the temple.

Therefore, Daniel 9:26 makes clear that the people and the coming leader will not appear on the pages of history at the same time. Daniel 9:27 also makes it crystal clear that the coming leader is the future persecutor of the nation of Israel during the seventieth week or seventieth unit of seven years.

The phrase “**the people of the coming leader**” in Daniel 9:26 simply means that this coming leader will originate from the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the Herodian temple in 70 A.D. The coming leader is the nearest antecedent to the third person masculine singular form of the verb *gā-bār* in Daniel 9:27. Thus, the latter is speaking of this coming leader who will come from the people who destroyed

Jerusalem and the temple. History tells us that the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. Thus, the Antichrist will be a Roman dictator.

Daniel 9:27 says that Antichrist will pretend to be Israel's benefactor and make a treaty with her but will turn against her in the mid way point of Daniel's Seventieth Week and will persecute Israel and occupy Jerusalem for three and a half years. He will make a seven-year treaty with the leaders of Israel, which will begin the final seven prophetic years called the seventieth week and during the middle of this seventieth week after three and a half years, he will break the treaty and stop the sacrifices in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and declare himself God. Nothing in history corresponds to the events described during this seventieth week. The Second Advent of Christ has yet to take place.

Daniel 7:26 refers to the Supreme Court of Heaven, (God the Father) passing down the decision to remove the little horn's power, which will take place at the Second Advent of Christ, which terminates Daniel's Seventieth Week (See Revelation 19:11-20:6).

So the Antichrist will start off as an insignificant world ruler among ten other rulers of kingdom but will defeat three of these ten kingdoms and emerge as a world ruler. The eyes of the little horn speak of the faculty of careful observation implying that the Antichrist will be extremely intelligent. The boastful speaking indicates that the Antichrist will be a great speaker who in the judgment of God is arrogant in his words.

The Antichrist will seek to prevent Christ's rule on the earth by attempting to destroy God's covenant people Israel but his reign will be short, only three and a half years and will be terminated with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ who at that time will establish His millennial reign on earth in fulfillment of God's covenant promises to Israel. The prophecy in Daniel chapter seven concerning the little horn and the prophecy in Daniel 9:27 will take place in the future since no such Roman ruler has attained world-wide rulership over a one-world government, no such Roman ruler has subdued three of ten kings who were ruling at once and no such ruler has persecuted Israel for three and a half years and no such ruler has been destroyed by the return of Jesus Christ!

The Antichrist Suspends the Worship of the God of Israel

In Daniel 9:27, Gabriel informs Daniel that after the coming leader mentioned in Daniel 9:26 establishes a seven year treaty with the leadership of Israel which marks the beginning of the seventieth week or seventieth unit of seven years, he will cause the sacrificial offering to stop in the middle of this seventieth week. This means that three and a half years into this treaty, the Antichrist will cause the sacrificial offering in the temple to stop. This implies that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem and the Levitical sacrifices will be reestablished.

The coming ruler who breaks this treaty with Israel during the seventieth week could not be Antiochus Epiphanes IV since nowhere in history or the Old Testament is he said to establish a seven year treaty with Israel and then break this treaty after three and a half years. In fact, Paul teaches in 2 Thessalonians 2 that it will be the Antichrist who does this. The apostle John also teaches this in the book of Revelation. Antiochus Epiphanes IV put a stop to the sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem in the second century B.C. as predicted by Daniel chapter eight. However, nowhere is he said to have established a seven year treaty with Israel and then break it after three and a half years. Antiochus' actions though do typify or foreshadow the actions of Antichrist during the seventieth week.

The coming ruler who establishes this treaty with Israel and then after three and a half years breaks is by no means Jesus Christ since our Lord's ministry did not last seven years. Also His death on the cross did not bring a stop to the sacrifices in the temple. Furthermore, he never set up an abomination that causes desolation in the temple.

In His Olivet Discourse, the Lord Jesus Christ makes mention of this event.

Matthew 24:15, "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains." (NASB95)

The apostle Paul also refers to the Antichrist's desecrating the temple and declaring himself God and demanding the worship of the world.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. 5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. 13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

Paul's statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that Antichrist will **"take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as God"** is a reference to the statement in Daniel 9:27, **"on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate."**

Revelation 13:14-15 also mentions Antichrist exalting himself as God and receiving the worship of the world as such.

Paul's statement that the Antichrist **"opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship"** means that he ranks himself superior to all the supreme beings worshiped by the various religions of the world, which will be a fulfillment of Daniel 11:36.

Daniel 7:25 makes mention of the Antichrist putting an end to the sacrificial offering during the final three and a half years of the seventieth week. Daniel 7:7-8 mentions the Antichrist, identifying him as "the little horn." Daniel 7:23-25 interprets Daniel 7:7-8.

Daniel 7:7 “After this, I was continuing to stare in a trance like state because of these night visions as behold, a fourth beast, intimidating, yes even terrifying as well as extremely powerful, possessing two large rows of iron teeth. It devoured as well as crushed. Specifically, it violently crushed the rest with its feet. Indeed, it was characterized as different from all the beasts which were before it in the sense of possessing ten horns. 8 I was contemplating in a trance like state because of these horns as behold, another little horn emerged out from among them. Then, the first three originating from the horns was torn out by being in the presence of it. In fact, behold, on this horn, were eyes like a human being’s eyes as well as a mouth speaking boastfully.” (Author’s translation)

Daniel 7:23 “Thus, he said, ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all these kingdoms in the sense that it will devour the entire earth. Specifically, it will trample it down so that it crushes it.’ 24 Also, the ten horns are ten kings who will arise from this kingdom. Then, another will arise after them. However, he will be different in comparison to the previous ones. Specifically, he will conquer three kings. 25 Furthermore, he will issue statements against the Most High. Also, he will make it his habit of persecuting the Most High’s saints as well as attempting to change the times, yes even the Law. Indeed, they will be given into his power for a period of a time, times and a half a time.” (Author’s translation)

In Daniel 7:23-25, the unidentified interpreter who is more than likely the elect angel Gabriel continues to provide Daniel the interpretation of the vision he received from God. In verse 24, the angel informed Daniel that the little horn will ascend to power after the ten kings represented by the ten horns ascend to power. Then, he tells him that in contrast to these ten, this king will be different in comparison to them. He becomes more specific telling Daniel that he will conquer three of these ten kings. Now, in verse 25, the angel continues to describe this king and specifically what he will do in relation to God and His people.

First of all, Gabriel informs Daniel that this king will issue statements against the Most High. This interprets the statement in Daniel 7:8 and 20 that the little horn spoke boastfully. The angel then tells Daniel that this king will make it his habit of persecuting the saints of the Most High. This interprets the statement in Daniel 7:21 that the little horn was continually waging war against the saints.

Then, Gabriel informs Daniel that this king will attempt to change the times, yes even the Law. This does not appear to interpret anything from Daniel’s vision but is additional information which will be further developed in Daniel 9:27. Some interpret this attempt to change times and law as an attempt to change moral and natural law of the universe. However, there is nothing in the context of chapter seven or the book of Daniel which would seem to indicate this as the case. There are others who think that this statement means that the Antichrist will “impose a new legal system on all his subjects, doubtless based on totalitarian principles in which the service of the government or the state will be substituted for the absolute standards of God’s moral law (Gaebelein, F, Editor: Expositor’s Bible Commentary OT 7 Volume Set: Books: Zondervan Publishing) Some speculate the Antichrist will attempt to adjust the time schedule so that there will no longer be a twenty-four hour day or attack the moral foundations of society.

However, it is better to interpret this statement that the Antichrist will attempt to change times and law as a reference to abolishing the various Levitical sacrifices which are related to the worship of Yahweh and replacing them with those pertaining to the worship of the Antichrist. It would also indicate

that he will attempt to abolish the observance of the seven great feasts of Israel: (1) Passover (2) Unleavened bread (3) First-fruits (4) Pentecost (5) Trumpets (6) Day of Atonement (7) Tabernacles. This is supported by the fact that this statement does not interpret anything in Daniel's vision in chapter seven but is an addition which is developed further by Daniel 9:27, which says that Antichrist will put an end to these sacrifices.

In Daniel 7:25, the noun *dāṭ* means "law" referring to the Mosaic Law and specifically to the Levitical laws concerning sacrifices since Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 and Revelation 13:1-8 indicate that Antichrist will put an end to the Levitical sacrifices in order to establish the worship of himself during Daniel's Seventieth Week.

The angelic interpreter's last statement in Daniel 7:25 is emphatic informing Daniel that the saints of the Most High will be given into the power of this king represented by the little horn, who we know as the Antichrist. This interprets the statement in Daniel 7:21 that the little horn will overpower the saints. This refers to God's people being killed by the Antichrist. Then, Daniel is told that this will take place for three and a half years which is a reference to the last three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week, which constitutes the tribulation portion of this seven year period. These three and a half years correspond with the "**for a time** (one year), **times** (two years), **and a half time** (six months)" in Daniel 7:25 and the "**one thousand two hundred and sixty days**" in Revelation 12:6 and the "**forty-two months**" in Revelation 11:2.

This three and a half year period is also not an interpretation of anything in Daniel's vision in chapter seven but is added by the angel. It is looking ahead to Daniel 9:27, which is a reference to the Seventieth Week of Daniel in which these future events described by the angel in Daniel 7:23-25 will take place. This three and a half year period thus corresponds to the Antichrist putting an end to the sacrificial offering in the middle of the seventieth week.

The Antichrist will abolish the Levitical offerings in the temple in the middle of the seventieth week because he will establish a world-wide worship of himself. Revelation 13:14-15 mentions Antichrist exalting himself as God and receiving the worship of the world as such.

Revelation 13:1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. (NASB95)

The "**dragon**" refers to Satan according to Revelation 12:9. In Revelation 13:1-4, the "**beast**" refers to the Revived Form of the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist since it is compared to previous Gentile world powers in Revelation 13:3 and it has "**ten horns**," which signifies the Revived Roman Empire in Daniel 7:7, 20, 24, Revelation 17:3, 7, 12 and 16.

Now, when approaching Revelation 13, we must understand that the ancient Orientals regarded kings and kingdoms synonymously. Therefore, the "**beast**" in Revelation 13 will refer at times to the Revived Roman Empire and at times to the Antichrist who is the leader of it with the context determining which one is view.

The "**sea**" refers to the Gentile nations according to Revelation 17:15 indicating that this beast is a Gentile kingdom and the "**ten horns**" refers to the ten nation European Confederacy according to Daniel

7:7, which is the revived form of the Roman Empire. This beast represents the Revived Form of the Roman Empire because it corresponds to both the feet of iron and clay in the image that appeared in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2:40-43. It also corresponds to the ten horns in Daniel's vision recorded in Daniel 7:7, both of which as we noted represented the Roman Empire

The “**seven heads**” refers to six great Gentile nations throughout history and the one to come in the future: (1) Egypt (2) Assyria (3) Babylon (4) Medo-Persia (5) Greece (6) Rome (7) Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation.

The “**ten diadems**” signifies that there will be ten independent nations in this European Confederacy, led by Antichrist, each with a ruler of its own and the “**blasphemous names**” represents the anti-Christ character of this confederacy.

Revelation 13:2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. (NASB95)

The statement that the beast was like a “**leopard**” is a reference to Daniel's prophecy about Greece in Daniel 7:6 and refers to the fact that like the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great and his generals, the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist will sum up the brilliancy and speed of Greece.

The statement that the beast's feet were like those of a “**bear**” is a reference to Daniel's prophecy about the Medo-Persian Empire in Daniel 7:5 and refers to the fact that like the Medo-Persian Empire, the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist will sum up the massive power of Medo-Persia.

The statement that the beast's mouth was like the mouth of a “**lion**” is a reference to Daniel's prophecy about the Babylonian Empire in Daniel 7:4 and refers to the fact that like the Babylonian Empire, the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist will sum up the absolute autocratic dominion of Babylon.

Revelation 13:3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. (NASB95)

This statement refers to the restoration of the Roman Empire and not the Antichrist since John is speaking in the context of the ten horns that represent the Revived Roman Empire.

Revelation 13:4 They worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” (NASB95)

Revelation 13:5-9 refers to the Antichrist since the passage emphasizes a personality who speaks arrogant words and receives the worship of men.

Revelation 13:5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. (NASB95)

The “**forty-two months**” refers to the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week and corresponds with the “**for a time** (one year), **times** (two years), **and a half time** (six months)” in Daniel 7:25 and the “**one thousand two hundred and sixty days**” in Revelation 12:6 and the “**forty-two months**” in Revelation 11:2.

Revelation 13:6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. (NASB95)

Revelation 13:5-6 corresponds with Daniel 7:8 and 11.

Revelation 13:7 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. (NASB95)

This statement corresponds with Daniel 7:23, which reveals that the little horn will have a world-wide kingdom and it will be an overwhelming conquest, which anticipates a coming one-world government under a worldwide dictator.

Revelation 13:8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. (NASB95)

Daniel 7:25 corresponds to Revelation 13:1-10.

Revelation 13:11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. 12 He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. (NASB95)

This second beast is called in Revelation 16:13, 19:20 and 20:10 “**the false prophet**” and will be a religious leader as indicated in that he is depicted as a lamb with two horns. The horns speak of power and the lamb is a religious symbol, a symbol of sacrifice, so this beast is a religious figure and as a lamb is also symbolical of a mild, lamb-like manner, so this second beast will adopt a mild lamb-like appearance, but he will be a wolf in sheep’s clothing. (Maybe the Pope)

Revelation 13:13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. (NASB95)

This passage teaches that the second beast, i.e. the false prophet will promote the worship of the first beast, which refers to the Antichrist and not the Revived Roman Empire since first beast is said to have “**had a wound of the sword and has come to life,**” which refers to surviving a fatal wound from an act of violence.

Rome was never destroyed by the sword, i.e. militarily but rather disintegrated from division and deterioration from within, thus indicating that Antichrist will survive an assassination attempt.

Revelation 13:15 And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. 17 And he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six. (NASB95)

To enforce the worship of the beast and to make life impossible without his worship, men cannot buy or sell without the mark of the beast. Consequently, millions of believers will be killed because they do not have the mark and refuse to receive it or because they starve to death since they cannot buy or sell.

Some will survive, however, by living off the land or because other believers who have food share with those who do not (cf. Matt. 24:15-25 and 25:31-40). To receive the mark of the beast is tantamount to the worship of the beast, and rejection of Jesus Christ (cf. 13:8; 17:8; 14:9-12; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4).

Revelation 13:17 say that the mark is his number, which is defined in verse 18 as 666 and is one of the options for the mark, either his name or his number and will be the means by which believers in the Tribulation period will identify the beast. This will not be just a number or identification mark on a plastic card but rather it will be on the person himself and symbolic of the fact that he is only a man and not God as he claims to be. It is interesting that within the identification numbers of various agencies, the IRS and others, the number 666 is beginning to pop up more and more.

The Antichrist Desecrates the Temple By Deifying Himself

In Daniel 9:27, Gabriel informs Daniel that the coming leader who is the little horn in chapter seven and the Antichrist in Revelation, will cause the temple to enter into the state of desecration in the sense that his sinful actions will defile the temple and make it ceremonially unclean. He will defile the temple between the wings of the cherubim on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant which results in abominations. This act constitutes making oneself God. This corresponds to Paul's statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that the Antichrist will take his seat in the temple of God and display himself as being God. Amazingly, he will sit between the wings of the cherubim. This event will also take place roughly simultaneously with the Antichrist putting a stop to the sacrificial offering in the temple.

That these two events occur simultaneously is indicated by the fact that they both occur in the midway point of the seventieth week. In the previous statement here in Daniel 9:27 Gabriel informed Daniel that the coming leader will put a stop to the sacrificial offering in the middle of the seventieth week. We know that on the wing of abomination, the Antichrist will cause the desecration of the temple in the middle of the seventieth week as well as indicated by the Lord Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:15-21. The Lord taught the generation living during the seventieth week that when they see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, they must flee to the mountains because there will be great

tribulation which has never occurred up to that point in history. So the abomination of desolation marks the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. Therefore, just as the stopping of the sacrifices in the temple will take place in the middle of the seventieth week so the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place will take place in the middle of the seventieth week. The Lord taught that this event marks the beginning of the great tribulation, which will take place during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week.

“Between the wings” is in the emphatic position of this temporal clause emphasizing the terrible actions of the Antichrist in sitting on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim. This prepositional phrase refers to the location in which the Antichrist will sit and display himself as being God. The **“wings”** are a reference to the wings of the cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant. This prepositional phrase in Daniel 9:27 coupled with Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians suggests that the Antichrist will sit on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant since the divine presence in the Old Testament was said to be seated on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat. This act would certainly constitute an abomination in the judgment of God.

“Abominations” speaks of two events. The first is the Antichrist taking his seat in the temple and sitting on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant between the cherubim while displaying himself as being God. The second is mentioned in Revelation 13:14-15, which teaches that the false prophet will set up an image of the Antichrist and will compel the whole world to worship it.

So this temporal clause in Daniel 9:27 indicates that by sitting on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant between the cherubim will result in these two abominations. In other words, these two abominations will be the result of Antichrist sitting on the Ark of the Covenant between the cherubim. By sitting between the cherubim, he will declare himself as God which results in another abomination, namely the false prophet erecting an image of the Antichrist and demanding the world to worship this image. One leads to the other but the first, namely sitting on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim and declaring himself to be God will result in the erection of the image of himself. This first abomination produces destruction since it results in God’s judgment. The Lord Jesus said this much in Matthew 24:15.

Matthew 24:15 “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).” (NASB95)

“The abomination of desolation” is composed of the following: (1) articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *bdelygma* (βδέλυγμα), **“the abomination”** (2) articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *erēmōsis* (ἐρήμωσις), **“of desolation.”**

The *erēmōsis* functions as a genitive of product meaning that it is the product of the noun *bdelygma* indicating that this abomination “produces” desolation. This echoes Daniel 9:27 since Gabriel informs Daniel that the Antichrist will cause desolation or destruction by sitting on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim on the Ark of the Covenant. In other words, Gabriel is telling him that this abomination of sitting on the Mercy Seat and thus displaying himself as God will produce destruction since it will result in God’s judgment upon the Antichrist and those who worship his image.

Preterists interpret the “abomination of desolation” (as they do most prophetic events) in Daniel and the Olivet Discourse as having its ultimate fulfillment in the events surrounding the destruction of the

Temple in A.D. 70. However, history has proven this is not the case. First of all, none of the actions of Roman officials during the first revolt against Rome by the Jews in 70 A.D. match the details given to us by the Scriptures in which this phrase “abomination of desolation” occurs. Also, the entrance of the Roman general Titus took place only after the Temple was already in flames and had been largely ruined and after the Jewish sacrifices had ceased. This is critical to see since the “abomination of desolation” which Gabriel informs Daniel about and to which the Lord Jesus Christ alludes, speak only of the cessation of sacrifice in the Temple, not of its destruction.

Interestingly, Daniel’s seventieth week, and especially its signal event of the “abomination of desolation,” seems to have influenced the literary structure of the Olivet Discourse in the Synoptic gospels and the judgment section of the Book of Revelation (chapters 6-19). The Lord Jesus Christ’s interpretation of the order of the events of the seventieth week in the context of prophetic history appears to confirm an eschatological interpretation for Daniel 9:27. In Matthew 24:7-14 it is predicted that persecution, suffering, and wars would continue to the end of the age, climaxing in a time of great tribulation unparalleled in history to that point, verses 21-22. He only makes a reference to Daniel 9:27 after these events with regards to the pivotal event of the tribulation, namely “the desolating abomination.” Therefore, if the seventy weeks were to run sequentially, without interruption, then why does the Lord place this intervening period before the fulfillment of the events of the seventieth week? Matthew reveals that the Lord’s prediction of the future was to answer His disciple’s questions concerning His Second Advent and the end of the age (Matthew 24:3). He explains why His coming is necessary (divine intervention and national repentance, verses 27-31; cf. Zechariah 12:9-10) and when it will occur (“after the Tribulation of those days”, verse 29). If we listen to Matthew, we can see that the events described in this period prior to the Messianic advent could not have been fulfilled in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem for the simple reason that these events usher in and terminate with the coming of Messiah.

Gabriel completes his communication of the prophecy of the seventy units of seven or seventy weeks, four hundred ninety prophetic years by informing Daniel that the coming leader who we know is the Antichrist will continue to desecrate the temple until a decreed complete destruction has been poured out against him. Throughout the last three and a half years of the seventieth week, Antichrist will continue to desecrate the temple by sitting on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant between the cherubim and displaying himself as God. He will be completely destroyed by God through the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. The demise of the Antichrist was decreed by God in eternity past to take place in human history.

Daniel 11:36-39: Character and Actions of the Antichrist

Daniel 11:36-39 presents a description of the character and actions of the Antichrist during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week.

Daniel 11:36 “Then, a unique king will do according to his desire. Consequently, he will exalt himself so that he will magnify himself above every deity. He will also issue extraordinary statements against the true God. However, despite this, he will succeed until the righteous indignation related to the end is completed because that which has been decreed must take place.” (Author’s translation)

The elect angel continues to communicate to Daniel this prophetic revelation from God regarding His prophetic program for Israel during the Times of the Gentiles. Here in verse 36, the angel's first prophetic statement is that a unique king will do according to his desire. This language was used to describe Alexander the Great in Daniel 11:3 and Antiochus Epiphanes IV in Daniel 11:16. In each instance, it refers to the absolute political and military power of these two individuals. Here in Daniel 11:36, this first prophetic statement speaks of the absolute political and military power of this unique king. The character and actions of this king described in Daniel 11:36-45 do not correspond to any king in history but rather corresponds to the descriptions of the character and actions of Antichrist during the seventieth week which are recorded in Daniel 7, Matthew 24-25, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13. In other words, the description of the character and actions of this king in Daniel 11:36-45 correspond to the prophecies of the Antichrist in Daniel 7, Matthew 24-25, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13.

“The king” in Daniel 11:36 does not refer to Antiochus Epiphanes IV. Those who believe that this king in Daniel 11:36 is a reference to Antiochus Epiphanes IV in the second century B.C. argue that by stopping the sacrifices and offering a pagan sacrifice Antiochus fulfilled the prophecy in Daniel 11:36 that this king will magnify himself above every god and speak monstrous things against the god of gods. Some argue that when Antiochus gave himself the title “God Manifest” he fulfilled this prophecy in Daniel 11:36. However, Antiochus did not set up an image of himself to be worshipped or demand the world worship him as will be the case with Antichrist according to Revelation 13. Antiochus simply set up an image of Zeus.

The prophecy in Daniel 11:37 that **“he will show no regard for the gods of his fathers”** was not fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes IV since his policy was to compel the Jews to worship the god of his fathers or be executed. The prophecy in Daniel 11:38 that **“he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know”** was not fulfilled by Antiochus since he was devoted to the god of his country Zeus who was the god of his fathers.

Furthermore, the king mentioned in Daniel 11:36 is clearly distinguished from the king of the north who is mentioned in Daniel 11:40 and we know from history that Antiochus Epiphanes IV in Daniel 11:21-35 is the despicable king of the north.

In Daniel 11:36, the angel communicates a second prophetic statement which presents the result of this unique king achieving absolute military and political power. The angel declares that this unique king will exalt himself so that he will magnify himself above every deity. Therefore, he will become arrogant as a result of achieving this power. Also, he will deify himself as a result of becoming arrogant as a result of achieving this power. In other words, the angel is telling Daniel that this unique king will become arrogant as a result of possessing such enormous power which will lead him to deify himself.

This second prophetic statement in Daniel 11:36 corresponds to the prophetic statements in Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation 13:14-15 that the Antichrist will deify himself. So this second prophetic statement is actually the second time that the book of Daniel prophesies that the Antichrist will deify himself.

The third prophetic statement in Daniel 11:36 continues to describe the character and actions of the unique king. The first prophetic statement reveals that this unique king will achieve absolute power for himself militarily and politically. The second reveals that as a result of this power he will exalt himself so that he will magnify himself above every deity. Based upon a comparison of the prophetic statements

recorded in Daniel 7, Matthew 24-25, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13, we can conclude that the first prophetic statement in Daniel 11:36 that **“a unique king will do according to his desire”** is a prophecy of Antichrist’s absolute power over the world during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. The second prophetic statement corresponds to the prophetic statements in Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation 13:14-15 that the Antichrist will deify himself.

The third prophetic statement in Daniel 11:36 corresponds to the prophetic statements recorded in Daniel 7:8, 20, 25 and Revelation 13:5-6 since these passages reveal that the Antichrist will issue statements against God.

The fourth and final prophetic statement reveals that this wicked king who will oppose God will succeed until the righteous indignation related to the end is completed because that which has been decreed by God must take place in history. Since we have already determined that this wicked king is the Antichrist, we can conclude that this righteous indignation related to the end is referring to the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. This corresponds to the prophecy in Daniel 7:25 which also prophesies that the Antichrist will issue statements against God and will persecute God’s people for three and a half years.

This righteous indignation refers to the exercise of God’s legitimate holy anger toward the inhabitants of planet earth for rejecting His Son Jesus Christ as Savior. Righteousness indignation speaks of God’s wrath, which is an expression of His holiness. The difference between righteous indignation and anger is that the former is based upon concern for the holiness of God whereas the latter is emotional, selfish, self-centered, vindictive and intent on harming another. God’s righteous indignation is the legitimate anger towards evil and sin since both are contrary to His holiness or perfect character and nature. In fact, God’s righteous indignation expresses His holiness. The completion of this righteous indignation will take place at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

Daniel 11:37 “Also, he will have absolutely no respect for the gods of his ancestors as well as the one desired by women, likewise he will have absolutely no respect for each and every god because he will magnify himself above all.” (Author’s translation)

The elect angel of God continues to communicate to Daniel prophecies regarding the character and actions of the Antichrist during the seventieth week. In this verse, the angelic being communicates four prophecies. The first is that the Antichrist will have absolutely no regard for the gods of his ancestors. The second is that the Antichrist will have absolutely no regard for the one desired by women. The third is that he will have absolutely no respect for each and every pagan god. The fourth and final one is that he will magnify himself above every god worshipped by unregenerate humanity. The fourth serves as the reason for the previous three indicating that Antichrist will reject every object of worship because he will deify himself.

In regards to the first prophetic statement some interpret the noun ^ē*lō-hîm* as meaning “God” referring to the God of Israel who is identified in the New Testament as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit rather than “gods” referring to pagan gods. This is a common use of the word ^ē*lō-hîm* in Daniel and throughout the Old Testament. The implication is that this unique king is Jewish. This would indicate that this unique king will have absolutely no regard for the God of his ancestors, i.e. he will have absolutely no regard for the God of Israel. However, the Scriptures make clear that the Antichrist is emphatically not a Jew but will be a Gentile and specifically a Roman.

The “little horn” in Daniel chapter 7 is from the four and final beast which represents the Roman Empire. This “little horn” is a reference to the Antichrist. Thus, he will be a Roman. The Antichrist is the first beast in Revelation 13 who is described as arising from the sea and since the sea depicts the Gentile nations according to Revelation 17:15, he must be of Gentile origin. Antichrist is the head of the last form of Gentile world dominion, for he is like a leopard, a bear, and a lion (Revelation 13:1; compare Daniel 7:7-8, 20, 24; Revelation 17:9-11) and as such he is a political leader. Furthermore, in Daniel 9:26 the phrase “the people of the prince who is to come” teaches that the Antichrist will arise from the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in this city. Of course, history records that the Roman’s fulfilled this prophecy in Daniel 9:26. The idea that he could be a Jewish Roman falls apart since Revelation 13 makes clear that he will be from the Gentile race.

There are many problems with regards to the second prophetic statement in Daniel 11:37. As we noted the noun *ḥēm-dā(h)* refers to a “desirable object” and is in the construct state meaning it is governing the word which follows it and is expressing a genitive relation with this word, which is the noun *’iš-šā(h)*, “women.”

Now, most English translations interpret the genitive relation as a subjective genitive which specifies the agent who performs or is characterized by the concept that is implied by the construct term. Therefore, we could translate this expression “the one loved by women, the one beloved by women” (ESV, NLT, NRSV) or “the god loved by women” (NET), or “the one desired by women” (NIV, TNIV).

Another interpretation arising from the subjective interpretation is that this expression is a reference to the natural desire of Jewish women to become the mother of the Messiah which would thus make the expression a symbol of the Messianic hope in general. The implication of this interpretation is obvious, namely that the Antichrist will have absolutely no respect for the Son of God.

Both interpretations arising from this subjective genitive interpretation have the advantage that this expression is sandwiched between two descriptions of the Antichrist rejecting the gods of ancestors and his magnifying himself above every deity worshipped by unregenerate humanity on the earth. The interpretation that Tammuz is in view is unlikely since the Antichrist did not live in the days of Daniel or in the ancient world when women worshipped this god. He will live during the seventieth week. It is possible Tammuz will be worshipped then but it is more likely that Tammuz will not be worshipped then but some other will be worshipped.

The interpretation that this expression is a reference to the desire to be the mother of the Messiah has problems since the reference to “women” in this expression is ambiguous. Is it a reference to Jewish or Gentile women or both? If the reference to “women” in this expression was Jewish women we would expect the angel to add the phrase “your people” which would indicate that the one desired by women of “your people.” However, the angel does not. But one could justifiably object and say that the angel could be speaking to Daniel’s frame of reference. In other words, when the angel speaks of the object desired by women, both he and Daniel would understand it as being the Messiah who is desired by every Jewish woman.

The genitive relation of this expression could also be interpreted as an objective meaning that the noun *’iš-šā(h)* is receiving the action implied by the noun *ḥēm-dā(h)*. Therefore, the translation of this expression would “the desire for women.” The interpretation that arises from this translation is that the Antichrist will have absolutely no regard for the desire for women. Both Young, Keil and Constable

hold to this interpretation. The implication of this interpretation is that the Antichrist would not have a love or desire for women which is natural to men. In other words, he will not have a natural affection for women.

The implication of this interpretation is that the Antichrist would be a homosexual. However, not having a desire for women does not always necessarily mean that a man is a homosexual. With this interpretation, it is better to understand the idea as being the Antichrist will not marry or seek to be married and start a family because he will be obsessed with ruling the world and having the world worshipped him. So this interpretation indicates that not only will the Antichrist be indifferent to religion but also to women. Some interpret that the Antichrist will be abusive to women but this is nothing but mere speculation rather than sound exegesis.

The interpretation which best fits the context is that the Antichrist will have absolutely no regard for the one desired by women, namely the Jewish Messiah since this description would be sandwiched between the description that he will reject the gods of ancestors, and for any other deity and deify himself. In other words, the Antichrist will reject the gods of his ancestors, and every other object of worship, as well as the Messiah and will deify himself. The interpretation that the Antichrist will have no desire for women would seem out of place whereas the Antichrist rejecting the Messiah fits perfectly.

There are no problems with the interpretation of the third and fourth prophetic statements in Daniel 11:37. The third prophetic statement reveals that the Antichrist will have absolutely no regard for each and every object of worship. Thus, he will be against organized religion. The fourth prophetic statement presents the reason for the previous three and echoes the second prophetic statement recorded in Daniel 11:36 since it reveals that the Antichrist will magnify himself above every object of worship. Thus, he will deify himself. Thus, this fourth prophetic statement in Daniel 11:37 corresponds to the second prophetic statement in Daniel 11:36. It also corresponds to the prophetic statements in Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation 13:14-15 that the Antichrist will deify himself. So this fourth prophetic statement recorded in Daniel 11:37 is actually the third time that the book of Daniel prophesies that the Antichrist will deify himself.

Daniel 11:38 “But instead of this, he will be characterized as honoring a god, which is the capturing of fortresses, which is a god his ancestors never had knowledge of. He will be characterized as honoring this god with gold, with silver, with the precious stone as well as valuable commodities.” (Author’s translation)

The angel presents a contrast with the previous prophetic statement at the end of Daniel 11:37 that the Antichrist will have absolutely no respect for any god because he will magnify himself above every deity. Here in verse 38 the angel reveals that instead of worshipping any deity or pagan god, the Antichrist will be characterized as honoring a god, which is the capturing of fortresses which is an expression which personifies waging war. This god which is the capturing of fortresses is in fact no god or deity at all but rather it is an expression for the personification of waging war. Therefore, the Antichrist will be characterized as honoring in the sense of esteeming the practice of waging war or in other words, he will idolize military power. So we can see that the contrast is between the Antichrist not worshipping any deity but honoring the power to make war. He will not honor any god but only war.

The angel then reveals to Daniel that the ancestors of the Antichrist never had knowledge of this god of waging war. Remember he will be a Roman (cf. Daniel 9:26) and they worshipped a pantheon of gods

but they never worshipped the god of waging war, though they waged war. The Roman emperors and generals of the Roman Empire all worshipped pagan deities whom they honored when celebrating their military victories. However, unlike these men, the Antichrist will never worship any pagan deities but rather will magnify himself above every god worshipped by unregenerate humanity. The Roman Emperors deified themselves but never above all other deities like the Antichrist will do. The Antichrist will idolize military power because it is a means to an end, which is to have the world worship him. He will view military power as the means by which he can accomplish his goals.

In fact, the angel also reveals to Daniel that the Antichrist will also be characterized as honoring this god of waging war with gold, silver, the precious stone as well as valuable commodities. This means that his defense budget or budget for the military will be very generous. In other words, he will be the best friend to the military industrial complex. This prophetic statement means that the Antichrist will pour vast amounts of money and materials into waging war since waging war will enable him to accomplish his goal of conquering the world and having the world worship Him as God. This last prophetic statement also reveals that the Antichrist will be a materialist.

Daniel 11:39 “Furthermore, he will take action against the strongest fortified cities with the help of a foreign god. To those who cause him to receive recognition, he will cause honor to be increased so that he will cause them to rule the masses. Also, he will distribute land for a price.” (Author’s translation)

The angelic being continues to communicate to Daniel here in verse 39 prophecies pertaining to the character and actions of the Antichrist during the seventieth week. The first prophetic statement in this verse reveals that the Antichrist will take military action against the strongest fortified cities with the help of a foreign god during the seventieth week. The reference to the foreign god is best interpreted by the adversative clause, which is that appears in Daniel 11:38, “But instead of this, he will be characterized as honoring a god, which is the capturing of fortresses, which is a god his ancestors never had knowledge of.” As we noted, the expression “a god, which is the capturing of fortresses” is a personification of waging war. Thus, the Antichrist will be characterized as honoring in the sense of esteeming the practice of waging war or in other words, he will idolize military power. Therefore, the reference to the foreign god here in Daniel 11:39 is a reference to the Antichrist’s idolization of waging war or his obsession with military power which will help him rule the world. Therefore, the angel is telling Daniel that the Antichrist will take military action against the strongest fortified cities with the help of his military industrial complex or in other words his military power.

The second prophetic statement in Daniel 11:39 reveals that the Antichrist will cause honor to be increased to those individuals who cause him to receive recognition. He will honor these individuals in the sense that he will bestow upon them money, power, authority resulting in a higher status in society. So in other words, if someone scratches his back, he’ll scratch theirs.

Undoubtedly, those who are being referred to as causing him to receive recognition would be of course those in the media. It will be extremely important to have these individuals in his camp since they have the power to propagate his lies and deception and program for planet earth. Satan is the prince of the power of the atmosphere (Ephesians 2:2) and thus the media is a tool that the devil uses to spread his lies and propaganda against Christianity, the Bible and Jesus Christ. Those in government will be helpful to the Antichrist since they will the power to advance his political agenda throughout the various governments on planet earth. One of the ways the Antichrist will Antichrist will honor those who cause

him to receive recognition is that of delegated political authority over groups of people. Thus, those who cause him to receive recognition, he will delegate authority to rule over the masses.

The third prophetic statement in Daniel 11:39 reveals that the Antichrist will distribute land for a price meaning if you give him a large sum of money, he will give you land, which implies that he will already have land in his possession to distribute to others who pay him. Of course, he will have this land because of his military conquests of various nations.

Therefore, these three prophetic statements in Daniel 11:39 reveal that the Antichrist will be a politician and a corrupt one at that whereas Daniel 11:38 indicates he will be military man. He will be a warmonger or a man of war. These two verses also reveal he will be the greatest materialist in history. These verses both reveal that he will love money since money allows him to accomplish his lofty goals of ruling the world. He will use money to get what he wants.

Daniel 11:36 and 37 reveal that the Antichrist will be an absolute world ruler during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. These verses reveal he will deify himself which will demonstrate the fact that he is totally and completely arrogant and full of himself. He will be the greatest megalomaniac and egomaniac in all of human history. He will also be against the organized religions of the world as a result of his desire to be worshipped as God by the entire world. Thus, these verses reveal he will totally oppose God which will manifest itself in his public statements.

This character sketch of the Antichrist in Daniel 11:36-39 reveals that he will reflect the character of his father the devil. This world today reflects the standards of Satan and what he values. This world is marked by war, materialism, the love of money, selfish, self-centeredness, greed, corruption of all types, hypocrisy, and egomania. Antichrist will perfectly embody the character and standards of Satan and his cosmic system.

The Events of Daniel's Seventieth Week

The events that will take place during Daniel's Seventieth Week are staggering and mind boggling. The following is a list of events that will take place during the first of the Tribulation: (1) The Rise of the Ten Nation Confederacy called the Revived Roman Empire at the beginning of Daniel's Seventieth Week (Dan. 2; 7). (2) Antichrist rises to power as the King of the Western Confederacy in Europe (Dan. 7:20, 24; 9:27; Rev. 13:1-10). (3) The formulation of a false religious system under the false prophet at the beginning of Daniel's Seventieth Week (Rev. 13:11-18). (4) Antichrist makes a 7-year covenant with Israel to protect her (Dan. 9:24-27; 1st seal Rev. 6:1-2). (5) Israel living in peace in the land (Ezek. 38:8). (6) Temple rebuilt in Jerusalem and sacrifices instituted (Rev. 11:1-2; 2 Th. 2:4). (7) World-wide apostate church dominates (Rev. 17). (8) The pouring out of the judgments under the seals (Rev. 6). (9) 144,000 Born-again Jews evangelize Israel and the world (Rev. 7:1-8).

The following is a list of events in the middle of the Tribulation: (1) Satan is expelled from heaven by Michael and the elect angels and cast down to earth (Rev. 12:1-17). (2) Gog and her allies invade Israel from the north (Joel 2:20; Ezek. 38-39). (3) Gog and her allies are destroyed by God (Ezek. 38:17-23).

The following are the events during the second half of Tribulation: (1) Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel and puts an end to sacrifices in temple and declares himself as God (Dan. 9:27; 2

Thess. 2:4). (2) Antichrist becomes world ruler as a result of the power vacuum in the world caused by the destruction of Russia's military (Rev. 6:1-2; 13:5, 7; 17:12-13). (3) War, famine and death (2nd, 3rd and 4th seals, Rev. 6:3-8). (4) Martyrdom of both Jewish and Gentile believers who don't receive mark of the Beast (5th seal, Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-14; Mt. 24:9). (5) Jerusalem overrun by Gentile armies (Rev. 11:2; Lk. 21:24). (6) 2 Witnesses (Moses and Elijah) killed and raised from the dead (Rev. 11). (7) Image of Antichrist worshipped by the world (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15; 2 Th. 2:4; Rev. 13:14-15). (8) Worldwide deception by false prophets and Antichrist (Mt. 24:11; 2 Th. 2:9-11). (9) Gospel proclaimed worldwide (Mt. 24:14). (10) Worldwide disasters from divine wrath (6th seal, Rev. 6:12-17). (11) Worldwide persecution of Israel (Jer. 30:5-7; Dan. 12:1; Mt. 24:21-22). (12) Trumpet Judgments (Rev. 8-9, 11). (13) Bowl Judgments (Rev. 16). (14) Antichrist destroys the worldwide apostate church (Rev. 17:16-18).

The following are the events concluding the Tribulation: (1) Signs appear in the earth and sky (Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:10; Mt. 24:29). (2) Christ returns to deliver Israel (Rev. 19:11-19; Mt. 24:27-31). (3) World's armies unite to fight Christ at Armageddon and are destroyed (Joel 3:9-11; Rev. 16:16; 19:17-19). (4) Antichrist and False Prophet are thrown into Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20). (5) Satan imprisoned for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). (6) Judgment of Israel (Ezek. 20:33-38). (7) Judgment Gentile nations (Mt. 25:31-46). (8) Resurrection of Old Testament and Tribulational martyrs (Dan. 12:1-3; Rev. 20:4-6). (9) Marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9). (10) Millennial reign begins (Rev. 20:4).

Revelation 12:7-17 - Satan is Driven Out of Heaven By Michael in the Middle of Daniel's Seventieth Week

Now, in the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, the cold war will become a hot war and overflow to planet earth. The event that will mark this is Michael the archangel and his legions of elect-angels expelling Satan and his legions from heaven (Rev. 12:7). Satan and the fallen angels defeat in heaven and permanent expulsion from heaven commences the worst period in all of human history and the war to end all wars. Satan will then move the Antichrist to sit down on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim and declare himself as God.

Revelation 12:1 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman (Nation of Israel) clothed with the sun (Represents Jacob), and the moon (Represents Rachel and Leah) under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars (Represents 12 Sons of Jacob) 2 and she was with child (Represents Jesus Christ); and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon (Represents Satan) having seven heads (Represents 7 great Gentile world empires: (1) Egypt (2) Assyria (3) Babylon (4) Medo-Persia (5) Graeco-Macedonia (6) Rome (7) Future Revived Roman Empire) and ten horns (10 Ten European Confederacy, i.e. Revived Roman Empire), and on his heads were seven diadems. 4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven (Represents fallen angels) and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. 5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child (Jesus Christ), who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne (Ascension and Session of Jesus Christ). 6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (Last 3 ½ years of Daniel's Seventieth Week). 7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. (NASB95)

Michael and the elect angels who number two-thirds of the angels that were created overwhelm Satan and his angels who number one-third of the angels created by the Lord because of a simple spiritual principle: Victory or defeat in angelic warfare is gained by the application of power and the withdrawal of the inferior force (Invisible War, Barnhouse).

Now, there were originally nine divisions in the angelic order of battle and in eternity past, Satan possessed the highest rank among the angels as the guardian cherub. He was adorned with nine jewels according to Ezekiel 28:13, which are comparable to the twelve jewels found on the breastplate of the high priest of Israel, where each jewel represented one of the twelve tribes liable for military service (Exodus 28:15-21).

Satan in eternity past before his rebellion was the high priest of God ruling over these nine divisions or tribes of angels just as the high priest in Israel presided over the twelve tribes of Israel (Ezekiel 28:14). Revelation 12:4 says that one-third of the angels fell, that means three angelic divisions in the Lord's military rebelled. These three angelic divisions are arranged in rank, thus mimicking God.

So like God, Satan has a military that is organized in ranks. This is suggested by the fact that Michael is called the Archangel or chief angel (Jude 9) and in Daniel 10:13 he is called one of the chief princes.

Ephesians 6:12 presents the Satanic "order of battle," which is a military term generally used to denote the force structure of a particular combatant in any given military campaign.

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. (NASB95)

"**Rulers**" is the noun *arche* and refers to the highest rank of angels in the Satanic order of battle and hold positions of authority ("**thrones**") in the Satanic kingdom and are subordinate to only Satan himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ created these "**rulers**" (Col. 1:16) and He has defeated them through His death (Col. 2:15).

"**Powers**" is the Greek noun *exousia*, which refers to the rank of fallen angels who have been given by Satan "**dominions**" and are subordinate only to the *arche*, "**rulers**" and Satan himself.

"**World-forces**" is the noun *kosmokrator*, "world-ruler" and expresses the power or authority, which the fallen angels exercise over the cosmic system.

These angels are subordinate directly to the *exousia*, "**authorities**" and carry out their orders and are more than likely they are behind the miracles and other satanic demonstrations of power (cf. Rev. 13:13).

"**Spiritual forces**" refers to the rank and file angels in Satan's military.

These rank and file angels are also known in Scripture by a variety of names such as: (1) “**Demons**” (Lev. 17:7; Mt. 9:34). (2) “**Evil spirits**” (Lk. 7:21; Acts 19:13). (3) “**Unclean spirits**” (Mt. 10:1; Mk. 1:27). (4) “**Devils**” (Jn. 6:70).

“**In the heavenly places**” designates the “location” of the base of operations and activities of these rank and file angels.

Compare Ephesians 6:12 with Colossians 1:16.

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities -- all things have been created through Him and for Him. (NASB95)

“**Thrones**” is the noun *thronos*, which does not refer to a particular rank of angels but rather simply to a “position of authority” that the *arche*, “**rulers**” possess.

“**Dominions**” is the noun *kuriotes*, which refers to the “dominion or jurisdiction” exercised by one who is in a ruling position, namely, the *exousia*, “**powers**” and does not refer to a particular rank of angels.

“**Rulers**” is the noun *arche* and refers to the highest rank of angels in the Satanic order of battle and hold positions of authority (“**thrones**”) in the Satanic kingdom and are subordinate to only Satan himself.

The fact that the noun *arche* means, “one who possesses the highest ranking authority” eliminates the idea that the nouns *thronos*, “**dominions**” and *kuriotes*, “**dominions**” in Colossians 1:16 are referring to a higher rank of angels than the group designated by the name *arche*, “**rulers**.”

“**Authorities**” is the noun *exousia* and refers to the rank of fallen angels who have been given by Satan “**dominions**” and are subordinate only to the *arche*, “**rulers**” and Satan himself.

So Satan has governmental organization or hierarchy patterned after God since he mimics God and he has a military. Although Satan had instigated revolution against God in heaven, he recognizes the importance of discipline and order. Patterned after the divine system, Satan divided his demons into officer personnel all the way down to the rank and file. Much of what the Bible has to say about angels, holy and fallen, is couched in military language and terminology.

Among the military terms used to describe angelic groupings are the words “**hosts**” (1 Kng.22:19; Neh.9:6; Ps.103:21; 148:2; Dan.8:10; cf. Lk.2:13), “**army**” (Lk.2:13; Rev.19:9), “**legion**” (Matt.26:53; Mk.5:9; Lk.8:30), and “**band**” (Ps.78:49).

The base of operations of the fallen angels and their activities take place in the earth’s atmosphere as well as the stellar universe.

We noted this in our study of Genesis 1:6-8 where after the second day of restoration, the Lord did “not” designate the restoration of the earth’s atmosphere as *tov*, “good,” or more accurately, “perfect.”

The reason for this omission is that Satan and the fallen angels inhabit the earth's atmosphere (Ephesians 2:1-2). Fallen angels also have access to the third heaven where the Supreme Court of heaven resides and is convened 24/7 according to a comparison of Scripture with Scripture.

Satan has access to heaven and accuses believers before the throne of God (Zechariah 3:1-7; Job 1-2) but the Lord Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the Father as the believer's advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1).

So the Bible teaches that during the midway point of Daniel's seventieth week that Michael and the elect angels of God and defeat Satan and his armies and throw them out of heaven. Thus, the fallen angels must have access to the third heaven in order to be thrown out of it.

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. (NASB95)

The name "**Michael**" means "who is like God?" and poses a rhetorical and negative question, one demanding a negative answer meaning "who is like the Lord? No one! This is significant for this angel's very name and presence stands as a rebuke and refutation to Satan's boast in Isaiah 14:14b, "**I will make myself like the most High,**" i.e., "I will be like God."

In Daniel 12:1 he is called the great prince and in Jude 9 he is "**the archangel,**" i.e., first or chief of the angels. Here, in Revelation, we read of "**Michael and his angels,**" those under his authority, thus, it appears that Michael became the chief commander and leader of the holy angels after Satan's fall.

Michael, the archangel, is the guardian of the nation of Israel (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9). Until this point in the Tribulation, Michael never lays a hand on Satan. But at this point in the Tribulation, however, Michael gets to do what he undoubtedly has longed to do for millenniums; he gets to boot Satan out of heaven.

The Lord foresaw the defeat of Satan in heaven.

Luke 10:18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning." (NASB95)

This event was also prophesied by the prophet Daniel in Daniel 12:1.

Daniel 12:1 "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued." (NASB95)

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (NASB95)

The “**great dragon**” and “**serpent of old**” is identified as “**Satan**,” which is the noun *Satanas*, a legal term meaning “adversary” and “**Devil**,” which is the noun *Diabolos*, also a legal term meaning “slanderer, false accuser.”

“**The great dragon**” emphasizes Satan’s vicious and cruel character and emphasizes his end time activity and behavior.

“**The serpent of old**” draws our attention to Satan’s crafty character and reminds us of the Garden of Eden, the fall of man, his usurpation of man’s rule on earth, and his constant activity of temptation and deception.

Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. **11** And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. **12** For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.” **13** And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. **14** But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. **15** And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. **16** But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. **17** So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (NASB95)

The Armageddon Campaign in Daniel 11:40-45

Daniel 11:40 “Now, during the end time, the king ruling the south will cause himself to go to war against him. Also, the king ruling the north will cause himself to storm against him with a military chariot group, with a cavalry as well as with a large armada of ships. However, despite this, he will wage attacks against countries so that he will overflow, yes, pass through like a flood.” (Author’s translation)

After providing Daniel with an extensive description of a king in Daniel 11:36-39 who will be an absolute world ruler and oppose God and deify himself, the angel informs Daniel that during the end time the king ruling the south will go to war against this king. Also, he tells Daniel that the king ruling the north will attack him as well during the end time with a military chariot group, a cavalry as well as a large armada of ships. This prophecy will take place during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. This is indicated by the expression “**the end time**” which refers to the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. The Antichrist will be a world ruler at this time from the final stage of the Roman Empire according to a comparison of Daniel 7:23-25, Daniel 9:26-27, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13. Since the king of the south throughout chapter eleven has been a reference to Egypt and the king of the north the Seleucid Empire in Syria, this two-pronged attack against Antichrist will come from both Egypt and Syria during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. The angel

informs Daniel that the Antichrist will wage attacks against countries and conquer them. These nations are identified later by the angel in Daniel 11:41-43.

The prophetic statements in Daniel 11:40b-45 would indicate that the Antichrist will be in Israel when Egypt and Syria and their allies attack him. This is indicated by two major factors. The first is obvious in that Egypt is located to the immediate south of Israel and Syria to the immediate north of Israel. Though, its possible, it is highly unlikely that these two nations would attack the Antichrist and his revived form of the Roman Empire in Europe. It is more likely they attack him while he is occupying Israel since this occupation would give these two nations a more sound motive to attack him. The second major factor indicating that Egypt and Syria will attack Antichrist while he is occupying Israel is that Daniel 11:41 says that he will wage an attack against the Beautiful Land which is Israel and then in Daniel 11:42, he exercises his military might against Egypt. In fact Daniel 11:43 says that he will gain control of Egypt economically. Therefore, it would appear that Egypt and Syria will attack the Antichrist while he is occupying Israel since chronologically Egypt is defeated by him after he attacks Israel.

Interestingly, Daniel 11:44 says that rumors from the East and North will disturb him. The rumors from the North in Daniel 11:40 is Syria and her allies since we have already determined from the context of chapter eleven that the king of the north is a reference to Syria and not a reference to the northern king who attacks Israel as prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39. The army from the east is more than likely the same army mentioned in Revelation 16 which comes over the dried up Euphrates River to attack the Antichrist. Therefore, it appears that the first two prophetic statements in Daniel 11:40 that the kings of the north and south will attack the Antichrist is a summary statement which is developed later in Daniel 11:41-45. Thus, when the angel says in Daniel 11:44 that rumors from the north will disturb the Antichrist he is referring back to his prophetic statements in Daniel 11:40 that the king of the north, who is Syria, will attack him.

Now, the third prophetic statement contained in Daniel 11:40 reveals that the king described in Daniel 11:36-39 will wage attacks against countries so that he will overflow these countries, yes, pass through like a flood despite the fact that he will be attacked by the kings of the north and south. Therefore, this third prophetic statement reveals that despite being attacked by Egypt and Syria and their allies the Antichrist will wage attacks against various countries so that his armies pass through them like a great flood overwhelms a particular geographical region. Thus, the Antichrist will gain a huge military victory despite being attacked by Egypt and Syria and their allies.

Now, the question arises as to who are these countries who are conquered by the Antichrist? The first is Israel since Daniel 11:41 reveals that the Antichrist will wage an attack against Israel. The second is Egypt since Daniel 11:42-43 reveals that the Antichrist will conquer this nation and plunder its wealth. Daniel 11:43 also reveals that Libya and Ethiopia will also be conquered by the Antichrist. Daniel 11:41 also reveals that Edom, Moab and the Ammonite leadership will not be conquered by him. Syria is not described in Daniel 11:40-45 as being conquered by the Antichrist. However, Daniel 11:44 says that rumors of an attack from the armies of Syria and the Far East like China will disturb the Antichrist so that he will attack these armies in a tremendous rage to destroy and wipe them out.

Now, some argue that Egypt, Syria and their Arab allies will attack Israel during the seventieth week and that Antichrist will come to Israel's aid since he entered into an agreement with the nation of Israel, which was presumably to offer her protection from her enemies. In other words, they argue that the Antichrist will view this attack of Israel by Egypt and Syria as an attack on him. He will use this attack

of Israel by Egypt and Syria as a pretext to move his armies in Europe into the Middle East. This would also mean that this attack by Egypt and Syria will take place before Antichrist desecrates the temple and deifies himself since he comes to Israel to honor his agreement with her to protect her. He doesn't become Israel's enemy until after desecrating the temple by deifying himself and then demanding the world to worship him.

The problem with this scenario is that the text of Daniel 11:40 says that Egypt and Syria will attack the Antichrist and not Israel. Furthermore, the text of Daniel 11:40 also says that this attack of the Antichrist by Egypt and Syria will be during the end time which is a reference to the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. If this is the case, then it is hard to reconcile Antichrist coming to the aid of Israel since the last three and a half years of the seventieth week begin with the Antichrist deifying himself and desecrating the temple which will result in the persecution of the Jewish people. In other words, he does not go to war with Israel until after desecrating the temple by deifying himself and then demanding the world to worship him as God. The war like character of the Antichrist is not manifested during the first three and a half years of the seventieth week but during the last three and a half years of this period. He does not go to war until after he deifies himself and desecrates the temple. Prior to this event, he will pose as a peace maker and an ally of Israel. Therefore, to interpret Daniel 11:40-45 as describing Antichrist coming to the aid of Israel after she is attacked by Egypt and Syria is untenable.

It is more likely that the events described in Daniel 11:40-45 all take place after the Antichrist desecrates the temple and deifies himself thus implying that the Antichrist is already in Israel when he is attacked by Egypt and Syria. It is better to interpret these verses as indicating that Egypt and Syria will attack Antichrist as a result of Antichrist deifying himself and demanding the world to worship him.

Now, if Daniel 11:40-45 is describing events taking place during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week with the Antichrist already in the Middle East, then the question arises as to what causes him to enter the Middle East so that his army is attacked by Egypt and Syria? This is easy to answer since Daniel 9:27 tell us that the Antichrist will enter into an agreement with the leadership of Israel which will begin the seventieth week. From this a likely scenario is that upon reaching this agreement and in accordance with this agreement, the armies of the Antichrist move into the Middle East in order to offer protection to Israel from her enemies. When the Antichrist desecrates the temple by deifying himself and then compels the world to worship him, Egypt and Syria and eventually China attack him. These nations will find repulsive the presence of the Western armies of Antichrist in Israel and the Middle East much like many Arab countries today in the twenty-first century find repulsive the presence of America and her European allies in the Middle East. But more than this, they would find totally repulsive his demand to be worshipped and his claim to be God. Daniel 11:41 reveals that the Antichrist will also turn on Israel and wage an attack against her. Based upon Daniel 9:27, this attack and occupation of Israel immediately follows his desecration of the temple as a result of deifying himself.

Therefore, upon reaching an agreement with Israel, Antichrist will move his armies into the Middle East in accordance with this agreement. Then, during the middle of this seven year agreement with Israel, Antichrist will break this agreement. He will desecrate the temple by deifying himself. He will then attack Israel and occupy her land (cf. Daniel 11:45). He will demand the world to worship him. This will then prompt Egypt and Syria to attack him since they find his presence in the Middle East to be a threat to their interests and they will find repulsive his claims of being God. They will be repulsed by his decree that the world must worship him. Antichrist will consequently retaliate and attack these nations.

Daniel 11:41 “He will even wage an attack against the beautiful land. Indeed, many will be defeated. However, these will for their own benefit escape from his power: Edom as well as Moab and in addition the leadership of the citizens of Ammon.” (Author’s translation)

Daniel 11:41 reveals that the Antichrist will also turn on Israel and wage an attack against her. Based upon Daniel 9:27, this attack and occupation of Israel immediately follows his desecration of the temple as a result of deifying himself. Upon reaching an agreement with Israel, Antichrist will move his armies into the Middle East in accordance with this agreement. Then, during the middle of this seven year agreement with Israel, Antichrist will break this agreement. He will desecrate the temple by deifying himself. He will then attack Israel and occupy her land (cf. Daniel 11:45). He will demand the world to worship him. This will then prompt Egypt and Syria to attack him since they find his presence in the Middle East to be a threat to their interests and they will find repulsive his claims of being God. They will be repulsed by his decree that the world must worship him. Antichrist will consequently retaliate and attack these nations.

When the angel says in Daniel 11:41 that the wicked king described in Daniel 11:36-40 will wage an attack against Israel, he is prophesying that the Antichrist will attack Israel after he breaks the treaty with her and desecrates the temple by deifying himself and demanding the world to worship him as God. In other words, this attack is the direct result of the actions of Antichrist in the temple in deifying himself and demanding the world to worship him. Therefore, the three prophetic events recorded in Daniel 11:40 and the first in Daniel 11:41 will all take place after the Antichrist desecrates the temple by deifying himself and demanding the world to worship him. Thus these prophetic events will take place after and as a direct result of the second and third prophetic events recorded in Daniel 9:27.

Now, after informing Daniel that the wicked king described in Daniel 11:36-39 will wage an attack against Israel, the elect angel of God advances upon and intensifies the prophetic statement in Daniel 11:40 that despite being attacked by the kings of the north and south, the king described in Daniel 11:36-39 will wage attacks against countries so that he will overflow, yes, pass through like a flood. Although many countries will be conquered by this king described in Daniel 11:36-39 who will be attacked by the kings of the north and south during the end time, Edom, Moab and the Ammonite leadership will not be captured by this king. Today, in the twenty-first century, the ancient nations of Edom, Moab and Ammon would all be included in the present kingdom of Jordan. Thus, the historical enemies of Israel will not be overthrown by the armies of the Antichrist during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week.

Daniel 11:42 “Yes, he will exercise his power against countries with the Egyptian people by no means being able to escape.” (Author’s translation)

The angel issues another prophetic statement, revealing to Daniel that this wicked king described in Daniel 11:36-39 will exercise his power against countries with the Egyptian people by no means being able to escape this military might of this wicked king. The angel reiterates in Daniel 11:42 the prophecy in Daniel 11:40 that the king described in Daniel 11:36-39 will wage attacks against countries and conquer them. Therefore, Daniel 11:42 is a prophecy of the Antichrist conquering other nations with the exercise of his military power during the last three and a half years of the seventieth after he desecrates the temple in Jerusalem by deifying himself. The countries mentioned in Daniel 11:41-42 appear to be Libya and Ethiopia as indicated by the angel’s prophetic statements in Daniel 11:43 since these nations are said to capitulate to the Antichrist.

If you recall, Daniel 11:40 teaches that Egypt (“the king ruling the south”) will attack the Antichrist during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week in response to the Antichrist deifying himself and demanding that the entire world worship him. Here in Daniel 11:42, the angel reveals that this attack by Egypt will fail since they are said to be conquered by the Antichrist.

Daniel 11:43 “He will even be in control over hidden treasures, namely their gold as well as their silver, indeed, over all Egypt’s valuable commodities. Also, the Libyans as well as the Cushites will be under his control.” (Author’s translation)

This prophetic statement indicates that when the Antichrist conquers Egypt by the exercise his military power, he will find something extraordinary and unexpected, namely he will control the hidden treasures of gold and silver in Egypt. He will in fact control all of her wealth as a result of his military victory over Egypt. This is fascinating since today Egypt is a poor country based on western culture’s living standards. However, in reality Egypt is very rich and the world’s leaders all know this. The archaeological work performed in Egypt over the last hundred years has revealed that Egypt has a wealth of gold. But it has not taken advantage of this vast possession of gold for other resources or modern conveniences. Thus most of Egyptians live in poverty. This vast gold resources is hidden from public view today.

The book of Revelation makes clear that the Antichrist will control the world’s economy during the seventieth week of Daniel and in particular the last three and a half years of it. Here Daniel 11:43 reveals one of the reasons why he will control the world’s economy, namely because he will have acquired vast gold reserves to support his new world economy.

Then, as an addition the angel tells Daniel that both the Libyans and the Cushites will be under the control of this wicked king. This prophetic statement thus reveals that Antichrist will control Libya and Sudan and possibly Ethiopia as well.

Daniel 11:44 “However, reports from the east as well as the north will alarm him. Consequently, he will march out in a great rage in order to kill, yes, annihilate many.” (Author’s translation)

Since we have already established that this king is the Antichrist, this prophetic statement teaches that intelligence reports from the east and the north will alarm him but who are these armies from the east and the north? First of all, the army from the east would appear to be the armies from the Far East such as China and Japan which is supported by the prophecies in Revelation 16 which teaches that a massive army of 200 million men will march across the dried up Euphrates River to oppose the Antichrist. This attack against the Antichrist by the armies from the east is the direct result of the sixth bowl judgment mentioned in the book of Revelation. Therefore, in Daniel 11:44, the army from the east which will oppose the Antichrist during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week is the direct result of the sixth bowl judgment. It will be composed by China, Japan, India, Persia, and Afghanistan. This massive army from the east will oppose Antichrist because of his actions in conquering militarily the Middle East and demanded that the world worship him.

The army from the north is more than likely Syria and her allies since in Ezekiel 38-39 no invasion from Egypt is mentioned as is the case in Daniel 11:40. Also, the army invading Israel in Ezekiel 38-39 comes from the remotest parts of the north of Israel whereas in Daniel 11:40 the Antichrist is attacked

by an army from the north with no mention as to how far north as was the case in Ezekiel 38-39. This would suggest that the king of the north in Daniel 11:40 is not the same as the northern ruler who attacks Israel in Ezekiel 38-39.

Now, as we noted the king of the north throughout Daniel chapter eleven is referring to the Seleucid Empire which was located to the immediate north of Israel, which was Syria as it is today. Why is it that expositors consistently identify the king of the north in Daniel 11:5-35 as being a reference to Syria but then in Daniel 11:40 they interpret the king of the north as Russia? This is not a consistent hermeneutic. It is hermeneutically inconsistent to interpret the king of the north this way. In fact, many of these expositors who argue that the king of the north in Daniel 11:40 is Russia, also say that the king of the south in Daniel 11:40 is Egypt since Egypt has been referred to throughout chapter eleven as the king of the south. Why does this reasoning not apply to the king of the north? What is consistent is to identify the king of the north as Syria since this is how the king of the north was used throughout Daniel 11:5-35. Therefore, the identity of the king of the north in Daniel 11:40 should be determined in light of the Seleucid Empire or in others in light of the fact that throughout Daniel 11:5-35, the king of the north is a reference to this empire which was located to the immediate north of Israel, which today would be Syria.

We must also keep in mind that the Seleucid Empire was composed of more than present day Syria since it originally extended from European Thrace east to the borders of India. When Rome defeated her, the authority of the Seleucid Empire was confined to Syria and Cilicia. At times, the Seleucid Empire included not only Syria but also areas of Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Bactria, Arachosia and much of Anatolia. Today the national boundaries of the Seleucid Empire would include Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan as well as parts of Pakistan. Therefore, we should interpret the king of the north in Daniel 11:40 as a confederation of nations located geographically to the immediate north of Israel. Thus, during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week, both Egypt and her allies in her region as well as Syria and her allies will attack the Antichrist.

If you notice in Daniel 11:40-45, the angel does not say if the army from the north will be defeated by the Antichrist. He does say that the army from the south will be defeated which we noted is a reference to Egypt. The reason for this could be that Syria and her allies will join forces with the armies from the Far East to fight Antichrist during the Armageddon campaign until the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. In other words, the armies of the final stage of the Roman Empire under Antichrist will be at war with the armies of Syria and the Far East until Jesus Christ's Second Advent which will end this war. So Antichrist would be fighting on two fronts during this war of Armageddon.

Now, we also must remember that the attack from the south and the north against the Antichrist mentioned in Daniel 11:40 will not be a simultaneous attack since the prophetic statements in this verse summarize Daniel 11:41-45. The army from the north in Syria will along with the armies from the East oppose Antichrist after the Antichrist has conquered Israel and Egypt and other countries in the Middle East. The chronology in Daniel 11:41-45 indicates that this since this passage reveals that the armies from the east and north oppose Antichrist after he has captured Israel and Egypt.

Revelation 16 and Daniel 11:40-45 do not mention Antichrist defeating these armies from Syria and her allies and the armies from the Far East led by China which would suggest that the armies of Antichrist, the Far East and Syria and her allies will fight each other up to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. Our Lord's statements in Matthew 24:22 that His Second Advent will prevent the extinction of the human race indicates that this final war during the last three and a half years would result in the

extinction of the human race if it were not for Jesus Christ returning to end this war. Revelation 19:19 reveals that the armies during the Armageddon campaign will turn their weapons from facing each other and turn them against Jesus Christ when He returns at His Second Advent. He will exterminate these armies and have Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown alive into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20-21). Also, Satan will be imprisoned at this time for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-6).

Daniel 11:45 “He will even pitch his royal tents between the seas on the beautiful, holy Mountain. However, despite this, he will come to his end with absolutely no one will help him.”

Daniel 11:45 brings to an end the prophecy regarding the character and actions of the Antichrist during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. This verse contains two prophetic statements. The first is that the Antichrist will pitch his royal tents between the seas on the beautiful holy mountain. “**The seas**” is a reference to the Mediterranean and Dead Seas with the former located to the west of Jerusalem and the latter located to the east of this city. “**The beautiful holy Mountain**” is a reference to the temple mount area in Jerusalem. Though in Daniel’s day it was destroyed by war, it was still called beautiful by Daniel since it is the place in which the Messiah would be crucified and would die as a substitute for all of sinful humanity. It is also the place in which He will reign over all the earth for a thousand years. This first prophetic statement in Daniel 11:45 is an ascensive clause meaning that this statement is shocking to the angel and repulsive to him since God who has chosen this city to be the capital city of Israel and place from which His Son will rule during His millennial reign.

When the Antichrist is occupying Jerusalem he will be displaying himself as God by sitting on the Ark of the Covenant between the cherubs in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem which Gabriel prophesied about in Daniel 9:27. Also the false prophet will lead the world in worshipping the image of the Antichrist during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week.

The apostle Paul also refers to the Antichrist’s desecrating the temple and declaring himself God and demanding the worship of the world. Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that Antichrist will “**take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as God**” is a reference to the statement in Daniel 9:27, “**on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate.**” The statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 also corresponds to the second prophetic statement in Daniel 11:36 that a unique will exalt and magnify himself above every god.

Revelation 13:14-15 also mentions Antichrist exalting himself as God and receiving the worship of the world as such while occupying Jerusalem.

Revelation 13:1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. (NASB95)

The “**dragon**” refers to Satan according to Revelation 12:9. In Revelation 13:1-4, the “**beast**” refers to the Revived Form of the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist since it is compared to previous Gentile world powers in Revelation 13:3 and it has “**ten horns**,” which signifies the Revived Roman Empire in Daniel 7:7, 20, 24, Revelation 17:3, 7, 12 and 16.

Now, when approaching Revelation 13, we must understand that the ancient Orientals regarded kings and kingdoms synonymously. Therefore, the “**beast**” in Revelation 13 will refer at times to the

Revived Roman Empire and at times to the Antichrist who is the leader of it with the context determining which one is view.

The “**sea**” refers to the Gentile nations according to Revelation 17:15 indicating that this beast is a Gentile kingdom and the “**ten horns**” refers to the ten nation European Confederacy according to Daniel 7:7, which is the revived form of the Roman Empire. This beast represents the Revived Form of the Roman Empire because it corresponds to both the feet of iron and clay in the image that appeared in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 2:40-43. It also corresponds to the ten horns in Daniel’s vision recorded in Daniel 7:7, both of which as we noted represented the Roman Empire

The “**seven heads**” refers to six great Gentile nations throughout history and the one to come in the future: (1) Egypt (2) Assyria (3) Babylon (4) Medo-Persia (5) Greece (6) Rome (7) Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation.

The “**ten diadems**” signifies that there will be ten independent nations in this European Confederacy, led by Antichrist, each with a ruler of its own and the “**blasphemous names**” represents the anti-Christ character of this confederacy.

Revelation 13:2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. (NASB95)

The statement that the beast was like a “**leopard**” is a reference to Daniel’s prophecy about Greece in Daniel 7:6 and refers to the fact that like the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great and his generals, the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist will sum up the brilliancy and speed of Greece.

The statement that the beast’s feet were like those of a “**bear**” is a reference to Daniel’s prophecy about the Medo-Persian Empire in Daniel 7:5 and refers to the fact that like the Medo-Persian Empire, the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist will sum up the massive power of Medo-Persia.

The statement that the beast’s mouth was like the mouth of a “**lion**” is a reference to Daniel’s prophecy about the Babylonian Empire in Daniel 7:4 and refers to the fact that like the Babylonian Empire, the Revived Roman Empire under Antichrist will sum up the absolute autocratic dominion of Babylon.

Revelation 13:3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. (NASB95)

This statement refers to the restoration of the Roman Empire and not the Antichrist since John is speaking in the context of the ten horns that represent the Revived Roman Empire.

Revelation 13:4 They worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” (NASB95)

Revelation 13:5-9 refers to the Antichrist since the passage emphasizes a personality who speaks arrogant words and receives the worship of men.

Revelation 13:5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. (NASB95)

The “**forty-two months**” refers to the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week and corresponds with the “**for a time** (one year), **times** (two years), **and a half time** (six months)” in Daniel 7:25 and the “**one thousand two hundred and sixty days**” in Revelation 12:6 and the “**forty-two months**” in Revelation 11:2.

Revelation 13:6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. (NASB95)

Revelation 13:5-6 corresponds with Daniel 7:8 and 11.

Revelation 13:7 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. (NASB95)

This statement corresponds with Daniel 7:23, which reveals that the little horn will have a world-wide kingdom and it will be an overwhelming conquest, which anticipates a coming one-world government under a worldwide dictator.

Revelation 13:8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. (NASB95)

Daniel 7:25 corresponds to Revelation 13:1-10.

Revelation 13:11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. 12 He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. (NASB95)

This second beast is called in Revelation 16:13, 19:20 and 20:10 “**the false prophet**” and will be a religious leader as indicated in that he is depicted as a lamb with two horns. The horns speak of power and the lamb is a religious symbol, a symbol of sacrifice, so this beast is a religious figure and as a lamb is also symbolical of a mild, lamb-like manner, so this second beast will adopt a mild lamb-like appearance, but he will be a wolf in sheep’s clothing. (Maybe the Pope)

Revelation 13:13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. (NASB95)

This passage teaches that the second beast, i.e. the false prophet will promote the worship of the first beast, which refers to the Antichrist and not the Revived Roman Empire since first beast is said to have

“had a wound of the sword and has come to life,” which refers to surviving a fatal wound from an act of violence.

Rome was never destroyed by the sword, i.e. militarily but rather disintegrated from division and deterioration from within, thus indicating that Antichrist will survive an assassination attempt.

Revelation 13:15 And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. 17 And he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six. (NASB95)

To enforce the worship of the beast and to make life impossible without his worship, men cannot buy or sell without the mark of the beast. Consequently, millions of believers will be killed because they do not have the mark and refuse to receive it or because they starve to death since they cannot buy or sell.

Some will survive, however, by living off the land or because other believers who have food share with those who do not (cf. Matt. 24:15-25 and 25:31-40). To receive the mark of the beast is tantamount to the worship of the beast, and rejection of Jesus Christ (cf. 13:8; 17:8; 14:9-12; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4).

Revelation 13:17 say that the mark is his number, which is defined in verse 18 as 666 and is one of the options for the mark, either his name or his number and will be the means by which believers in the Tribulation period will identify the beast. This will not be just a number or identification mark on a plastic card but rather it will be on the person himself and symbolic of the fact that he is only a man and not God as he claims to be. It is interesting that within the identification numbers of various agencies, the IRS and others, the number 666 is beginning to pop up more and more.

Now, the second prophetic statement contained in Daniel 11:45 is a concessive clause meaning that despite the Antichrist occupying Jerusalem and the temple where he displays himself as God, he will meet his demise with absolutely no one to help him. The Word of God teaches that Jesus Christ at His Second Advent will kill the Antichrist and have him thrown alive into the Lake of Fire after his death. So therefore, this concessive clause makes clear that Antichrist will die in Jerusalem which would rule out Antiochus Epiphanes IV fulfilling Daniel 11:36-45 since he did not die in Jerusalem but in Persia after an unsuccessful raid on Elymais.

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ

At His “Second Advent,” the Lord Jesus Christ will terminate the seventieth week and the Times of the Gentiles. He will destroy the Tribulational armies, have Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:11-19), will imprison Satan for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3) and will establish His millennial reign on planet earth (Rev. 20:4-6).

At that time, the Lord and His armies will orbit the earth before landing on the Mount of Olives, which was the site of His Ascension (Acts. 1:9-11). There will be a great earthquake when our Lord's foot touches the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1-8) and will be a unique day having neither day nor night (Zech. 14:7). The Lord Jesus Christ describes the Tribulation period in detail and His Second Advent in Matthew 24:29-31 and Luke 21:25-28.

The "Second Advent" of Jesus Christ is taught in both the Old and New Testaments (Deuteronomy 30:3; Psalm 2:1-9; 24:7-10; 96:10-13; 110; Isaiah 9:6-7; 63:1-6; Jeremiah 23:1-8; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:18-27; Zechariah 12; 14:1-9; Matthew 19:28; 24:27-31; Mark 13:24-30; Luke 12:35-40; 17:24-37; 18:8; 21:25-28; Acts 1:10-11; 15:16-18; Romans 11:25-27; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2:8; 2 Peter 3:3-4; Jude 14-15; Revelation 1:7-8; 2:25-28; 16:15; 19:11-21).

Revelation chapter 19 teaches extensively regarding the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:1-10 reveals the events in heaven leading up to the Second Advent, which is taught in Revelation 19:11-20:3.

In Revelation 19:1-6, John presents "hallelujah" choruses after the destruction of the city of Babylon by the great world-wide earthquake.

Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER." (NASB95)

"After these things" refers to the events recorded in Revelation 17-18, which deal with destruction of religious Babylon by Antichrist (Revelation 17) and the destruction of politico-commercial Babylon by God (Revelation 18).

A "great multitude" forms the first chorus, which refers to the martyred dead of the Tribulation.

"Hallelujah" is the interjection *hallelouia*, which is the Greek rendering of two Hebrew words, the first is *hal^{el}lu* and the second is the Hebrew name of God in the shortened form, *Yahh*, and together they mean, "to sing praise, to give praise to the Lord."

So the nature of these choruses in heaven is to give praise to the Lord. The content of their praise involves attributing salvation, glory and power to God for His permanent destruction of both religious and politico-commercial Babylon (verses 1-3) as well as giving praise for the permanent sovereignty of the Lord God over both the significant and insignificant (verses 4-6).

This multitude praises God's power, righteousness and justice.

Revelation 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" (NASB95)

Revelation 19:4 records the “**twenty-four elders and the four living creatures**” forming a chorus that answers antiphonally to the first chorus of the martyred dead of the Tribulation, which formed a “**great multitude.**” The “**twenty-four elders**” represent the representatives of the church and the “**four living creatures**” represent the elect angels.

Revelation 19:5-6 records the final hallelujah chorus.

Revelation 19:5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” 6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” (NASB95)

This praise is prophetic for what is about to happen rather than for the judgment just executed upon Babylon since at this point Christ had not bodily assumed the sovereign rule of planet earth.

Revelation 19:7-10 records the proclamation of the wedding of the Lamb

Revelation 19:7 “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (NASB95)

In order to understand the significance of what is recorded in Revelation 19:7-10, we must have some kind of understanding of the marriage custom in John’s day, which took place in three stages:

(1) Betrothal: The marriage contract was drawn up by the parents when the parties to the marriage were still children, which included a payment of a dowry. Though the marriage was not consummated as of yet, they were considered legally married.

The symbolism of this stage is fulfilled when the Christian became a part of the bride of Christ the moment they accepted by faith Jesus Christ as their Savior. The church age is the betrothal phase, the time when God is calling out a bride for His Son.

The payment of a suitable dowry was fulfilled symbolically when Christ gave His own life for the church age believer as a dowry. Today all believers are legally married to Jesus Christ and through living faithfully in the Word, they are kept as pure virgins, kept from Satanic apostasy or fornication (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-26 with Jam. 4:4).

(2) Presentation: When the couple reached a suitable age the father of the bridegroom would present the contract to the father of the bride. The bridegroom would then go to the house of the bride in the company of his friends and escort her to his home. This is the background for the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25:1-13.

During the betrothal phase the groom would prepare an apartment, a place to live in his father's house. Homes, especially for the wealthy, were often very large complexes. Only the portions which were needed, however, were finished and furnished. When a son was to be married, another portion was completed to make ready for the new bride (John 14:2-3).

The rapture, or resurrection of the church, is the event which brings the groom to the bride and which takes the bride back into heaven. The groom and his friends would then escort the bride to their new home. The ceremony which followed was the "presentation" or actual marriage. The hand of the bride was placed into the hand of the groom's father. He would then place it into the groom's hand. This was considered the marriage ceremony. Ephesians 5:27 speaks of this presentation, but also of Christ's present work of keeping the church pure and productive by loving her through the Word.

(3) The Marriage Feast (The Reception): The groom would invite many guests and gather all his friends to come to the marriage feast and view his bride. The millennium represents the marriage feast where Christ displays His bride, the church.

In the parable of Matthew 22:1-14 we have an illustration of this custom. The parable, however, pictures the rejection of Israel and Christ's gracious extension of the invitation to all nations. Christ had prepared a great feast of spiritual blessings, but Israel was too busy to be bothered so the offer was extended to the nations or the Gentile world (cf. Rom. 11:1-32).

In Matthew 25:1-13 we have another reference to the wedding feast only this time it refers to the millennium and the invitation is to come as guests to this great feast. The invitation is to Jews and Gentiles of the Tribulation to come to the marriage feast of Christ and His bride, the church. Of course, they can only come by faith in the groom. Faith alone in Christ alone is the wedding invitation; this provides the righteous garment necessary to get into the feast.

Revelation 19:7 records the announcement of the wedding feast or the millennial reign and not the announcement of the marriage, which already occurred in heaven following the rapture with the presentation of the church to the Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:9 makes this clear.

The marriage supper or millennial reign can now be announced and anticipated because Christ is about to return to remove all the enemies of God and unbelievers from the earth in preparing the earth for this great celebration of 1,000 years. However, for such an event the bride must be properly clothed and prepared so the groom may show off his new bride.

Revelation 19:8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (NASB95)

The bride refers to the church of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22f). Second, we are told, "**His bride makes herself ready.**" This brings out the aspect of personal responsibility of individuals. There is first the responsibility in relation to salvation.

To be a part of the bride, one must have believed in Christ as his or her personal Savior from sin. But the primary emphasis here relates to the issue of true spirituality which results in rewards or preparation for eternity. Men must personally and responsibly believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, and then, as believers and as part of the bride of Christ, they must choose to walk by the Spirit of God according to

the Word, by faith, so they can bear fruit or reproduce good works. This is what is meant by the statement, **“makes herself ready.”**

God’s part is brought with the statement in verse 8 that **“it was given to her to clothe herself...”** The words **“was given to her”** focuses our attention on God’s grace and refers, I believe, to two phases of His grace to all believers who make up the bride of Christ.

First, it refers to those gifts Christ has given to the church which enable believers to produce good works for God and to glorify Him. Second, **“was given to her”** also refers to the reward the Lord will give for faithful service or the righteous deeds done in the power of the Holy Spirit. The reward is a beautiful wedding garment to be worn at the wedding feast. This is clearly spelled out in the next words of our text, **“... to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”**

Revelation 19:9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” (NASB95)

Verse 9 has reference to the custom of inviting guests to the wedding feast as seen in Matthew 22 and 25. This passage records a beatitude, a pronouncement of blessing upon those invited. All men are invited, both Jews and Gentiles, but to enter and be a part one must accept the invitation and come with the right wedding garment, namely, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This means one must first accept the invitation to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12; 3:3, 16; Rom. 3:21-22; 4:5; Matt. 22:8-13).

Every guest must have on a wedding robe, a garment of righteousness, in order to be a part of the marriage feast or the millennial reign of the Savior. These guests are friends of the bridegroom (John 3:29).

Revelation 19:10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (NASB95)

John is overcome by the awesome revelation given to him and falls at the feet of the angel who gave him this revelation and he is rebuked by the angel for doing so. He had forgotten that one must always keep in mind that it is the message about God and His ways and not the messenger that is important whether men or angels. Revelation from God whether through an angel or man must always result in the worship of God and not the messenger. The messengers are simply servants as the angel tells John.

Revelation 19:11-20:3 records the “Second Advent” of Jesus Christ, which like the “First Advent” will be literally fulfilled. None of the details given in Revelation 19:11-21 corresponds to the “Rapture” of the church.

The “Rapture” of the church is distinguished in Scripture from the “Second Advent” of Jesus Christ. For example, the “Rapture” delivers the church from the Tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9) while the “Second Advent” delivers Israel from Satan, Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. The “Rapture” is seen only by the church and is therefore invisible to the world while the “Second Advent” is the visible manifestation of Christ on the earth (Revelation 1:7).

Revelation 1:7 “BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.” (NASB95)

The Lord meets the church in the earth’s atmosphere at the “Rapture,” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) whereas the Lord physically lands on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem at His “Second Advent.” (Zechariah 14:4). Signs do not precede the “Rapture” whereas visible signs precede the “Second Advent.” (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21:10-31).

The Lord claims His Bride at the “Rapture” but He returns with her at the “Second Advent.” (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:10) The “Rapture” completes God’s program for the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-58) while the “Second Advent” is related to God’s program for Israel (Matthew 24).

The “Rapture” is a mystery (1 Corinthians 15:51-57), not known to Old Testament saints whereas the “Second Advent” is prophesied throughout the Old Testament canon. The “Rapture” leaves creation unchanged whereas the “Second Advent” entails a change in creation from corruption to perfect environment (Romans 8:18-22).

The “Rapture” does not fulfill God’s covenants to Israel whereas the “Second Advent” marks the beginning of their fulfillment through Christ’s millennial reign. The “Rapture” precedes the Tribulation whereas the “Second Advent” follows it as indicated by the chronology presented in the book of Revelation.

The church is nowhere found during the events of the Tribulation period recorded in Revelation 6-18 but appears as Christ’s bride in heaven in Revelation 19:1-10 and comes back with Christ at His Second Advent as recorded in Revelation 19:11-21.

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. (NASB95)

The “**white horse rider**” is a reference to Christ and is distinguished from the white horse rider in Revelation 6:2, which refers to Antichrist coming as a peacemaker during the first half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

In the ancient world, the horse was an animal used for warfare, thus here it speaks of Christ making war against His enemies. During His First Advent, He came riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, which was an animal that symbolized peace, which He was offering to the nation of Israel, which they rejected when they crucified Him. The fact that Christ is on a white horse is alluding to the ancient Roman Triumph.

Revelation 19:11-13 presents a twelve-fold description of Jesus Christ when He appears at His Second Advent. The first description is that He is “**faithful and true.**” Our Lord is described as “**faithful,**” which means that He can always be counted on to keep His promises unlike rulers throughout human history who made promises they could not or did not fulfill. He is described as “**true**” meaning that He is the “**real deal,**” the perfect ruler for this world who always tells the truth because as to His divine nature, He is truth.

The second description “**in righteousness He judges and wages war**” means that every enemy of God on the earth is about to be judged and executed and removed from the earth and this is in accordance with His perfect righteousness. This stands in stark contrast to Christ’s “First Advent,” when He came full of grace and truth, not to judge but to bear the penalty of sin, to be judged for our sin. However, at His “Second Advent” He comes as Judge.

Revelation 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. (NASB95)

The third description of our Lord is that His “**eyes are a flame of fire**,” which is symbolic language for the fact that at His Second Advent, He will come to judge those on the earth in rebellion against God and to put down all unrighteousness.

The fourth description of Christ is that “**on His head are many diadems**,” which symbolizes Christ’s right to rule as absolute, sole ruler of planet earth.

The fifth description of our Lord is that “**He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself**.”

The word “**name**” refers to our Lord’s character. Jesus Christ is unique as the God-Man in that He is the only member of the Trinity with a human nature and He is the only member of the human race who has a divine nature as God, thus no one knows His name except Himself.

Revelation 19:13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. (NASB95)

The sixth description of Christ is that “**He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood**,” which anticipates the defeat of His enemies (See Isaiah 63:1-6).

The seventh description of our Lord is that “**His name is called the Word of God**,” which refers to the fact that He is the Word of God incarnate.

Revelation 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (NASB95)

This verse presents the eighth description of Christ at His Second Advent.

The armies following Christ are composed of two groups: (1) Elect angels (Matthew 13:41; 16:27; 24:30-31; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7) (2) Overcomers from the church age (Revelation 19:1-8, 14). These “overcomers” from the church age are “**clothed in fine linen**,” which Revelation 19:8 describes as “**the righteous acts of the saints**.”

Revelation 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. (NASB95)

The ninth description of Christ when He comes back at His Second Advent is that **“from His mouth comes a sharp sword so that with it He may strike down the nations,”** which speaks of the fact that Christ will remove all His enemies from the earth.

The tenth description **“He will rule them with a rod of iron”** refers to Christ wielding absolute governmental authority over the entire earth during His millennial reign and will require all men to conform to His righteous and just standards and that He will not tolerate lawlessness or injustices. This description speaks of Christ acting the part of a shepherd by destroying the enemies of the sheep.

The eleventh description of Christ at His Second Advent is that **“He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty,”** which speak of a harvest of judgment that is deliberate and continuous until it is complete and demonstrates how much God hates sin and is an expression of God’s holiness.

Revelation 19:16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” (NASB95)

Revelation 19:16 records the twelfth description of Christ when He returns at His Second Advent. This description refers to the majestic power of Christ since the robe in the ancient world was a symbol of majesty and the thigh suggested power.

Revelation 19:17-20:3 presents the conclusion of the Armageddon campaign, which began with the Russian invasion of Israel during the midway point of Daniel’s seventieth week.

Daniel 11:40-45, Zechariah 12 and 14 describes this war from Israel’s perspective and Revelation 19 records the outcome of this war. Therefore, the events recorded by John in Revelation 19:17-20:3 present the conclusion of the Armageddon campaign.

Revelation 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” (NASB95)

The angel’s invitation to the birds of the earth anticipates how devastating and complete Christ’s victory will be over the Tribulational armies.

Revelation 19:17-18 teaches that Jesus Christ will destroy all who resist Him regardless of class and status in life. It teaches the principle that God’s judgment upon man is no respecter of persons (See Romans 2:6-11).

Revelation 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. (NASB95)

The armies of Antichrist will be fighting the Eastern Confederacy in the valley of Jezreel, which is also called “Armageddon.” However, Revelation 19:19 teaches that they will stop pointing their weapons at each other and will point them at Christ.

“The beast” is a reference to the Antichrist who is identified by this designation in Revelation 13:1, 2, 3, 4; 14:9, 11; 11:7; 15:2; 16:2; 17:3; 19:20; and 20:10.

“The kings of the earth” would include the seven remaining kings of the ten nation European Confederacy (See Revelation 17:12-17; Daniel 7:18) as well as the kings of the East (Revelation 16:12-17).

Revelation 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. (NASB95)

“The beast” and the **“false prophet”** are the first human beings that will occupy the Lake of Fire and the rest of unsaved humanity will join them at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). Notice that they are thrown **“alive”** into the Lake of Fire indicating a conscious existence in the place. Satan is not sent to the Lake of Fire until after the millennium when he starts one final rebellion, which God puts down (Revelation 20:7-10).

Revelation 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh. (NASB95)

This passage teaches that Christ’s victory over Antichrist, the false prophet and the kings of the earth and their armies is a total and complete and absolute one.

Revelation 20:1-3 records that Satan will be captured at the Second Advent of Christ and will be incarcerated for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. (NASB95)

The **“abyss”** is a prison for fallen or non-elect angels.

Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. (NASB95)

“The dragon” emphasizes Satan’s vicious and cruel character and emphasizes his end time activity and behavior.

“The serpent of old” draws our attention to Satan’s crafty character and reminds us of the Garden of Eden, the fall of man, his usurpation of man’s rule on earth, and his constant activity of temptation and deception.

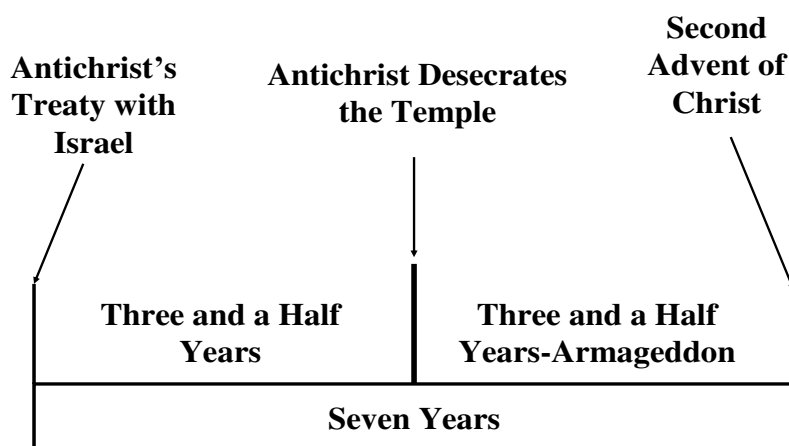
“Devil” is the noun *Diabolos*, a legal term meaning “slanderer, false accuser.”

“Satan” is the noun *Satanas*, which is a legal term meaning “adversary.”

Revelation 20:3 And he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. (NASB95)

The fact that Revelation 20:3 teaches that Satan will be incarcerated for a thousand years at Christ's Second Advent clearly implies that he is not incarcerated at this present time in history and won't be until the Second Advent of Christ. In fact, 2 Corinthians 4:4 says that Satan is the "**god of this world**" at the present time and also deceives the entire world as well (1 John 5:19; Revelation 12:10).

Daniel's Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:27)



Five Views of the Rapture

As we noted thus far in our study, the Bible teaches that the rapture will take place prior to the Tribulation period since it teaches that the church is delivered from the wrath to come. This teaching that the rapture will take place prior to the Great Tribulation period is called by theologians and students of prophecy, the "pre-tribulation" view. However, not all Christians adhered to this view as a result there are five different views of the rapture, which we will note. I will present the arguments for each view and then demonstrate through the Scriptures that these other views are incorrect and that the "pre-tribulation" rapture view is the correct biblical view.

The five views of the rapture: (1) "Pre-tribulation": The rapture will take place "before" the Tribulation. (2) "Partial": Only those believers who are worthy will be taken off the earth at the rapture. (3) "Mid-tribulation": The rapture will take place during the "midway" point of the Tribulation. (4) "Post-tribulation": The rapture will take place "after" the Tribulation. (5) "Pre-Wrath": The rapture of the church will take place prior to God exercising His wrath during the last year and half of the seventieth week of Daniel.

Pre-Tribulation Rapture

The "pre-tribulation" view contends that the rapture of the church will take place prior to the Tribulation period and will deliver every church age believer from this awful period. The "pre-

tribulation” view adheres to the literal method of interpreting the Bible unlike the “post-tribulation” view, which spiritualizes the literalness of the events in the Tribulation in an attempt to harmonize these events with other Scriptures in the light of this interpretation.

In regards to the Pretribulation rapture position, Pentecost writes, “Pretribulation rapturism rests essentially on one major premise-the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures. As a necessary adjunct to this, the pretribulationist believes in a dispensational interpretation of the Word of God. The church and Israel are two distinct groups with whom God has a divine plan. The church is a mystery, unrevealed in the Old Testament. This present mystery age intervenes within the program of God for Israel because of Israel’s rejection of the Messiah at His first advent. This mystery program must be completed before God can resume His program with Israel and bring it to completion. These considerations all arise from the literal method of interpretation.”²³²

The “pre-tribulation” view makes a distinction between Israel and the church and sees them as two distinct entities in the plan of God. In fact, the essence of dispensationalism is the distinction between Israel and the Church. This arises out of the dispensationalist’s consistent utilization of normal or plain interpretation.

Dispensationalism recognizes distinctions in God’s program in history. The dispensationalist follows the principle of interpreting the Bible literally, and does not allegorize away the Bible, thus he is consistent in his interpretation. It recognizes that God’s message to man was not given in one single act but was unfolded in a long series of successive acts and through the minds and hands of many men of varying backgrounds.

A dispensation is a period of human history defined in terms of divine revelation. According to the Bible, history is a sequence of divine administrations. These consecutive eras reflect the unfolding of God’s plan for mankind. A dispensation is a period of history where God has designed a particular plan for man and man is tested as to whether or not he will be obedient to that particular plan.

Now, 1 Thessalonians 1:10 explicitly teaches that the church age believer is delivered from this wrath, thus it follows that the church will be raptured “before” the Tribulation.

The purposes of the Tribulation do not include the church, thus favoring a “pre-tribulation” rapture of the church. The first great purpose of the tribulation is to prepare the nation Israel for her Messiah (Deut. 4:30; Jer. 30:7; Ezek. 20:37; Dan. 12:1; Zech. 13:8-9).

The book of Revelation teaches that the Tribulation period is a time when God deals with His covenant people Israel (Rev. 7:4-6; 12:1-2; 17). God’s purpose for Israel in the Tribulation is “crisis evangelism” or in other words, to lead them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. These Jews who turn to Jesus Christ as Savior will enter into the blessings of the Christ’s millennial kingdom and experience the fulfillment of all Israel’s covenants.

The second great purpose of the tribulation is to pour out judgment on unbelieving man and nations (Revelation 3:11; Joel 3:2). Since the church is composed of individuals who have believed in Jesus Christ as Savior, it follows that the church will not go through the Tribulation and God’s wrath since Christ experienced God’s wrath for the church. It is impossible for the church age believer to face God’s

²³² *ibid*, page 193

wrath during the Tribulation period since this would in effect cause Christ to have to face God's wrath again since the church age believer is united to Christ as members of His body and His future bride.

The Bible teaches that the Tribulation portion of the day of the Lord is characterized by wrath, i.e. God's righteous indignation or legitimate anger towards sin (Zeph. 1:15, 18; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 6:16-17; 11:18; 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19). The tribulation period will witness the wrath of Satan in his animosity against Israel (Rev. 12:12-17) and of Satan's man, the Beast, also known as Antichrist, in his animosity against the saints (Rev. 13:7) but even Satan's wrath does "not" come close to the intensity of God's wrath.

The Scriptures plainly teach that the wrath poured out during the Great Tribulation period originates with God and is therefore a time of God's wrath upon a Christ rejecting a world that is deceived by the devil (See Isaiah 34:1-2; Joel 1:15; Obadiah 15; Revelation 15:1, 7; 16:1; Revelation 19:11-21).

The Scriptures plainly reveal that Daniel's Seventieth week, also known as the Great Tribulation period is distinctly the time when God's wrath and judgment fall upon the earth. This is not wrath from men, nor from Satan, except as God may use these agencies as instruments for the execution of His will, thus the wrath during Daniel's Seventieth week is tribulation from God. This period differs from all preceding tribulation, not only in intensity but also in the kind of tribulation, since it comes from God Himself.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 explicitly teaches that the church age believer is delivered from this wrath. 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9 clearly exempt the church from the wrath of God. Revelation 3:10 explicitly teaches that the church will not go through the Tribulation.

Revelation 3:10 "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth." (NASB95)

"Because you have kept the word of my perseverance" refers to the believer in Jesus Christ in the sense that he or she has trusted in His person and work on the cross and who now sits at the right hand of the Father interceding for the believer.

"The word of My perseverance" refers to the testimony of Scripture regarding the truth of Christ as the suffering, resurrected, and so also, the victorious Savior who endured the shame of rejection and the cross and who endures today as the resurrected and ascended Lord now sitting at God's right hand (Heb. 1:3 with 12:1-3).

The statement **"I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth"** is a promise from the Lord Jesus Christ to all church age believers that because they have trusted in Him as Savior, He will deliver them from the Tribulation period.

J. Hampton Keathley III has this insightful comment regarding this promise, he writes, "I will also keep you from the hour of testing' 'Testing' is the Greek *peirasmós*, 'a trial, temptation, or testing.' The context must determine the exact meaning of the word. Here the context shows us the reference is to a very specific meaning, that of world-wide testing or tribulation. 'Hour' is metaphorical for a shortened

period. Because of the clause that follows, this clearly refers to more than the general trials or testings or temptations which people today may encounter. The hour is defined in three ways: (1) It is ‘the’ hour of trial. The presence of the Greek article specifies this as a very specific time of testing. (2) It is to come upon the whole world. The term translated ‘world’ is *oikoumene*, meaning ‘the inhabited earth,’ but modifying it is the adjective, *holos*, ‘whole, complete.’ The testing is worldwide. (3) Finally, it is designed to test a certain category of people defined as ‘those who dwell upon the earth.’ The verb ‘dwell’ is *katoikeo* from *kata*, ‘down’ and *oikeo*, ‘dwell, live.’ *Katoikeo*, means “to live, dwell, reside, settle (down),” or it can mean ‘inhabit.’ The construction of the Greek (a substantival present articular participle) describes the inhabitants as those who are characterized as earth dwellers. As used in Revelation, ‘those who dwell upon the earth’ is basically a technical term for unbelievers because they are earthdwellers, i.e., people bound only to this life and what it can give (6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 14; 17:8; Isa. 24:17f). In contrast to believers who are to think and live as sojourners or aliens, the earthdweller is quite at home on earth. ‘The hour of trial,’ sometimes referred to as ‘the Tribulation,’ refers to the time of wrath or judgment described in chapters 6-19. This is the same as Daniel’s Seventieth Week (Dan. 9:27) and the time of Jacob’s trouble described by Jeremiah as unprecedented in its judgment (Jer. 30:7). The promise: First, note that this is not a reward to the faithful. This will come in verses 11-12. Instead, this is a promise to the church as a whole. This is clear from 3:13 which broadens this as a promise to the churches at large. All believers are to listen to these messages and their warning, exhortations, and promises and act accordingly. As in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, this is to bring comfort to the church. Second, the promise is ‘I will keep you from the hour...’ i.e., from the Tribulation. This is very specific and carefully described in the Greek to emphasize and clearly teach the pre-tribulation rapture of the church. The Greek words for ‘keep out’ are *tereo* and *ek* meaning ‘out of.’ There are four other ways this could have been stated if John wanted to imply that church age believers would be in the Tribulation, but none of them were used: (1) *tereo en* = To keep in. This would be a promise of preservation in the Tribulation. (2) *tereo dia* = to keep through. This would be a promise to keep us through the Tribulation. (3) *aireo ek* = to take out, or *sozo ek* = to save out. This could mean that believers would go into the Tribulation and then be taken out of the Tribulation. (4) *aireo apo* = to take from. This would mean that believers would go into the Tribulation and then be taken out of the Tribulation. Rather than any of the above, John chose to use *tereo ek*, which means ‘to keep out.’ This is a promise that believers will never get into the Tribulation. But how? Paul describes this for us 1 Thessalonians 4:13f. We can chart it like this: Some have tried to argue that this construction means just the opposite of the above interpretation. Gundry, for instance, in his book, *The Church and the Tribulation*, believes it argues for a post-tribulational emergence of the saints. He writes, ‘As it is, *ek* lays all the emphasis on emergence, in this verse on the final, victorious outcome of the keeping-guarding.’ Although this is generally true with *ek*, if *ek* is related to a non-motion verb like *tereo* the idea of motion out of something is negated by the static nature of the verb. The fact then, that a motion verb like *sozo* is used here with *ek* shows the fallacy of Gundry’s argument. However, even if a verb of motion were used, it would not prove Gundry’s argument. A good illustration is 2 Corinthians 1:10 which has *rhuomai ek*, ‘delivered us from death.’ Certainly Paul did not mean that God had delivered them out of death through resurrection, but that He had kept them from death. Another illustration of this use of *ek* with a verb of motion is James 5:20, ‘save him from (the peril) of death,’ *sozo* plus *ek*. As James 5:20 and 2 Corinthians 1:10 means saved from the peril of death, i.e., from dying. So likewise 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and Rev. 3:10 means delivered from the peril of wrath, the time of testing, the Tribulation.”²³³

²³³ Studies in Revelation-Christ’s Victory Over The Forces Of Darkness, pages 74-76; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1997

In support of the “pre-tribulation” view is Revelation 6-18. These chapters describe the events that will take place during Daniel’s Seventieth Week and the church is conspicuously not mentioned once in these chapters, thus implying that the church will not go through this period because it has already been removed from the earth at the rapture.

The fact that the church is never mentioned in Revelation 6-18, which deals exclusively with events of the Tribulation period is an indication that the church will not go through the Tribulation.

Also, in support of the “pre-tribulation” view of the rapture is that the New Testament epistles are silent on the church going through the Tribulation, which would leave the church unprepared if they were to go through the Tribulation.

Revelation 12 teaches that the object of Satan’s attack during the Tribulation period is Israel, which is significant since the church is the body of Christ and why not attack the church!

Also supporting the “pre-tribulation” view is the fact that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells each and every church age believer and 2 Thessalonians 2:7 teaches that the Antichrist cannot appear until the Spirit who indwells the church is taken away from the earth.

The expressions “**the man of lawlessness**” and “**the son of destruction**” is a reference to Antichrist. Paul’s statement that the Antichrist “**opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship**” means that he ranks himself superior to all the supreme beings worshiped by the various religions of the world, which will be a fulfillment of Daniel 11:36. Paul’s statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that Antichrist will “**take his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as God**” is a reference to the statement in Daniel 9:27, “**on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate.**” “**He who now restrains**” refers to the Holy Spirit since He is the only one who has the power to restrain evil.

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells the church age believer’s body anointing (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:18-20). A comparison of these passages with 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 teaches that Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way and for the Holy Spirit to be taken out of the way, every church age believer would have to be removed as well since the Spirit permanently indwells every church age believer.

The “immanency” of the rapture further supports the “pre-tribulation” view since 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 teaches that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night meaning that it will take place unexpectedly. The only way the day of the Lord could break unexpectedly upon the world is to have it begin immediately after the rapture of the church, which is imminent. The thief comes at night when you least expect them and so it is with the return of Jesus Christ at the rapture of the church.

Those who don’t believe in a “pre-tribulation” rapture of the church also fail to see the distinctions between the Second Advent of Christ and the rapture and thus attribute passages dealing with the latter to the former.

There will be three major events following the Rapture for the church in heaven: (1) Bema Seat Evaluation: Involving all believers (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10). (2) Overcomer believers are presented to

the Father by the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 3:5). (3) Marriage of the Lamb: Involving all believers (Rev. 19:7).

Also, the events of Daniel's Seventieth Week have to take place between the rapture and the Second Advent of Christ.

The "pre-tribulation" view unlike the "mid-tribulation" and "post-tribulation" views do not take this into consideration.

If all believers are raptured at the Second Advent of Christ, then there are no believers with non-glorified bodies to enter the millennial kingdom, which causes a major problem for the "post-tribulation" view, which contends that the rapture will take place at the end of the Tribulation period.

Therefore, the "pre-tribulation" view is the correct biblical view because it interprets the bible literally and does not allegorize or spiritualize Scripture and thus respects the authority of Scripture.

Secondly, this view is the biblical view because it recognizes the distinctions between Israel and the church and the rapture and the Second Advent. It also is correct since it supports the immanency of the rapture, which is designed to motivate the Christian to grow to spiritual maturity.

Finally, it magnifies the faithfulness of the Lord to the church in that it corresponds with the Lord's explicit promise to deliver His bride from the Tribulation.

Mid-Tribulation View

The "mid-tribulation" position contends that Christ will remove the church from the earth during the midway point of the Tribulation. The "mid-tribulation" view will only apply the literal method of interpretation to the last half of Daniel's Seventieth Week but spiritualize the events of the first half to permit the church to go through the first half.

Pentecost gives six points in which the mid-tribulation position is based on: "Midtribulationism must either deny or at least weaken the dispensational interpretation of the Scriptures, and deny the strict distinctions between Israel and the church. This is observed in that this position places the church in the first half of the last seven years of the period determined upon Daniel's people and city. The position must rest on a view of the tribulation that divides the period into two separate and unrelated halves, so that the church can go through the first half, even though it has no part in the last half. The position must deny the doctrine of imminence, for all the signs of the first half of the week apply to the church. The position must deny the concept of the church as a mystery, so that the church age may overlap God's program with Israel. The position must depend, to a certain extent, on the spiritualizing method of interpretation. This is particularly evident in the explanation of the portions of Scripture dealing with the 1st half of the tribulation period."²³⁴

In this view, the rapture is said to occur in connection with the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the catching up of the two witnesses in Revelation 11. However, the seventh and final trumpet judgment recorded in Revelation 11:15-19 comes at the end of the Tribulation period and results in the Second Advent of Christ.

²³⁴ *ibid*, pages 179-180

The seven trumpets mentioned in Revelation chapters 8 and 9 and 11:15-19 are all related to the nation of Israel during Daniel's Seventieth Week and have no connection whatsoever to the church.

The first four trumpet judgments are separated from the last three in that the latter are specifically called "woe" judgments. Revelation 8:6-7 records the first of the seven trumpet judgments and is directed at the earth and results in a third of the inhabitants of planet earth are killed.

The first trumpet results in hail and fire being cast to the earth mingled with blood, which results in a third of the earth being burned up meaning trees and the grass are burned up as well as various crops like wheat, barley, rice, and corn.

Revelation 8:8-9 records the second of the seven trumpet judgments and is directed at the sea and results in a third of the sea becoming blood and a third of aquatic life dying and a third of the ships being destroyed.

Revelation 8:10-11 records the third trumpet judgment, which involves a large star called "**Wormwood**" falling upon rivers and springs of water making them bitter.

Revelation 8:12-13 records the fourth of the seven trumpet judgments that is directed at the sun, moon and stars of the stellar universe, which results in a third of them being darkened so that the day would not shine for a third of it and the night in the same way.

Revelation 9:1-12 records the fifth trumpet judgment, which is the first woe, and results in the release from prison of fallen angels who look like locusts and are energized by Satan and are not permitted to kill men but only to torment them.

Revelation 9:13-21 records the sixth of the seven trumpet judgments, which is the second woe.

Revelation 11:15-19 records the seventh and final trumpet judgment, which is the third woe and results in the Second Advent of Christ.

Chronologically, the seven bowl judgments follow the seven trumpet judgments that are recorded in Revelation 8:1-9:21 and 11:15-19 and the seven trumpet judgments follow the seven seal judgments that are in Revelation 6:1-17 and 8:1-5.

So, the seven seal judgments begin God's judgment program during Daniel's Seventieth Week.

Revelation 6:1-2 records the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven breaking the first of the seven seal judgments, which results in the appearance of the Antichrist on the stage of history as a peace maker and who is depicted as riding on a white horse. The rise to prominence of the Antichrist as a man of peace is the result of the breaking of the first seal judgment recorded in Revelation 6:1-2.

The rider in this passage is not the Lord Jesus Christ since this occurs too early in Daniel's Seventieth Week since at this time Christ is in heaven rewarding His bride while at the same time pouring out wrath from the throne mentioned in Revelation 4:2. Christ's coming on a white horse is at the end and is the culmination of the Tribulation.

Also, Revelation 6:16 records the Lamb as still in heaven. Furthermore, the white horse rider is not Christ since the other three horses are instruments of judgment with each rider an instrument of evil and judgment on the world. The Lord Jesus Christ is also the one who opens the seals allowing the riders to go forth and would not be one of the riders. He also puts an end to the Tribulation judgments. Here, in Revelation 6:1-2, the judgments of the entire Tribulation have yet to take place. Lastly, the crown this first rider is wearing is the *stephanos* crown, a single crown and a victor's crown, not the *diadem* crown of a sovereign.

Revelation 19, the white horse rider wears many crowns, and they are the *diadem* crowns or in other words, the crowns of sovereignty. That the rider sat on a white horse is significant since white is a symbol of peace, thus the symbolism is that Antichrist will come as a peacemaker.

Daniel 9:27 teaches that the Antichrist will establish a peace treaty with the leadership of Israel, which begins Daniel's Seventieth Week. One of Antichrist's first accomplishments will be to find a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict with a peace treaty with Israel according to Daniel 9:26-27, which begins Daniel's 70th week, the unprecedented time of Jacob's distress (Jer. 30:7).

The statement "**he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week**" refers to Antichrist making a 7-year covenant with Israel, which actually begins Daniel's 70th week (See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).

The expression "**firm covenant**" means that Antichrist will not renew an existing treaty but will establish an original one that contains strong and firm guarantees with the Israeli leadership ensuring Israel's security.

"**The many**" does "not" mean that Antichrist will make this covenant "with all" since the definite article in the Hebrew text that precedes the adjective *rav*, converts the adjective into a noun and means, "**the leaders**" which is a reference to the military and political leadership of the nation of Israel at that time.

Therefore, Daniel 9:27 teaches that Daniel's Seventieth Week comes after the rapture but does "not" begin with the rapture. So, while the rapture will precede Daniel's Seventieth Week (Great Tribulation period), it does "not" begin it but rather the signing of the peace treaty between Antichrist and the leadership in Israel will begin it.

Daniel 9:27a indicates that he will pretend to be Israel's benefactor and make a treaty with her but will turn against her in the mid-way point of Daniel's Seventieth Week and will persecute Israel and occupy Jerusalem for three and a half years.

Notice in Revelation 6:1-2 that the rider's weapon is a bow, yet no arrows are mentioned. The bow is a symbol of distant victory and since no arrows are mentioned it seems to indicate that he gains his victory by bloodless tactics. That all this is true is indicated further by the fact that peace isn't taken from the earth until the second seal.

Antichrist will have a hidden agenda since his purpose is not world peace, but rather world domination since Revelation 6 goes on to say that he goes out conquering and to conquer. This covenant between Antichrist and Israel is a peace treaty, which will guarantee Israel's safety in the land and

suggests that Israel will be in her land but will seek support that she had previously. The agreement between Israel and Antichrist stipulates that he will rush to the aid of Israel in the event of an enemy attack (Dan. 9:27; cf., 11:38-39).

The Lord Jesus Christ's prophecy in His Olivet Discourse of the appearance of false Christ's during the first three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week recorded in Matthew 24:5-6, parallels the first seal judgment recorded in Revelation 6:1-2. Therefore, the rapture does not occur in connection with the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the catching up of the two witnesses in Revelation 11 since the seventh trumpet completes God's judgment program at the end of the Tribulation. Also, the first seal judgment, which precedes the seven trumpet judgments predicts the emergence of Antichrist and 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8 says he cannot appear until the removal of the Spirit, which would result in the removal of the church since the church is permanently indwelt by the Spirit.

So the seventh trumpet judgment takes place at the end of the Tribulation period and thus cannot be used as support for the "mid-tribulation" position. Connected to this, the "mid-tribulation" view also contends that the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15 and the last trump of 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16 are identical.

Some expositors have tried to associate the "**trumpet of God**" in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and the "**last trumpet**" in 1 Corinthians 15:52 with the last or seventh trumpet of the Tribulation and with the trumpet of Matthew 24:31. By doing this, they attempt to put the rapture either in the Tribulation or at its end, when the Lord returns to earth. In both of these passages, this trumpet is followed by the resurrection of the church, i.e. the rapture. There are obvious differences that exist between the "**trumpet of God**" in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and the "**last trumpet**" in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and the last or seventh trumpet of the Tribulation in Revelation 8:7f. and with the "**great trumpet**" of Matthew 24:31.

The trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 should not be equated with Joel 2:1 or with Revelation 8:7f since there are many differences between them. In 1 Corinthians 15:22 the trumpeter is not stated whereas the trumpet in Matthew 24:31 and the trumpets of Revelation 8 are blown by angels. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 the trumpeter is Christ whereas the trumpet in Joel is a human being, an Israelite.

The purpose of the "**great trumpet**" in Matthew 24:31 is to have the elect angels gather the living elect on the earth whereas the purpose of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is to gather the living church age believers. With the blowing of the trumpet in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Christ Himself and not the elect angels gather living church age believers to Himself whereas in Revelation the purpose of the blowing of the trumpet by angels to execute judgment during the last three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week.

The purpose of the trumpet in Joel 2:1 to assemble Israel and warn them against danger. The trumpet in Joel is an alarm to the nation of Israel that signals that the day of the Lord has begun. In Joel 2, the armies of Israel and her people are being warned of an impending attack.

The result of the blowing of the "**great trumpet**" in Matthew 24:31 results in entrance into the kingdom or millennial kingdom of Christ whereas the result of the blowing of the trumpet in 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the resurrection of church age believers. The result of the blowing of the trumpet of God in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 is also the resurrection of church age believers whereas the result of the

blowing of the trumpets by elect angels in Revelation 8 is the execution of judgments during the last three and a half years of Daniel's Seventieth Week. The result of the blowing of the trumpet in Joel 2 is war and an invasion from an enemy.

Therefore, because of these obvious differences between these trumpets, the trumpets of Revelation 8 and the **"great trumpet"** in Matthew 24:31 and the trumpet of Joel 2:1 do not take place at the same time as the trumpets mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

The **"last trumpet"** of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is thought by some expositors of the Bible to be associated with the trumpet judgments that appear in Revelation 8. Consequently, they place the rapture at the end of the Tribulation period, i.e. Daniel's Seventieth Week.

However, a comparison of the differences between the various trumpets mentioned in Revelation 8, Joel 2:1, Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16, indicates quite clearly that the **"last trumpet"** in 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the very voice of the Lord Jesus Christ calling out the church in resurrection.

The **"last trumpet"** of 1 Corinthians 15:52 and the **"trumpet of God"** in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 both result in the resurrection of the church and the purpose of both are to gather the church to Christ and they are not blown by elect angels. Whereas, the trumpet judgments of Revelation 8 and the **"great trumpet"** in Matthew 24:31 are blown by elect angels and the result of the former is the execution of judgments during the Tribulation whereas the result of the latter is entrance into Christ's millennial kingdom.

Commenting on the meaning of the **"last trumpet"** in 1 Corinthians 15:52, J. Hampton Keathley III, writes, "But what does the Apostle mean by 'the Last Trump'?" Because of the adjective "last," some seek to associate this with the seventh or last trumpet of Revelation 8 and thus place the rapture at the end of the Tribulation. But as the above comparison shows, this is a distinct signal, evidently the very voice of the Lord Himself for the church. It is not blown by angels and is not for the world. John Eadie, a well-known scholar who wrote at the end of the 1800s wrote: The phrase, 'the last trump' (1 Cor. XV, 52), is supposed ... to imply previous trumpets, at the last of which the Judge descends, while others identify it with the seventh trumpet of the Apocalypse; but these notions, the second especially, are exceedingly precarious—the phrase, 'the last trump,' being apparently a popular one, and meaning the trumpet in connection with the End. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Greek Text of the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians (Reprint by James and Klock Christian Publishing Co., Minneapolis, 1977), p. 165) Of course the issue is the end of what? Since this is written to believers of the church age who are waiting for His imminent return, the end is that of the church age, not of the end of the age of Israel, or of all things. In the Old Testament, the blowing of the trumpet was used to accompany the Theophanies, the manifestations of God, as in Exodus 19:16. There it signaled the approach of the Lord at the giving of the Law. For the church this is the end and involves the Christophany, the manifestation of Christ, but at the same time, it will form the beginning of the end in that afterwards (how soon is not revealed), the Tribulation will begin which will be culminated just seven years later by the manifestation of Christ's *parousia*, His presence openly revealed to the world as He descends with His church as described above."²³⁵

²³⁵ 1 Thessalonians: An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary, page 91; Biblical Studies Press, 1998

Therefore, the “mid-tribulation” view that the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15 and the last trump of 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16 are identical is erroneous. Also, the “mid-tribulation” view holds that the rapture is described in Revelation 11.

The “mid-tribulation” view holds that the rapture is described in Revelation 11 by contending that the “two-witnesses” are symbolic of a “larger company of witnesses” that they represent two groups, the dead and the living at the rapture. They interpret the cloud as representing the Lord’s presence and that the great voice is the shout of 1 Thessalonians 4:16. This interpretation is totally devoid of exegesis and is an argument from analogy.

The two witnesses are spoken of in Revelation 11 as individuals and not as symbolic representatives of the church. These two witnesses are called “two olive trees,” which means that they are associated with Israel since in the Old Testament the olive tree represented Israel, which would refute the “mid-tribulation” view that the two witnesses are symbolic of the church (See Hosea 14:6; Romans 11:17, 24).

The problem with the “mid-tribulation” position is that it denies the distinction between Israel and the church in the sense that it places the church in the first half of the seventieth week, which was decreed for Daniel’s people the Jews according to Daniel 9:24. The church is nowhere mentioned in the prophecy of Daniel’s Seventy Weeks and in particular the Seventieth Week. In fact, this prophecy deals explicitly with Israel and never mentions the church which would be inappropriate since the church is the body of Christ. The phrase “**your people**” indicates that the prophecy deals specifically with the history of the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem and not with world history or church history.

The “mid-tribulation” position also denies the doctrine of the immanency of the rapture in that they apply to the church all the signs that were designed to warn Israel of Christ’s Second Advent. It also denies the doctrine that the church age is a “mystery” dispensation meaning it was not known to Old Testament prophets in that it has the church age overlap with God’s program for Israel detailed in Daniel’s Seventy Weeks (cf. Ephesians 3:8-9).

The “mid-tribulation” view argues that God promises the church tribulation and therefore can expect to experience the first half of the Tribulation period. However, the term “tribulation” can be used in a “technical” way referring to a specific period in the future and a “non-technical” way meaning it is not used with reference to a specific period of time in the future.

The term “tribulation” is used in relation to the church in a “non-technical” way in John 16:33, Romans 5:3, 8:35, 12:12, 1 Thessalonians 1:6 and Revelation 1:9, 2:9-10, whereas it is used in “technical” way in Matthew 24:9, 21, 29, Mark 13:19, 24 and Revelation 7:8, 14 where it is used with reference to the Tribulation period.

God does not want the Christian to believe in the “mid-tribulation” position because it denies the distinction between Israel and the church in the sense that it places the church in the first half of the seventieth week, which was decreed for Daniel’s people the Jews according to Daniel 9:24.

Why is it important that the Christian knows that the mid-tribulation view is incorrect? God does not want the Christian to believe in the “mid-tribulation” view because it denies the doctrine of the immanency of the rapture in that they apply to the church all the signs that were designed to warn Israel of Christ’s Second Advent. He wants you to know that the rapture is imminent because it serves as

motivation to live our lives in a manner worthy of the Lord (1 John 3:1-3). It is also important for every Christian that he or she understands the pre-tribulation view of the rapture is the correct view because it is God's will and God wants His children to know His will. Also, it is important for every Christian that he or she understands that they will not go through the tribulation period because it is in the Word of God and Christians in 2 Peter 3:18 are commanded to grow in the grace and "knowledge" of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God is His mind and thinking. Lastly, it is important for every Christian that he or she understands that the mid-tribulation view of the rapture is incorrect in order to minister to fellow Christians who have been misled by such teaching and instruct them in the correct doctrine.

Post-Tribulation View

The third view is the "post-tribulation" position, which contends that the rapture will take place at the end of the Tribulation period, which means then that the church would have to go through the Tribulation. With this position, the church is taken off the earth and then immediately placed right back down on it, which obviously leaves no time for the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church to take place (2 Corinthians 5:10) and the Marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:1-7).

Dwight Pentecost gives seven points on which the post-tribulation position is based on: "Posttribulationsim must be based on a denial of dispensationalism and all dispensational distinctions. It is only thus that they can place the church in that period in which is particularly called 'the time of Jacob's trouble' (Jer. 30:7). Consequently, the position rests on a denial of the distinctions between Israel and the church. The position must rest on a denial of the Scriptural teaching concerning the nature and purpose of the tribulation period. Whereas Scripture uses such terms as wrath, judgment, indignation, trial, trouble, and destruction to describe this period, and states that the divine purpose in this period is to pour out judgment on sin, the advocate of this position must deny this essential teaching of the Word. The posttribulationist must deny all the distinctions observed from the Scriptures between the rapture and the second advent, making them one and the same. The posttribulationist must deny the doctrine of imminence, which says that the Lord may come at any time, and substitute the teaching that a multitude of signs must be fulfilled before the Lord can possibly come. The posttribulationist denies any future fulfillment to the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, claiming for it an historical fulfillment. The posttribulationist must apply major passages of Scripture that outline God's program for Israel (Matt. 13; Matt. 24-25; Rev. 4:19) to the church in order to support his views. It will thus be observed that the position rests essentially on a system of denials of the interpretations held by the pretribulation rapturist, rather than on a positive exposition of the Scripture."²³⁶

The "post-tribulation" position denies all distinctions between the rapture and the Second Advent since they make them one and the same event. The rapture delivers the church while the Second Advent delivers Israel. The rapture is seen only by the church and is therefore invisible while the Second Advent is the visible manifestation of Christ on the earth. The Lord meets the church in the earth's atmosphere at the rapture, whereas the Lord physically lands on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem at the Second Advent.

Signs do not precede the rapture whereas visible signs precede the Second Advent. The Lord claims His Bride at the rapture but He returns with her at the Second Advent. The rapture completes God's program for the church while the Second Advent is related to God's program for Israel. The rapture is a

²³⁶ Things to Come, pages 164-165

mystery, not known to Old Testament saints whereas the Second Advent is prophesied throughout the Old Testament canon. The rapture leaves creation unchanged whereas the Second Advent entails a change in creation. The rapture does not fulfill God's covenants to Israel whereas the Second Advent marks the beginning of their fulfillment. The rapture precedes the Tribulation whereas the Second Advent follows it.

Therefore, as we can see the "post-tribulation" position denies all distinctions between the rapture and the Second Advent since they make them one and the same event. Also, the "post-tribulation" view like the "mid-tribulation" view argues that the church has been promised tribulation, which indicates then that the church will have to go through the Tribulation period. However, the term "tribulation" can be used in a "technical" way referring to a specific period in the future and a "non-technical" way meaning it is not used with reference to a specific period of time in the future.

The term "tribulation" is used in relation to the church in a "non-technical" way in John 16:33, Romans 5:3, 8:35, 12:12, 1 Thessalonians 1:6 and Revelation 1:9, 2:9-10, whereas it is used in "technical" way in Matthew 24:9, 21, 29, Mark 13:19, 24 and Revelation 7:8, 14 where it is used with reference to the Tribulation period.

Also, another problem with the "post-tribulation" position is that it considers the prophecy of Daniel's Seventy Weeks to be completely fulfilled. A "week" in the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 refers to 7 prophetic years of 360 days; therefore, the prophecy of the 70 weeks of Daniel refers to 490 prophetic years of Israel's history.

Daniel 9:24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place." (NASB95)

The phrase "**your people**" indicates that the prophecy deals specifically with the history of the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem and not with world history or church history.

"To finish the transgression" refers to the nation of Israel's apostasy and sin and wandering over the face of the earth will be brought to its consummation within the seventy-sevens or 490 prophetic years at the Second Advent of Christ, on the Day of Atonement.

"To bring an end of sin" refers to bringing sin into judgment at the cross, and extending forgiveness for sins already committed through faith in the coming Redeemer, the Messiah.

"To make an atonement for iniquity" refers to the Cross of Christ as it affects the restoration of the nation of Israel at the Second Advent of Christ (See Zechariah 12:10).

In the Hebrew text, the phrase **"to bring in everlasting righteousness"** literally means "to cause to bring in everlasting righteousness" and refers to the millennial reign which will be characterized by righteousness.

The phrase **"to seal up vision and prophecy"** refers to the fact that all that God promised to Israel throughout her history by means of the prophets will be fulfilled during Christ's millennial reign.

The sixth divine objective **“to anoint the Most Holy Place”** refers to the dedication of the most holy place in the millennial temple which is described in detail in Ezekiel 41-46.

Daniel 9:25 “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.” (NASB95)

“The issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem” was the fourth of four decrees made by Persian rulers in reference to the Jews: (1) Cyrus’ decree in 538 B.C. (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13). (2) Darius’ I decree in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6:1; 6-12). (3) Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26). (4) Artaxerxes Longimanus’ decree in 444 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

The first three decrees say nothing about the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem itself since the first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to finances for animal sacrifices at the temple but the fourth decree granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls.

The first period of 49 years refers to the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:12-15) and the 62 “sevens” or 434 years extend up to the introduction of Jesus as the Messiah to the nation of Israel (**“until the Messiah, the Prince”**), which was concluded on the day of our Lord’s Triumphal entry into Jerusalem just before He was crucified (**“cut off”**).

Daniel 9:26 “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.” (NASB95)

The statement **“after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off”** refers to the crucifixion of Christ.

“The people” refers to the Romans who under the general Titus destroyed the city of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

“The prince who is to come” refers to the Antichrist who will make a seven-year treaty with Israel to begin Daniel’s 70th week.

Three and a half years into the treaty, he will break and desecrate the rebuilt Jewish temple and declare himself world-ruler and God and will demand to be worshipped as God.

So, we can see that the first seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks that followed it ran consecutively with no time between them and totaled 483 years and extended from March 5, 444 B.C to March 30, 33 A.D.

In order to understand how 444 B.C. to A.D. 33 can equal 483 years, we must understand that the Jewish calendar had 360 days per year, thus 483 years times 360 days equals 173,880 days. The Gregorian Calendar contains 365 days a year and under this 444 B.C. to A.D. 33 would be 476 years since only one year expired between 1 B.C. and A.D. 1. A total of 476 years divided by four (a leap year every four years) gives 119 additional days but three days must be subtracted from 119 because

centennial years are not leap years, though every 400th years is a leap year. Thus, 476 years times 365 days equals 173,740 days and if we add 116 days in leap years and 24 days (March 5-30), we have 173,880 days.

The church age takes place between Daniel 9:26 and 27 and was a “**mystery**” (Eph. 3:9) meaning it was not known to Old Testament prophets such as Daniel. God has temporarily set aside Israel because of her rejection of Jesus Christ as Messiah (Rom. 9-11) in order to form the church and to fulfill the “**times of the Gentiles**,” which we will note in this study of the day of the Lord.

Romans 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery so that you will not be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. (NASB95)

Daniel 9:27 “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (NASB95)

The statement “**he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week**” refers to antichrist making a covenant with Israel, which actually begins Daniel’s Seventieth Week (See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4).

“**But in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate,**” refers to the antichrist stopping the Levitical sacrifices that will be reestablished in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem in the middle of Daniel’s 70th week.

The statement in Daniel 9:27, “**on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate**” means that the Antichrist will proclaim himself as God and seat himself on the mercy seat between the wings of the two cherubim on either the recovered Ark of the Covenant or one built by himself, which will be located in the Holy of Holies in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (cf. Matthew 24:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

The phrase “**even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one (Antichrist) who makes desolate**” refers to the destruction of antichrist at the 2nd Advent of Christ when he will be thrown into the lake of fire (See Revelation 19:20; Daniel 7:11, 26).

So, we can see that the seventy weeks of Daniel of 490 prophetic years are divided into three segments: (1) 7 “sevens” (49 years): The decree of Artaxerxes in 444 B.C. (Neh. 2:1-8) to the completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25). (2) 62 “sevens” (434 years): The completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem to Christ’s Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and crucifixion in 33 A.D. (Dan. 9:25-26) (3) 1 “seven” (7 years): Tribulation period (Dan. 9:27).

None of the events mentioned in Daniel 9:27 have been fulfilled in history, thus refuting the “post-tribulation” position that Daniel’s Seventy Weeks have been fulfilled. Also, the Lord Jesus Christ in His Olivet Discourse, in which He addressed the future of Israel, spoke of a yet future fulfillment of the Seventieth Week of Daniel “after” His death.

Proponents of this “post-tribulation” view contend that John the Baptizer began his ministry as the “Seventieth Week” was ushered in and Christ was baptized, tempted and began to preach a few months later. They also say that the first half of the week was used in preaching the gospel of the kingdom and the middle of the week was reached at Passover. They contend that the Passover was exactly in the middle of the seventieth week.

According to this theory Christ becomes the one who confirms the covenant and in the period of His ministry the six great promises of Daniel 9:24 have already been fulfilled. In response to this, it can be stated that the six areas of promise in Daniel 9:24 are related to Israel and Jerusalem and are the logical outgrowth of the covenant with that nation. Israel has not experienced her national salvation. The church cannot now be fulfilling these promises. Therefore, we can conclude that the six promises in Daniel 9:24 await a future fulfillment.

Christ could not have confirmed the covenant as the “post-tribulation” view holds since the “**he**” of Daniel 9:27 must have as its antecedent “**the prince that shall come**” of the preceding verse. Therefore, because this one is related to the people who destroyed Jerusalem, namely the Romans, the one confirming the covenant cannot possibly be Christ but rather Antichrist who will make a treaty with Israel, which he shall break.

“Post-tribulation” view most strongly depends on the interpretation that the resurrection of all believers whether the church or Old Testaments saints is at the end of the Tribulation period just prior to the millennium. Again, they fail to see the distinction between Israel and the church in that they have the resurrection of the church taking place at the same time as the resurrection of Israel. They also fail to see that the Scriptures teach that the resurrection of believers throughout history takes place in stages.

The chronological order of events in God’s resurrection program: (1) The humanity of Christ in hypostatic union (Matthew 28; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-9). (2) The Church at the rapture, which takes place prior to Daniel’s Seventieth Week (1 Cor. 15:51-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Philippians 3:21). (3) Old Testament believers and Tribulation martyrs at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which ends Daniels’ Seventieth Week (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4). (4) Every non-believer in human history will be raised from the dead at the Great White Throne Judgment of unbelievers at the end of human history (Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:11-15).

Lastly, another argument used to support the “post-tribulation” position is that the wheat in our Lord’s parable of the wheat and the tares that appears in Matthew 13 refers to the church being raptured.

Matthew 13:24-30 records our Lord giving this parable. Matthew 13:36-43 records our Lord explaining the parable to His disciples. This parable of the wheat and the tares does not refer to the history of the church as some have erroneously interpreted it to be but rather it is the history of the kingdom of God. It does not refer to the church age but rather the entire age from the rejection of Christ to His Second Advent.

In the parable, God will be sowing and so will the devil and at the end of the age, God will distinguish those who are His children and those who are the devils’. The latter will be removed from the earth. This judgment will be followed by the establishment of the millennial kingdom on earth. So, the rapture is not in view in the parable and thus the parable cannot be used to support the “post-tribulation” position.

Partial Rapture View

The “partial” rapture theory contends that not all believers will be taken off planet earth at the time of the rapture but only those who are “watching” or “waiting” for that event and who have reached some degree of spiritual development that makes them worthy to be included. Those who adhere to this theory use Luke 21:36, Philippians 3:11, Titus 2:13, 2 Timothy 4:8 and Hebrews 9:28 to support this view that only those believers who “wait, look for” and “have loved His appearing” will be removed from the earth at the rapture. The problem with this view is that it misunderstands the value of Christ’s death in the sense that this death, which propitiated the Father, reconciled the believer to God and redeemed the believer from the slave market of sin, frees the sinner from condemnation (Romans 8:1). This view does not understand the doctrine of justification, which by way of definition is a judicial act of God whereby He declares a person to be righteous as a result of crediting or imputing to that person His righteousness the moment they exercised faith in His Son Jesus Christ. Consequently, God accepts that person and enters that person into a relationship with Himself since they now possess His righteousness. Thus, Paul declares the following:

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. (NASB95)

Romans 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

Thus, the person who adheres to the “partial” rapture position is minimizing the perfect standing of the believer.

The other problem with this view is that it denies the teaching of the unity of the body of Christ since 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 teaches that through the baptism of the Spirit, all church age believers are united to the body of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18).

Romans 12:4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. (NASB95)

Therefore, if only a portion of believers are raptured, then the body of Christ would be disfigured and dismembered and the building of which Christ is the chief cornerstone would be incomplete and so would be the new creation.

Furthermore, Paul teaches explicitly in 1 Corinthians 15:51 that “all” believers will be changed at the rapture.

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; 52 for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (NASB95)

The “partial” rapture view believes that the rapture itself is a reward in the sense that they contend that only those who are worthy will be resurrected at the rapture. This confuses the teaching of the Bible regarding rewards, which are given by the Lord at the Bema Seat to those believers for faithful service whereas the Bible teaches the rapture is not a reward but a gracious gift that completes the believer’s salvation.

As we noted earlier, adherents to the “partial” rapture position use Luke 21:36 as support for their theory.

Luke 21:36, “But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (NASB95)

This passage is taken from our Lord’s Olivet Discourse in which He was addressing the nation of Israel and was speaking in the context of His Second Advent, which will deliver Israel from Satan, Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. Therefore, since He was speaking with regards to the future of the nation of Israel, this passage cannot be used for support of the “partial” rapture position.

“Partial” rapture adherents also use Matthew 24:40-41 for support of their position.

Matthew 24:40 “Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.” (NASB95)

Again, our Lord was speaking to Israel and with regards to His program for that nation. The one taken is a Jew who is taken to judgment whereas the one left is a “born-again” Jew who is left to go through the millennium.

“Partial” rapture adherents also use Hebrews 9:28 for support of their position.

Hebrews 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (NASB95)

The writer is contrasting the unbeliever with the believer who is characterized as “**those who eagerly await Him.**” This passage teaches that Christ appeared once to die for sin at the cross (Hebrews 9:24) and now appears in heaven for the believer (Hebrews 9:26) and to that same group, He will again appear as it says in Hebrews 9:28 to complete the work of redemption. This passage infers that the same group to whom Christ appeared and for whom He now appears, will be the one to whom He will appear.

“Partial” rapture adherents also use Philippians 3:11 for support of their position.

Philippians 3:10 That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Author's translation)

This passage does not refer to the rapture but rather to the Christian experiencing His identification with Christ in His resurrection as a result of experiencing His identification with Christ in His death through undeserved suffering.

The active voice of the Greek verb translated “**I may attain**” indicates that Paul as the subject must produce the action of the verb whereas at the rapture the believer's volition is not involved since the rapture takes place exclusively because of the sovereign will of God.

Those who support the “partial” rapture position also use 1 Corinthians 15:23 as support for their view.

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming. (NASB95)

This passage is used by “partial” rapture adherents who contend that this passage teaches a division in ranks of the believer in the resurrection of the church. However, Paul is not giving instructions on the order of the resurrection of the church but rather the divisions within the whole resurrection program, which would include not only church age believers but also Old Testament believers and Tribulation believers as well.

2 Timothy 4:8 is also used as support of the “partial” rapture view.

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. (NASB95)

The expression “**all those who have loved His appearing**” is found in the context of Paul discussing his receiving a reward from the Lord for his faithful service and is not speaking in the context of his being resurrected at the rapture of the church.

The expression “**all those who have loved His appearing**” refers to those believers who are motivated to faithful and diligent service to the Lord, which will result in rewards for them because they understand that the rapture is imminent.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 is also used to support the “partial” rapture position.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come. (NASB95)

This passage cannot be used as support for the “partial” rapture position since Paul is not using waiting for Jesus Christ as a condition to be delivered from the Tribulation period or in other words he is not saying that “if” we wait for Him, then He will deliver us from the wrath to come.

Pre-Wrath View

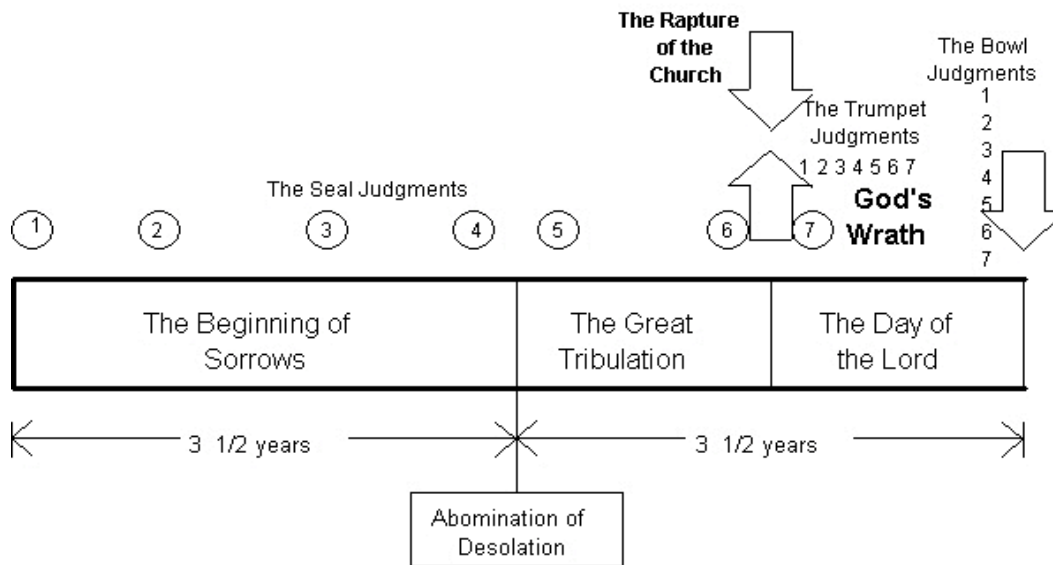
The last view of the rapture in relation to the tribulation portion of Daniel's seventieth week is the "pre-wrath" view, which asserts that the church will be taken off the earth by Jesus Christ just prior to God exercising His wrath during the last year and a half of the seventieth week.

The pre-wrath rapture theory is relatively recent interpretation of the time of the rapture of the church in relation to the seventieth week of Daniel. So this view contends that the rapture occurs about three fourths of the way through the seventieth week of Daniel and thus before God exercises His wrath against the inhabitants of planet earth. This view argues that the wrath of God is not striking the earth for the first and one half years of the seventieth week but rather the wrath of man. When God is about to exercise His wrath, He removes the church. This view argues that the church will be removed at the time of the sounding of the seventh trumpet in the book of Revelation. At that time, the church is removed.

The pre-wrath view divides the seventieth week of Daniel into three periods. The first is the "Beginning of Sorrows" which lasts three and a half years. The second period is the Great Tribulation, which lasts twenty-one months or one and three-fourths years. The third and final period is the day of the Lord, which also lasts twenty-one months. During this period, God exercises His wrath. This view argues that because the wrath of God does not begin until last into the seventieth week, the rapture need not take place before that time. This pre-wrath view argues the wrath of Satan will be exercised through Antichrist before God exercises His wrath. Therefore, the suffering of the inhabitants of the earth during the period in which Satan is exercising His wrath through Antichrist is not attributed to God.

John H. Fish III writes "Marvin Rosenthal has come up with a new view of the timing of the rapture. For thirty years this graduate of Dallas Seminary and former executive director of the Friends of Israel believed in pretribulationism. Now he has changed his viewpoint and adopted a new position which is neither pretribulation, midtribulation, or posttribulation. He feels that Christ will come for the church sometime during the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week (Daniel 9:24–27) before God's wrath is poured out on the earth in the Day of the Lord. Thus the church will not endure the wrath of God, but it will suffer the trials and persecutions of the Antichrist. His book, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, is an exposition and defense of this position. Rosenthal is a well-known evangelical leader, a popular conference speaker, and an effective writer. The popular style of this book and the reputation of the author will probably secure it a wide reading. The issue that it raises is itself an important one and deserves to be considered. Will the church go through the tribulation at the end of the age? Rosenthal is not the only one who has shifted from pretribulationism in the last thirty to forty years. Many have given up the dispensationalism and pretribulationism that were once so popularly represented by the *Scofield Reference Bible*. More significantly there does not seem to be the same sense of fervency and expectancy in looking for the coming of Christ among pretribulationists today. Our doctrine does make a difference, and the issue of the rapture does have many practical implications. We need to examine the doctrine of Rosenthal like the Bereans to see if these things are so. Rosenthal's Argument. First we will try to understand Rosenthal's position and the arguments used to support it. The following chart adapted from the book itself may help to understand what is being said.

The Prewrath Rapture of the Church



Rosenthal does not believe that the church will suffer the wrath of God which will be poured out on the earth in the judgments of the end times. If those judgments occur throughout the entire seven years, then he would have to be pretribulational. He must therefore show that the wrath of God is restricted to a latter portion of Daniel's Seventieth Week. He argues as follows. First of all Scripture nowhere designates the entire seven years as the Great Tribulation. The phrase great tribulation is used in Matthew 24:21 to describe the persecution and trials which begin with the Abomination of Desolation which takes place in the middle of the seven-year period (Daniel 9:27). The Great Tribulation therefore is at most the second 3 1/2 years. More significantly, the first half of the week is not the Great Tribulation and is not the time of the outpouring of God's wrath. Secondly, the Great Tribulation does not last the entire 3 1/2 years. Matthew 24:22 says that "unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short." What is it that is cut short? Certainly not the seventieth week of Daniel. The length of that has been specifically and precisely predicted. What is shortened is the Great Tribulation. It begins in the middle of the seventieth week, but does not run until its end (p. 109). Here again the key to Rosenthal's argument is that the Great Tribulation itself is not part of the wrath of God."²³⁷

Gerald Stanton writes "It is evident that the *timing* of the rapture, and not its relationship to divine wrath, is uppermost in the mind of Rosenthal in the writing of this volume. Coming perilously close to advocating a date-setting scheme, he defends with enthusiasm the view that the rapture will be three quarters of the way through the '70th week of Daniel,' with divine wrath to be found only in the final quarter. His evidence for such conclusions is lengthy and complicated, based squarely on his personal division of the '70th week of Daniel' into three clearly recognizable periods, the 'Beginning of

²³⁷ [Emmaus Journal](#), 1(1), 23 (1991).

Sorrows,’ the ‘Great Tribulation,’ and the frequently predicted ‘Day of the Lord.’ The rapture is then placed immediately between the Great Tribulation and the day of the Lord, which according to his definitions is after the Tribulation but is still ‘pre-wrath.’ Rosenthal proceeds to support these views by some 200 pages of strong and somewhat overbearing argumentation, with a sharp attack against any response that reminds him of his previous pretribulationist position. His terminology and unique division of the ‘70th week’ are central to his argument. He tries, with several notable exceptions on his own part, not to use the expression ‘the Tribulation period,’ saying that it contains a predisposition toward pretribulationism when it is used of the entire 70th week of Daniel. Rather, he prefers to call the coming seven years of judgment and wrath the ‘70th week of Daniel.’ These seven years he then subdivides as follows: (1) The first three and one-half years are ‘the Beginning of Sorrows.’ (2) The first half of the second three and one-half years (which would be one and three-fourths years or 21 months), he calls ‘the Great Tribulation.’ (3) The final 21 months, the fourth quarter of the seven years, he designates as ‘the Day of the Lord,’ in which is found the ‘wrath of God.’ Just before the day of the Lord, at the sounding of the ‘seventh trumpet,’ the rapture will occur. Hence the rapture of the church takes place between the third and fourth quarters of the 70th week of Daniel, just before the outpouring of the wrath of God. Therefore to Rosenthal the rapture will take place at a sharply defined moment of prophecy, and it is posttribulationist but pre-wrath.”²³⁸

Interestingly, like every view with the exception of the pre-tribulation view, the pre-wrath view does not teach that Christ could come back at any moment. Thus, this view rejects the imminency of the rapture. Thus, the church will have to suffer severe persecution before the rapture.

Therefore, a major objection to the pre-wrath view is that it rejects the imminency of the rapture. There is no “blessed hope” as mentioned by Paul in Titus 2:13 with this view. Another problem with this view is that it fails to see that the entire seven year period of the seventieth week of Daniel is a time when God exercises His wrath against the world. In fact, the seventieth week is the final seven years of God disciplining the nation of Israel for her rejection of Him and His Son Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the first of the seven seals recorded in the book of Revelation chapter six begins the period in which God exercises His wrath which coincides with the beginning of the seventieth week. However, the pre-wrath views the opening of this seal as the beginning of Satan’s wrath. However, Revelation 6 makes clear that the seven seal judgments are from God. In fact, Jesus Christ Himself breaks the seven seals on the scroll and the elect angels execute the judgments related to these seals. Therefore, how could this judgment be associated with the wrath of Satan or man? It is obviously the wrath of God. Furthermore, Daniel 9:24-27 does not mention the seventy-weeks as being a time of Satan’s wrath but rather it speaks of God disciplining the nation of Israel for their rejection of Him.

G.B. Stanton writes “Pretribulationists normally place the beginning of the day of the Lord right after the rapture in conjunction with the start of the Tribulation. Rosenthal rather violently opposes such a placement and makes it ‘perhaps the single greatest error in the debate concerning the timing of the Rapture.’²³⁹ To him, the day of the Lord must commence *after* the Great Tribulation is over. It fills in the final 21 months (half of three and one-half years) of the seven-year ‘Tribulation period,’ beginning with the opening of the seventh seal.”²⁴⁰ But this misses the fact that there can be only one completely unprecedented day of sorrow in Israel’s future, and Joel 2:1–2 calls it ‘the day of the Lord,’ while Daniel 12:1 calls it Israel’s ‘time of trouble,’ and in Matthew 24:21 Christ identified it as ‘the great tribulation.’

²³⁸ Stanton, G. B. (1991). [A Review of The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church](#). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 148, 90–93.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

The three are one, not three periods that follow in sequence. Rosenthal rightly reviews the frequent use of ‘the day of the Lord’ in the Old Testament, but denies that it extends to ‘the new heavens and the new earth’ according to 2 Peter 3:10–13. He commences it at Revelation 8:1 on the basis of cosmic disturbances under the sixth seal (Joel 2:30–31; Rev. 6:11–12). He argues that the day of the Lord’s wrath must begin immediately after the church is raptured, indeed ‘on the same day,’ and cites the fact that the Flood began on the day Noah entered the ark, and fire and brimstone fell out of heaven the day Lot left Sodom. However, this is weak evidence to help establish a great New Testament doctrine. A number of Scriptures unite to demonstrate that the day of the Lord does include the first six seals. While Rosenthal speaks of these seals as the wrath of man, the beasts of the earth and the heavenly bodies of Revelation 6:8 and 12 are not under the dominion of man, but of God. The darkness of Amos 5:18–20 matches the darkness of the sixth seal. The judgment on the proud and lofty in Isaiah 2:12, 17 finds fulfillment in Revelation 6:15, and the announcement of wrath in Isaiah 13:6–13 and Zephaniah 1:14–18 finds its counterpoint in Revelation 6:17. Isaiah 2:19 and Revelation 6:15 state that the wicked shall hide in the holes of the rocks and caves of the earth, a fact far too specific to be lightly ignored. Zephaniah 2:3 calls this period the day of the Lord’s fierce anger, surely fulfilled in substance at Revelation 6:8 with the destruction of one-fourth of the world’s population. It is wrong to declare that the day of the Lord begins with Revelation 8:1 when its predictions find such clear fulfillment in the seal judgments of Revelation 6. How could the day of the Lord come unexpectedly, as a thief in the night, if the severe judgments of Revelation 6 must come first? Why could men be found crying peace and safety under such horrendous circumstances? Yet it is essential to Rosenthal’s prophetic system that the day of the Lord begins with the opening of the seventh seal,²⁴¹ which to him signals the end of the Great Tribulation and the moment of the rapture. It is far better to understand that the rapture precedes the entire Tribulation period, with the day of the Lord commencing soon thereafter. This is the order and emphasis of 1 Thessalonians 4 and 5, prime Scriptures on both prophetic themes. This writer has sought to demonstrate elsewhere²⁴² that the Old Testament predictions of ‘the day of the Lord’ and their fulfillment in the Book of Revelation fit together like hand in glove, including the judgments under the first six seals. Placing the day of the Lord after the Great Tribulation is erroneous and artificial, and denying that it extends up to the new heavens and the new earth appears to violate 2 Peter 3:10–13. Certainly the day of the Lord, the theme of such extensive prophecy, is of greater significance and extent than 21 months or 630 days. Rosenthal’s treatment of the three component parts of Daniel’s 70th week is entirely unsatisfactory. His view essentially ignores the first three and one-half years and artificially distinguishes between the Great Tribulation and the day of the Lord, compressing each into a mere one-fourth of the Tribulation period. This is a fractured foundation on which to build any trustworthy conclusions relative to the blessed hope of Christ’s return.”²⁴³

Again, Fish writes “Rosenthal has to say that the first five seal judgments in Revelation 6 cannot be from God. Why? The first seal which describes the rider on the white horse going out to conquer is a description of the emergence of the Antichrist. But if the seal judgments are from God, this makes God alone directly responsible for a counterfeit religious system and the emergence of the Antichrist (p. 142). This, Rosenthal says, is ‘obviously preposterous’ (p. 142). But is it really preposterous? Rosenthal’s weak view of the sovereignty of God here is inadequate and unbiblical. For instance in Isaiah 10:5–12 there is a description of how God uses evil human instruments to accomplish His will and yet still holds

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 155.

²⁴² Gerald B. Stanton, *Kept from the Hour* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1956), pp. 75–83. (A revised edition of this book was published in 1990 by Schoettle Publishing Co., Box 594, Miami Springs, FL 33266. It includes reviews of 20 major books on the rapture debate, including Rosenthal’s book.)

²⁴³ Stanton, G. B. (1991). [A Review of The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church](#). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 148, 97–99.

them responsible for their sin. God is going to use Assyria, the rod of His anger (v. 5), to judge Judah.²⁴⁴ Judah is a godless nation (v. 6) and is to be trampled on and plundered. Yet while Assyria is the instrument of God, from the human perspective its motives are thoroughly evil and God will judge that boastful and arrogant nation. ‘So it will be that when the Lord has completed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will say, “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the pomp of his haughtiness”’ (verse 12). We have here the evil instrument of Assyria responsible for its sin and judged for its sin, and yet the instrument of God sent forth by God to accomplish His judgment. 2 Thessalonians says that the Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, cannot be manifested until the Restrainer, the one who restrains the mystery of lawlessness, is taken out of the way. While there has been a great deal of debate over the identification of the Restrainer, it is clear that the restraint is under the control of God. When He wills it, the restraint will cease and the Antichrist will appear. The book of Job shows us how even Satan can be allowed to act in his evil to accomplish God’s purposes and bring glory to Him. All of Satan’s activities toward Job were evil, yet all were under God’s control. Paul’s thorn in the flesh was given to him by God to keep him humble because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations given to him. Yet this thorn in the flesh is called ‘a messenger of Satan’ (2 Corinthians 12:7). Rosenthal does not see how God can use sin to accomplish His purposes, but the Bible says that He does. He controls the affairs of sinful men so that while they sin of their own will and are held responsible for it, God uses them to accomplish His greater will. Godless and evil dictators like the Antichrist can be God’s instruments of judgment on a sinful world.”²⁴⁵

G.B Stanton writes “Rosenthal also has peculiar and erroneous views relating to ‘the Great Tribulation.’ Similar to the first four seals, he makes the Great Tribulation ‘the persecution of God’s elect by wicked men,’ namely, man’s wrath against man, but never God’s wrath against man.”²⁴⁶ He limits the Great Tribulation by declaring that it will be the third quarter of the seven-year period, and that somehow even these days will be ‘shortened.’ He fails to relate the Great Tribulation to the detailed descriptions of the Book of Revelation. One can only conclude that if the first four seals are ‘the beginning of sorrows,’ and the day of the Lord begins with the opening of the seventh seal,²⁴⁷ then the Great Tribulation which comes between must be limited to the brief compass of the fifth and sixth seal. This is exactly Rosenthal’s position... With such a view he stands alone. It finds no adequate place for the detailed teaching of Christ in Matthew 24:9–26 and makes the Great Tribulation simply the activity of Antichrist rather than judgment from God. Then to Rosenthal, the rest of the seven years, the final quarter, starts with Revelation 8:1 and becomes ‘the day of the Lord’ or the final day of the Lord’s wrath. Rosenthal is in serious trouble when he limits the Great Tribulation to the third quarter of the seven-year period. Christ linked the Great Tribulation with the action of Antichrist defiling the Jewish temple by setting up his image to receive worship, in fulfillment of the ‘abomination which makes desolate’ in Daniel 9:27. This event in the middle of the ‘week’ is the sign for the Jews to flee from the wrath of Satan, from whom they must be protected three and one-half years ‘from the face of the serpent’ (Rev. 12:14). Thus the ‘time of trouble’ for Israel (Dan. 12:1) and the desolation of ‘the great tribulation’ predicted by Christ (Matt. 24:21) must extend for at least three and one-half years and not for a period of 21 months. Indeed, the finishing of Israel’s ‘rebellion’ and the end of the Antichrist’s ‘desolation’ are linked with the entirety of the 70 weeks and not with a small portion of it (Dan. 9:24, 27). Gabriel testified that the Antichrist’s ‘war’ with Israel should last until the ‘end’ of the period under

²⁴⁴ The text is not specific as to whether it is the northern kingdom of Israel or the southern kingdom of Judah which will be judged. Leupold holds that it is Israel while Young takes it as Judah. H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968), 1: 200–201; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), 1: 359. The reference to Jerusalem and Mount Zion in verses 11–12 would suggest that it is Judah which is in view.

²⁴⁵ *Emmaus Journal*, 1(1), 29–30 (1991)..

²⁴⁶ Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, p. 105.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

consideration, evidently with a ‘flood’ of divine judgment (v. 26). The Antichrist will make war with Israel and all the saints, until he is judged and they possess the kingdom (7:22). He will defile the earth and lead the nations in the final rebellion and war of Armageddon right up to the power and glory of the second coming of Christ. In a word, Tribulation conditions cannot be limited to one fourth of that frightful seven-year period.”²⁴⁸

Conclusion

In this study of the rapture, we noted that the church age believer will receive a resurrection body from the Lord Jesus Christ. We also noted that it was a mystery which means that it was not known to Old Testament saints. We have also seen in our study of the Scriptures that it is also imminent which means it could happen at any moment, which should motivate the believer to make it their habit of staying in fellowship with God.

We also have noted that the rapture or resurrection of the church will bring to completion the process of salvation and sanctification which both began at the moment of their justification through regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit. This study has also revealed that the guarantee of a receiving a resurrection from the Lord Jesus at any moment should motivate the believer to appropriate by faith their identification with Him in His death and resurrection in order to experience their salvation and sanctification. In other words, so that they will experience the holiness of God in their lives.

We have also seen that the believer must not overlook the distinctions between the rapture and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. The latter will be visible to the entire world and will result in the deliverance of the believing remnant of Israel from Satan, Antichrist and the tribulational armies as well as the establishment of Jesus Christ’s millennial kingdom. The former will be invisible to the world and will result in delivering the church from the divine judgments which will be executed upon the inhabitants of planet earth during the last three and a half years of Daniel’s seventieth week.

Lastly, this study has also investigated five different views of the rapture, namely, “pre-tribulation,” “partial,” “mid-tribulation,” “post-tribulation” and “pre-wrath” views. We have concluded that the “pre-tribulation” is the correct view since it is supporting by the teaching of the Scriptures, while the others are not.

²⁴⁸ Stanton, G. B. (1991). [A Review of The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church](#). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 148, 95–96.

Chapter Fourteen: Three Major Events after the Rapture of the Church

There will be three major events following the rapture for the church in heaven: (1) Bema Seat Evaluation: Involving all believers (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10). (2) Overcomer believers are presented to the Father by the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 3:5). (3) Marriage of the Lamb: Involving all believers (Revelation 19:7).

The believer who perseveres and becomes a joint-heir with Christ during His millennial reign and on into eternity is an “overcomer” who is one who executes the Father’s plan for his life and overcomes the following: (1) Old sin nature (2) Cosmic system of Satan (3) Satan.

1 John 5:4, “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

Revelation 21:7, “He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.”

The believer must fulfill the condition of executing God’s plan for his life if he is to receive his eternal inheritance. Failure to execute God’s plan does not result in loss of salvation but rather loss of rewards (1 John 2:28; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

The overcomer will receive his inheritance and rewards at the “Bema Seat Evaluation,” which is taken from the Greek noun *bema*. This judgment takes place immediately after the Rapture of the Church and is actually an “evaluation” of the church age believer’s life after salvation to determine if they merit rewards or not (Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 John 2:24).

A prominent doctrine of the New Testament concerns the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is a doctrine often ignored or, when taught, it is misrepresented because of the term “judgment” that is used in translating the Greek text. As will be shown below, though it is tremendously serious with eternal ramifications, the Judgment Seat of Christ is not a place and time when the Lord will mete out punishment for sins committed by the child of God. Rather, it is a place where rewards will be given or lost depending on how a believer has lived his life for the Lord.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, the Apostle Paul drew courage and was motivated by the fact of rewards at the return of the Lord for the church which he mentions in every chapter in this epistle and which becomes the primary subject of 2 Thessalonians. The Lord’s return and what this means, not only to the world but also to us individually, is a very prominent subject of the New Testament.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy. (NASB95)

It is significant that among the final words of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we find these words of the Lord: **“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done”** (Revelation 22:12). While salvation is a gift, there are rewards given for faithfulness in the Christian life as well as the loss of rewards for unfaithfulness.

Rewards become one of the great motivations of the Christian's life or should. But we need to understand the nature of these rewards in order to understand the nature of the motivation. Some people are troubled by the doctrine of rewards because this seems to suggest "merit" instead of "grace," and because, it is pointed out, we should only serve the Lord out of love and for God's glory. Of course, we should serve the Lord out of love and for God's glory, and understanding the nature of rewards will help us do that. But the fact still remains that the Bible promises us rewards.

God gives us salvation. It is a gift through faith, but He rewards us for good works. God graciously supplies the means by which we may serve Him. Indeed, He works in us both to will and to do as we volitionally appropriate His grace, but the decision to serve and the diligence employed in doing so, are our responsibility and contribution, and this is what God will reward. He will reward how we used His grace.

Both Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 speak of the "**judgment seat.**" "**Judgment Seat**" is the noun *bema*. While *Bema* is used in the gospels and Acts of the raised platform where a Roman magistrate or ruler sat to make decisions and pass sentence, its use in the epistles of Paul is more in keeping with its original use among the Greeks because of his many allusions to the Greek athletic contests.

Romans 14:10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (NASB95)

This word was taken from Isthmian games where the contestants would compete for the prize under the careful scrutiny of judges who would make sure that every rule of the contest was obeyed. The victor of a given event who participated according the rules was led by the judge to the platform called the *Bema*. There the laurel wreath was placed on his head as a symbol of victory.

2 Timothy 2:5 And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. (NASB95)

In all of these passages ... Paul was picturing the believer as a competitor in a spiritual contest. As the victorious Grecian athlete appeared before the *Bema* to receive his perishable award, so the Christian will appear before Christ's *Bema* to receive his imperishable award. The judge at the *Bema* bestowed rewards to the victors. He did not whip the losers. In other words, it is a reward seat and portrays a time of rewards or loss of rewards following examination. But it is not a time of punishment where believers are judged for their sins. Such would be inconsistent with the finished work of Christ on the cross because He totally paid the penalty for our sins.

Chafer and Walvoord have an excellent word on this view: “With reference to sin, Scripture teaches that the child of God under grace shall not come into judgment (John 3:18; 5:24; 6:37; Romans 5:1; 8:1; 1 Corinthians 11:32); in his standing before God, and on the ground that the penalty for all sin—past, present, and future (Colossians 2:13)—has been borne by Christ as the perfect Substitute, the believer is not only placed beyond condemnation, but being in Christ is accepted in the perfection of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 2:10; Hebrews 10:14) and loved of God as Christ is loved (John 17:23).”

Again, Chafer writes concerning the Bema, “It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the judgment is unrelated to the problem of sin, that it is more for the bestowing of rewards than the rejection of failure.”

Bema

Romans 14:10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. (NASB95)

“**The judgment seat of God**” is composed of the articular dative neuter singular form of the noun *bema* (βῆμα), “**the judgment seat**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), “**of God**.”

Louw Nida defines the noun *bema*, “A raised platform mounted by steps and usually furnished with a seat, used by officials in addressing an assembly, often on judicial matters—‘judgment seat, judgment place.’ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον ‘he sat down on the judge’s seat in the place called The Stone Pavement’ Jn 19:13. The association of a βῆμα with judicial procedures means that there is almost always an important component of judicial function associated with this term. Therefore in translating βῆμα, it is often best to use a phrase such as ‘a place where a judge decides’ or ‘a place where decisions are made’ or ‘a judge’s seat.’ The focus upon judgment is particularly important in those passages which refer to the judgment seat of God (Ro 14:10) and of Christ (2 Cor 5:10).”²⁴⁹

The NET Bible makes the following comment, “The judgment seat (βῆμα, *bēma*) was a raised platform mounted by steps and sometimes furnished with a seat, used by officials in addressing an assembly or making pronouncements, often on judicial matters. The judgment seat was a familiar item in Greco-Roman culture, often located in the *agora*, the public square or marketplace in the center of a city.”

The noun *bema* appears only four times in the Septuagint (Deuteronomy 2:5; 2 Maccabees 13:26; Sirach 19:30; 45:9). It occurs twelve times in the Greek New Testament (Matthew 27:19; John 19:13; Acts 7:5; 12:21; 18:12, 16, 17; 25:6, 10, 17; Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The noun is used in Acts 7:5 for a very limited space of ground where Abraham did not possess even a foot of the land of Canaan as an inheritance yet God promised to give him this land as a possession. It is used for the judgment seat of Pilate (Matthew 27:19; John 19:13), Herod (Acts 12:21), Gallio (Acts 18:12, 16, 17), Festus (Acts 25:6, 17) and Caesar’s (Acts 25:10). Lastly, the noun appears in Romans

²⁴⁹ Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, 7.63

14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 for the judgment seat of Christ. This event will take place immediately after the rapture of the church. This is indicated by the fact that Luke 14:12-14 teaches that rewarding a believer is associated with resurrection and the rapture is when the church is resurrected.

Also, Revelation 19:8 reveals that when the Lord returns to earth at His Second Advent to bring an end to Daniel's Seventieth Week, the church is portrayed as already rewarded since she is described as dressed in fine linen, which refer to the righteous acts of the saints, a reference to rewards.

Furthermore, 2 Timothy 4:8, 1 Corinthians 4:5 teach that rewards are associated with "that day" and with the Lord's coming, which refers to the event described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 that refers to the rapture.

1 Thessalonians 4:17, Revelation 4:2 and 19:8 make clear that the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church will take place somewhere either in the earth's atmosphere or the stellar universe.

Every passage in the Greek New Testament that is either addressing rewards or the Bema Seat are addressed to believers or church age believers specifically (Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; 1 John 2:28; 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20; 1 Timothy 6:18-19; Titus 2:12-14).

Old Testament saints are resurrected and rewarded after the church age believers are resurrected and rewarded (Revelation 19:8; Daniel 12:1-2; Matthew 24).

Each and every church age believer, regardless if they were faithful or not, will receive their resurrection bodies at the rapture and all will thus stand before the Bema Seat of Christ to have their works evaluated by the Lord.

Christ Will Conduct the Bema Seat Evaluation

The New Testament writers make clear that Jesus Christ Himself will be the judge of the church (Revelation 1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:5f; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 John 2:28). The Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared to the Jews that the Father had given Him authority to judge the living and the dead (John 5:22-29).

The Father awarded His Son Jesus Christ the sovereign rulership over the entire cosmos as a result of His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross. Consequently, Jesus Christ will preside over and conduct the following judgments: (1) "Bema Seat Evaluation": The "evaluation" of the church age believer's life after salvation to determine if they merit rewards or not (Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 John 2:28). (2) The judgment of "Israel" will take place immediately after the Second Advent and prior to the millennial reign and involves the removal unregenerate Israel from the earth leaving only regenerate Israel to enter into the Millennial reign of Christ (Ezekiel 20:37-38; Zechariah 13:8-9; Malachi 3:2-3, 5; Matthew 25:1-30). (3) The judgment of the "Gentiles" and also takes place immediately after the Second Advent of Christ and prior to His millennial reign and involves the removal unregenerate, anti-Semitic Gentiles from the earth (Matthew 25:31-46). (4) The judgment of Satan and his fallen angels and will take place at the end of human history and is their sentence for their pre-historic rebellion against God (Matthew 25:41; 1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 20:10). (5) The "Great White Throne" judgment, which will take

place at the end of human history and is the judgment of all unregenerate humanity in human history for the rejection of Christ as Savior (Revelation 20:11-15).

What Will Take Place at The Bema?

The *bema* seat of Christ is an evaluation of the Christian's works to determine if they merit rewards or not. Eternal salvation is not the issue at this judgment since this was determined the moment the Christian was declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone.

Samuel L. Hoyt presents three views of the Bema that appear in Christianity, he writes, "Some Bible teachers view the judgment seat as a place of intense sorrow, a place of terror, and a place where Christ display all the believer's sins (or at least those unconfessed) before the entire resurrected and raptured church. Some go even further by stating that Christians must experience some sort of suffering for their sins at the time of this examination. At the other end of the spectrum another group, which holds to the same eschatological chronology, views this event as an awards ceremony. Awards are handed out to every Christian. The result of this judgment will be that each Christian will be grateful for the reward which he receives, and he will have little or no shame. Other Bible teachers espouse a mediating position. They maintain the seriousness of the examination and yet emphasize the commendation aspect of the judgment seat. They emphasize the importance and necessity of faithful living today but reject any thought of forensic punishment at the Bema. Emphasis is placed on the fact that each Christian must give an account of his life before the omniscient and holy Christ. All that was done through the energy of the flesh will be regarded as worthless for reward, while all that was done in the power of the Holy Spirit will be graciously rewarded. Those who hold this view believe that the Christian will stand glorified before Christ without his old sin nature. He will, likewise, be without guilt because he has been declared righteous. There will be no need for forensic punishment, for Christ has forever borne all of God's wrath toward the believer's sins."²⁵⁰

At the Bema Seat, the believer's sins are never mentioned whether these sins were confessed by the believer on earth or were not. These sins were judged at the cross (1 John 2:12). Therefore, the Bema Seat is not punitive.

Hoyt writes, "Scripture teaches that for the believer God's justice has already been fully and forever satisfied at the Cross in relation to the believer's sins. If God were to punish the believer judicially for his sins for which Christ has already rendered payment, He would be requiring two payments for sin and would therefore be unjust. Such a concept (punishment for sin) erroneously disparages the all-sufficiency of Christ's death on the cross."²⁵¹

The purpose of the Bema Seat is to evaluate the quality of every believer's work whether it is good in the sense of acceptable or bad in the sense of being unacceptable. In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ evaluates the church every day according to Revelation 2-3.

The Bema Seat Evaluation of the church is a time when those works that the believer performed in the energy of the sin nature will be destroyed.

²⁵⁰ Bibliotheca Sacra, volume 137, number 545, January-March 1980; The Judgment Seat of Christ in Theological Perspective-Part 1: The Judgment Seat of Christ and Unconfessed Sins; page 33

²⁵¹ Bibliotheca Sacra, volume 137, number 545, January-March 1980; The Judgment Seat of Christ in Theological Perspective-Part 1: The Judgment Seat of Christ and Unconfessed Sins; pages 34-35

1 Corinthians 3:11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (NASB95)

The Bible teaches that every sin committed by the believer in his lifetime, both confessed and unconfessed have been forgiven as a result of Christ's substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, which the Holy Spirit appropriated for the believer when they trusted in Christ as Savior (Psalm 102:12; John 3:18; Romans 5:1-2, 19; 8:1; 1 John 2:12).

The believer must confess his sin in order to be restored to fellowship with God. Personal sin does not sever his relationship with God but it does knock him out of fellowship with God, thus the need for the confession of sin.

The Bema Seat is a time when the believer will be rewarded for their actions that were empowered by the Spirit and in response to God's love for them. The believer who was properly motivated to serve Him and the body of Christ out of love and appreciation for what the Lord did for him will be rewarded at the Bema Seat.

The believer will be rewarded for living in light of the imminent return of Christ at the rapture of the church. Every moment that the church believer lives, is an opportunity to bring glory to God and receive rewards for loving one's neighbor as oneself.

The "overcomer" church age believer or in other words those who were faithful till death or the rapture will receive rewards at the "Bema Seat Evaluation" of the church, which takes place immediately after the rapture of the church.

Rewards at the Bema Seat

There are two words in the Greek New Testament that are used to describe rewards for believers: (1) *Stephanos*, "wreath, garland, crown." (2) *Brabeion*, "prize."

In the ancient world, the *stephanos* was the wreath or garland, the actual crown for winning an event whereas the *brabeion* was the prize given to the victor in the athletic games of the ancient world.

Believers who execute the Father's plan for their life are called in Revelation 2 and 3 "**overcomers**," meaning that they overcame their old sin nature, the devil and his cosmic system by obeying the Word of God, which is motivated by love for God. These believers will receive the following rewards from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation:

The "**crown of righteousness**," is a reward given to believers for their faithfulness in executing their own spiritual life and functioning in their spiritual gift.

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous

Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. (NASB95)

“The Incorruptible Crown” describes all the crowns and is also a special crown given for faithfulness in running the race and exercising self-control in order to serve the Lord and finish the race.

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air 27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (NASB95)

The **“crown of life”** is given to the believer for enduring testings (trials) and temptation.

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (NASB95)

Revelation 2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. (NASB95)

The **“unfading crown of glory”** is a reward promised to pastor-teachers for their faithfulness in the discharge of their responsibilities in shepherding their flocks.

1 Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. (NASB95)

“White garment” is a reward for faithfulness in the form of a translucent uniform of glory over the resurrection body.

Revelation 3:4 “But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.” (NASB95)

The overcome or winner believer will receive a **“white stone”** and **“hidden manna”** and a **“new name”** written on the stone, which refers to intimate access to the Lord Jesus Christ and great responsibility in Christ’s millennial government and in the eternal state (Revelation 2:17).

Revelation 2:17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.” (NASB95)

The **“hidden manna”** in Revelation 2:17 refers to the special intimate access to the Person of Christ during His millennial reign and throughout all of eternity and will be given only to the overcomer or winner believer.

The new title on the white stone in Revelation 2:17 refers to the privilege of having intimate access to the Person of Christ during His millennial reign and throughout all of eternity which will be exclusively to the overcomer. He will also receive a New Title in the Lamb's book of life and will have a membership to the Paradise Club and access to the Gazebo in the Garden (Revelation 2:7).

Revelation 2:7 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.” (NASB95)

The winner believer will have his name recorded in the historical record section of heaven (Revelation 3:12).

Revelation 3:12 “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.” (NASB95)

The overcomer will have a special audience with God the Father.

Revelation 3:5 “He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” (NASB95)

The noun *brabeion*, “prize,” refers to the believer's inheritance or escrow blessings, which are released to the believer upon executing the Father's plan for their lives (Ephesians 1:14, 18; Philippians 3:14; Colossians 1:12; 3:23-24; 1 Peter 1:4; Hebrews 9:15).

Philippians 3:14 I am sprinting towards the finish line for the prize, which is God the Father's invitation to privilege residing in the Person of Christ Jesus. (Author's translation)

Every church age believer has the opportunity to receive his eternal inheritance if he fulfills the condition of being faithful till death or the rapture whichever comes first and thus executes the Father's will for his life.

If we are not faithful and don't stay habitually in fellowship with the Lord we will be disqualified from receiving rewards.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality. (NASB95)

The prize is given to the overcomer and refers to the privilege of ruling with Christ during His millennial reign and throughout the eternal state, and only the overcomer will receive it (Romans 8:16-18; 2 Timothy 2:12a; Revelation 2:26; 3:21).

Revelation 2:26 “He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS.” (NASB95)

Revelation 3:21 “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” (NASB95)

The prize is also intimate access to the Person of Christ during His millennial reign and the eternal state and thus it involves having the privilege of being a companion to the Lord during His millennial reign and throughout the eternal state.

The believer who does not execute the Father’s plan by habitually remaining out of fellowship through disobedience and will experience loss of rewards and temporary shame and embarrassment when he stands before the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation.

1 John 2:28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. (NASB95)

Hoyt commenting on 1 John 2:28, writes, “The Bible suggests that there will be shame at the judgment seat of Christ to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the measure of unfaithfulness of each individual believer. Therefore, it should be each believer’s impelling desire to be well-pleasing to the Lord in all things. Although Christians apparently will reflect on this earthly life with some regret, they will also realize what is ahead for them in the heavenly life. This latter realization will be the source of boundless joy. English strikes a proper balance on this subject. ‘Joy will indeed be the predominant emotion of life with the Lord; but I suspect that, when our works are made manifest at the tribunal, some grief will be mixed with the joy, and we shall know shame as we suffer loss. But we shall rejoice also as we realize that the rewards given will be another example of the grace of our Lord; for at best we are unprofitable servants’ (E. Schuyler English, “The Church At the Tribunal,” in *Prophetic Truth Unfolding Today*, ed. Charles Lee Feingberg [Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Corinthians, 1968], p. 29) The elements of remorse, regret, and shame cannot be avoided in an examination of the judgment seat of Christ. But this sorrow must be somewhat relative because even for the finest of Christians there will be some things worthy of unceasing remorse in the light of God’s unapproachable holiness. This would mean that the finest of Christians could be sorrowful throughout eternity. However, this is not the picture that the New Testament gives of heaven. The overwhelming emotion is joyfulness and gratefulness. Although there is undeniably some measure of remorse or regret, this is not the overriding emotion to be experienced throughout the eternal state. The emotional condition of the redeemed is that of complete and unending happiness. Emotion proceeds from the realization of facts in personal experience. Hope will at last become reality for all those who are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:18-25). Elimination of the curse, pain and death will also remove sorrow, tears and crying (Revelation 21:4). The judgment seat of Christ might be compared to a commencement ceremony. At graduation there is some measure of disappointment and remorse that one did not do better and work harder. However, at such an event the overwhelming emotion is joy, not remorse. The graduates do not leave the auditorium weeping because they did not earn better grades. Rather, they are thankful that they have been graduated, and they are grateful for what they did achieve. To overdo the sorrow aspect of the judgment seat of Christ is to make heaven hell. To underdo the sorrow aspect is to make faithfulness inconsequential.”²⁵²

J. Hampton Keathley III has an excellent comment on the noun *bema*, he writes, “Both Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:9 speak of the “judgment seat.” This is a translation of one Greek word, the

²⁵² Bibliotheca Sacra, volume 137, number 545, January-March 1980; The Judgment Seat of Christ in Theological Perspective-Part 2: The Negative Aspects of the Christian’s Judgment; pages 131-132

word *bema*. While *bema* is used in the gospels and Acts of the raised platform where a Roman magistrate or ruler sat to make decisions and pass sentence (Matthew 27:19; John 19:13), its use in the epistles by Paul, because of his many allusions to the Greek athletic contests, is more in keeping with its original use among the Greeks. This word was taken from Isthmian games where the contestants would compete for the prize under the careful scrutiny of judges who would make sure that every rule of the contest was obeyed (cf. 2 Timothy 2:5). The victor of a given event who participated according to the rules was led by the judge to the platform called the *Bema*. There the laurel wreath was placed on his head as a symbol of victory (cf. 1 Corinthians 9:24-25). In all of these passages, ‘Paul was picturing the believer as a competitor in a spiritual contest. As the victorious Grecian athlete appeared before the *Bema* to receive his perishable award, so the Christian will appear before Christ’s *Bema* to receive his imperishable award. The judge at the *Bema* bestowed rewards to the victors. *He did not whip the losers.*’ We might add, neither did he sentence them to hard labor. In other words, it is a reward seat and portrays a time of rewards or loss of rewards following examination, but it is not a time of punishment where believers are judged for their sins. Such would be inconsistent with the finished work of Christ on the Cross because He totally paid the penalty for our sins. Chafer and Walvoord have an excellent word on this view: With reference to sin, Scripture teaches that the child of God under grace shall not come into judgment (John 3:18; 5:24; 6:37; Romans 5:1; 8:1; 1 Corinthians 11:32); in his standing before God, and on the ground that the penalty for all sin—past, present, and future (Colossians 2:13)—has been borne by Christ as the perfect Substitute, the believer is not only placed beyond condemnation, but being in Christ is accepted in the perfection of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 2:10; Hebrews 10:14) and loved of God as Christ is loved (John 17:23). (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Major Bible Themes: 52 Vital Doctrines of the Scripture Simplified and Explained*, rev. John F. Walvoord, editor, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1974, p. 282) Again, Chafer writes concerning the *Bema*, ‘It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the judgment is unrelated to the problem of sin, that it is more for the bestowing of rewards than the rejection of failure.’²⁵³

Stewardship

As we noted in our study of spiritual gifts, in Romans 14:11, Paul cites Isaiah 45:23 to affirm the certainty that each and every Christian must present himself to the Lord Jesus Christ at His Bema Seat in order to have their works evaluated by the Lord to determine if they merit rewards or not. The implication is obvious in that the strong Christian is never to regard and treat with contempt the weaker believer for his convictions and the weak are never to condemn the strong for theirs since the Lord Jesus Christ will determine at His Bema Seat if the believer’s service, whether weak or strong, merits rewards.

Romans 14:11 For it is written, “AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD.” (NASB95)

Then, in Romans 14:12, Paul draws an inference from these statements in Romans 14:10-11 and teaches that each and every church age believer without exception will have to give an account of himself to the Son of God.

Romans 14:12 So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. (NASB95)

²⁵³ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. IV: Ecclesiology-Eschatology, Dallas Seminary Press, Dallas, TX, 1948, p. 406) (J. Hampton Keathley III, *The Doctrine of Rewards: The Judgment Seat (Bema) of Christ*; page 2; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org 1997

“Each one” is the nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *hekastos* (ἕκαστος), which functions as a substantive and denotes each one of a totality in a distributive sense. Thus, it refers to “each and every” member of the body of Christ who have been declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone without exception regardless of race, gender or social status. The word makes clear to Paul’s Christian readers that “each and every member” of the body of Christ “without exception” will give an account of himself to the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church. It functions as a nominative subject meaning that it is performing the action of the verb *didomi*. We will translate the adjective *hekastos*, **“each and every one without exception.”**

“Of us” is the genitive first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ) and refers to Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome. It functions as a partitive genitive or wholative genitive meaning that the word denotes the whole of which the head noun *hekastos*, **“each and every one without exception”** is a part. This indicates each and every person, “who is a part of the body of Christ” will have to give an account of himself to the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat. We will translate *hemeis*, **“of us.”**

“Will give an account” is composed of the third person singular future active indicative form of the verb *didomi* (δίδωμι), **“will give”** and the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *logos* (λόγος), **“an account.”**

The verb *didomi* means “to give” and is used with each and every member of the body of Christ as its subject and the noun *logos*, “account” as its object. Together, these two words form an idiom that denotes the act of the believer making himself accountable to the Lord since to be “accountable” means to be subject to giving an account. These two words denote the act of the believer making himself accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ. The believer is subject to giving an account to the Lord in order that his service and stewardship of his time, talent, truth and treasure can be evaluated by the Lord to determine if he was faithful in his service or not and to determine if his stewardship was profitable or not. This will take place at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church, which will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ immediately after the rapture.

Therefore, the verb *didomi* and the noun *logos* refer to the act of the believer presenting himself at the Bema Seat and having his actions as related to his service evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat to determine if these actions related to his service merit a reward or not. They refer to the Christian giving an account to the Lord or in other words, being held responsible by the Lord for his service, which involves a four-fold stewardship: (1) Time: Were they profitable in how they used their time on earth that the Lord gave them? (2) Talent: Were they profitable in how they used their spiritual gift the Lord gave them? (3) Truth: Were they profitable in how they used the truth the Lord gave them? (4) Treasure: Were they profitable in how they used their finances that the Lord gave them?

They are to be good stewards with their talent (they are to operate in their spiritual gifts) and treasure (they are to financially support each other when necessary) and truth (they are to apply the Word of God in their relationships with each other).

Time: Galatians 6:9-10, “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

Talent: 1 Peter 4:10, “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Treasure: Luke 6:38, “Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure -- pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”

Truth: Colossians 4:5-6, “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

At the Bema Seat, the believer’s service, as expressed through their stewardship in these four areas, will be evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ to determine if they were a faithful and profitable steward in these four areas or not. If they were a faithful and profitable servant and steward with their time, spiritual gift, truth and finances that were given to them by the Lord as trusts, they will receive a reward from the Lord and if they were not, they will not receive a reward.

Therefore, the verb *didomi* and the noun *logos* do not refer to the believer offering an explanation for actions in life since no explanation could alter or change what the believer said or did in life. To give an account to the Lord does not mean that the believer will be giving an explanation as to why he did not do something or did do something. It will not be a time for explanations or excuses but rather it will be a time when his actions as related to his service and stewardship in life will be evaluated to determine if they were a good steward with their time, talent, truth, and treasure that the Lord gave to them as trusts to be invested for His kingdom.

To give an account to the Lord is thus making oneself accountable to the Lord in order to have one’s service and stewardship evaluated by the Lord to determine if they merit rewards or not.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 reveal that the believer’s works as related to service will be evaluated by the Lord to determine if they merit rewards or not. There is nothing in these passages mentioning the believer giving an explanation for what he did since no explanation could justify or change that which the believer said and did in life.

“**To God**” is the articular dative masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), which is absent from some mss (B F G 6 630 1739 1881 pc) but are found in a A C D Ψ 0209 33 Majority text lat sy co.

Moo writes, “The last words of the verb τῷ θεῷ (“to God”) are omitted in the important primary Alexandrian uncial B, in the secondary Alexandrian minuscule 1739 and in the sister western bilinguals F and G. The omission could be original, later scribes feeling it necessary to complete the text. But the omission of the words renders the text perhaps too difficult; we should probably follow the primary Alexandrian a, the secondary Alexandrian MSS A, C, 33 and 81, Ψ, the western uncial D and the majority text and include it.”²⁵⁴

The NET Bible commenting on this textual problem, writes, “External evidence somewhat favors their inclusion since Alexandrian, Western, and Byzantine mss are well represented. From an internal

²⁵⁴ Moo, Douglas J., The New International Commentary on the New Testament, The Epistle to the Romans, page 834; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Corinthians, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K., 1988

standpoint, however, it is easy to see the words as a scribal gloss intended to clarify the referent, especially as a reinforcement to the quotation of Isa 45:23 in v. 11. Not only that, but the abrupt ending of the verse without “to God” is harsh, both in Greek and in English. In this instance, the internal considerations seem overwhelming on the side of the omission. At the same time, English stylistic needs require the words and they have been put into the translation, even though they are most likely not original. NA27 places the words in brackets, indicating doubt as to their authenticity. tn Or “each of us is accountable to God.”

As Cranfield points out, “The reading which omits τῷ θεῷ is undoubtedly the more difficult; but we are inclined to think that this is a case where we should pay more heed to the argument from intrinsic probability than to the principle of *difficilior lectio potior* (here intrinsic probability is surely in favor of accepting the longer reading, for, without τῷ θεῷ the sentence is most unsatisfactory as the conclusion to the paragraph, although there can be no doubt about Paul’s meaning).”²⁵⁵

Bruce Metzger commenting on this textual problem, writes, “On the one hand, the combination of such witnesses as a A C D 33 81 614 and most versional testimony makes it difficult to reject the reading τῷ θεῷ. On the other hand, however, it is easy to understand why, if the words were originally absent from the text, copyists would have supplied them in order to clarify the reference of the verb. To represent the balance of external and internal considerations, it was decided to include τῷ θεῷ in the text, but to enclose the words within square brackets.”²⁵⁶

Therefore, if we take into account each of these observations, we can conclude that the words τῷ θεῷ were in the original autograph based upon the combination of witnesses, that the inclusion of the words is the most difficult reading and because of intrinsic probability.

The noun *theos* refers to the Lord Jesus. This is indicated in that 2 Corinthians 5:10 teaches that the Lord will conduct the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church. Also, the article is anaphoric meaning that the word was used previously in verse 11 and its meaning is retained here in Romans 14:12.

In Romans 14:11, the noun *theos* referred to the Lord Jesus Christ emphasizing His deity and equality with the Father and the Spirit. In this passage, the articular construction of the noun *theos* refers to the Lord Jesus Christ since it is anaphoric indicating that the word’s meaning in Romans 14:10 where it referred to the Lord Jesus Christ is being retained here in Romans 14:11.

In Romans 14:10, the noun *theos* refers to Jesus Christ with emphasis upon His deity as indicated by the fact that 2 Corinthians 5:10 teaches that the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, John 5:22-29 and Philippians 2:5-11 make clear that He will be conducted all the judgments in history, which would include the Bema Seat.

Therefore, in Romans 14:12, the articular construction of the noun *theos* is anaphoric indicating that the word was used in Romans 14:11 and its meaning in that passage is used here again in Romans 14:12. The articular construction of the noun *theos* also emphasizes the personality of the Son of God. The noun *theos* functions as an indirect object meaning that the word is that to or for which the action of the verb is performed. This indicates that the believer who is making himself accountable to the Lord Jesus

²⁵⁵ Cranfield, C.E.B., International Critical Commentary, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, volume 2, page 711; T and T Clark, A Continuum imprint, London, New York, 1975

²⁵⁶ A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament; second edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: 1994, page 469

Christ at His Bema Seat is received by the Lord. We will translate the articular form of *theos*, “**to God the Son.**”

Therefore, in Romans 14:12, Paul is teaching us that each and every member of the body of Christ will be required to give account of himself at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church, which will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ. This refers to the evaluation by the Lord Jesus Christ of the believer’s four-fold stewardship. At that time the believer’s service for the Lord and stewardship of his time, talent, truth and treasure will be evaluated to determine if they merit a reward or rewards for their service.

When the believer stands before Christ at the Bema Seat it is not to determine their eternal destiny since that was decided when they trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior and as a result were declared justified by the Father.

“Justification” is a judicial act of God whereby He declares a person to be righteous as a result of crediting or imputing to that person His righteousness the moment they exercised faith in His Son Jesus Christ. Consequently, God accepts that person and enters that person into a relationship with Himself since they now possess His righteousness.

Justification is God declaring a person to be righteous as a result of acknowledging or recognizing His righteousness in that person, and which righteousness He imputed to that person as a result of their faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. It is a once and for all declaration, which never changes or can be rescinded since God is a perfect Judge who because He is immutable, always makes perfect decisions (Romans 3:23-26; 5:1-2).

Justification causes no one to be righteous but rather is the recognition and declaration by God that one is righteous as He is. To be justified by God through faith alone in Christ alone means that God can never condemn us for our sins. It means that a believer can never lose his salvation because of any sin since God, who is a perfect judge, rendered a perfect decision when he declared righteous the person, who exercised faith in His Son Jesus Christ! Thus, Paul declares the following in our completed corrected translation of Romans 8:1: **“Therefore, there is now, as an eternal spiritual truth, never any condemnation, none whatsoever for the benefit of those in union with Christ who is Jesus.”**

There is absolutely never any condemnation whatsoever for the Christian because of a legal decision rendered by the Father the moment they exercised faith in His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior. The Father is a perfect judge and once He renders a decision, it can never be rescinded. It is a once and for all, final decision. He never makes a mistake. He saves the Christian based upon the merits of His Son and His Son’s deaths (spiritual and physical) on the Cross.

The Christian has no merit with God. The object of his faith, Jesus Christ has all the merit with God the Father. Therefore, the Christian salvation and the fact that he avoids eternal condemnation is based upon the merits of the Person of Christ and what He did at the Cross for sinners.

Therefore, in Romans 14:12, Paul is teaching us that each and every member of the body of Christ will be required to give account of himself at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church, which will be conducted by the Lord Jesus Christ. This refers to the evaluation by the Lord Jesus Christ of the believer’s four-fold stewardship. At that time the believer’s service for the Lord and stewardship of his

time, talent, truth and treasure will be evaluated to determine if they merit a reward or rewards for their service.

A steward is a manager, not an owner. He is one who manages the property of another. God is the owner and we are the managers of the various stewardships He has given. This includes the whole of life, of course. But to be good stewards of His grace, we must know the precise areas of stewardship for which God is holding us accountable.

Stewardship is one of four concepts related to Christian fellowship: (1) Relationship with Christ: We are all permanently united together by the common (eternal) life that we share as a result of regeneration and the Baptism of the Spirit (Acts 2:42; 1 C. 1:9; 1 John 1:3). (2) Partnership: We are to work together for a common purpose to obtain common objectives for the glory of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. Phil 1:27; Philippians 1:5; Galatians 2:9; Hebrews 1:9). (3) Companionship: We are to communicate with one another and have fellowship with one another sharing with one another the things (viewpoint and thinking) of Christ (Acts. 2:42; Hebrews 10:25; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Romans 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Thess. 5:11; Phlm. 6). (4) Stewardship: We must recognize that all we have belongs to the Lord and has been given to us as trusts from God to invest for His purposes.

Believers need to be willing to share their material possessions for the promotion of the gospel and to help those in need.

Good stewardship stems from recognizing our relationship to Jesus Christ, but it also means recognizing our partnership in Christ's enterprise on earth. (Romans 12:13; 15:27; Galatians 6:6; Philippians 4:15; Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 9:13; Hebrews 13:16; 1 Timothy 6:18). We must recognize that all we have belongs to the Lord and has been given to us as trusts from God to invest for His purposes.

A steward is one who manages the property of another and is not an owner; he is a manager. As stewards, we must recognize that all we have belongs to the Lord and has been given to us as trusts from God to invest for His purposes. Believers need to be willing to share their material possessions for the promotion of the gospel and to help those in need. Everything that we are and possess as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, both spiritually and materially, namely, our time, talent and treasure are in fact, trusts given to us by God which we are to invest for God's kingdom and glory (1 Peter 1:17; 2:11; 4:10-11; Luke 19:11-26).

Good stewardship stems from recognizing our relationship to Jesus Christ, but it also means recognizing our partnership in Christ's enterprise on earth. In any good partnership, the partners share equally in both privileges and responsibilities, the assets and liabilities, and the blessings and burdens.

What kind of partnership would it be if one partner took all the income and enjoyed all the privileges while the other partner did all the work and paid all the bills? No one would enter into a partnership like that, yet that is what goes on in the church today. Partners are to share and share alike in all the aspects of their enterprise. They may not do the same things since there are diverse spiritual gifts distributed to individuals in the body of Christ. In fact, members of any partnership will be much more successful in their enterprise if they work and share according to their abilities, expertise, and training, but still share the load.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples the importance of being obedient servants of God. He taught His disciples to be profitable rather than unprofitable servants of God. A profitable servant is obedient whereas the unprofitable servant is disobedient (Matthew 24:47-51; 25:14-30).

Stewardship of Time

The first area of stewardship that we will note that the believer will have to give an account for in that it will be evaluated by the Lord at the Bema Seat is that of his stewardship of time.

God has allotted twenty-four hours to each one of us. God has given us days not years.

Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom. (NASB95)

Scripture commands a believer to make the most of his time, to conduct his life with respect toward God and according to the will of God.

Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. (NASB95)

Ephesians 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. (NASB95)

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (NASB95)

Remember, God allots us a certain amount of time on this earth, and we are held accountable as to how we use that time. The principle of our stewardship of time is taught by our Lord in the parable of the minas in Luke 19:11-26.

Every believer must use his time wisely if he is to be acknowledged by the Lord as a good steward (Psalm 90:1-17).

Psalm 39:4 LORD, make me to know my end and what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am. 5 Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; Surely every man at his best is a mere breath. (NASB95)

Colossians 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. (NASB95)

“**Opportunity**” is *kairos* and again, rather than emphasize a point of time, the focus is on a period of time filled with all kinds of opportunities through the privileges and responsibilities given.

In connection with our witness to the unbelieving world, we are responsible for two things: (1) Our conduct, which includes our behavior, must be opportune in relation to the time in its various possibilities; and (2) Our conduct, as it occurs in our speech, must be appropriately seasoned to fit the person we are seeking to reach for Christ.

1 Peter 1:17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers. (NASB95)

“**Time**” in 1:17 is *chronos*, which simply focuses on the duration of one’s life on earth as well as its temporality. On the other hand, the word “**stay**,” while also pointing to the element of temporality, focuses our attention on the attitude and the manner of life that should characterize how we should conduct ourselves during that time. We are to live as sojourners. As believers in Christ, we are now citizens of heaven from whence we are to be looking for the Savior (Philippians 3:20-21).

In Romans 13:11-14, Paul emphasized with his readers the importance of being good stewards with their time. Paul in Romans 13:11 commands his Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of loving their neighbor as themselves as a result of what he taught in Romans 13:8-10 that loving one’s neighbor fulfills the requirements of the Mosaic Law. In this passage, he teaches that they are to continue obeying this command because they are well aware of the significance of the period of history in which they were living in, namely, they were living in the church age preceding the imminent return of Christ at the rapture. This period he teaches is characterized by urgency and opportunity for them, demanding immediate action on their part in that they can gain rewards for obeying the command to love your neighbor as yourself.

The apostle also teaches in this passage that it is now already the moment for his readers to be awake spiritually. To awake from spiritual sleep refers to the confession of sins to be restored to fellowship with God and maintaining that fellowship by obedience to the Word of God. Lastly, he teaches that it is now already the moment for Paul’s readers to be awake spiritually because their deliverance from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system at the rapture of the church is now nearer to taking place than when they first became Christians.

Romans 13:11 So then, all of continue making it your habit of practicing this because all of you are well aware of the significance of this particular period of history characterized by urgency and opportunity, demanding immediate action, namely that, it is now already the moment for each and every one of you to be awake from sleep because our deliverance is now nearer to taking place than when we believed. (Author’s translation)

Then, in Romans 13:12 Paul informs his readers that the night has drawn to a close and the day is approaching. He then draws an inference from these two statements by exhorting his readers to lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:12 The night has drawn to a close. Indeed, the day is approaching. Therefore, let us for the duration continue to lay aside for ourselves the activities, which characterize the kingdom of darkness. Indeed, let us for the duration continue to clothe ourselves with the weapons, which characterize those belonging to the kingdom of light. (Author’s translation)

This passage contains four sections. The first statement **“the night has drawn to a close”** teaches that the period in which the church age believer is not in his or her resurrection body and is living during a period of history in which Satan is the god of this world has drawn to a close.

The second statement **“the day is approaching”** emphasizes with Paul’s readers that the period of time when each and every one of them is living in their resurrection body and is permanently delivered from living in Satan’s cosmic system is approaching or is imminent. This period begins for the believer with the rapture of the church and will never end and will go on throughout eternity future.

The third statement is an exhortation **“Therefore, let us for the duration continue to lay aside for ourselves the activities, which characterize those who belong to the kingdom of darkness”** which is making an inference from these previous two statements. This inferential exhortation involves the confession of sin (1 John 1:9) to be restored to fellowship with God since the noun *ergon*, **“deeds”** refers to activities and the noun *skotos*, **“darkness”** refers to those who belong to the kingdom of darkness. They were to continue to confess their sins, keeping short accounts with God the Father during this interim period prior to being permanently delivered by the return of Christ at the rapture.

The fourth and final statement in Romans 13:12 **“Indeed, let us for the duration continue to clothe ourselves with the weapons, which characterize those who belong to the kingdom of light”** speaks of the believer appropriating by faith his union and identification with Christ. This statement speaks of the act of the church age believer exercising faith in the Spirit’s revelation in the Word of God that they are crucified with Christ, died, buried, raised and seated with Him.

The expression **“armor of light”** refers to the Christian’s union and identification with Christ but from the perspective that it gives the believer victory over spiritual and physical death, personal sins, the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system. The believer’s identification with Christ in His crucifixion, spiritual and physical deaths, burial, resurrection and session when appropriated by faith gives them the victory experientially over spiritual and physical death, the sin nature, personal sins and Satan and his policy of evil promoted and propagated by his cosmic system.

In this final statement in Romans 13:12 Paul is contrasting those who belong to the kingdom of light and those who belong to the kingdom of darkness. This antithesis between light and darkness used often by the apostle in his writings (2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:8, 11; Colossians 1:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:4-5, 8) and is used by John (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35; 1 John 1:5; 2:8-9).

The apostle Paul in Romans 13:13 exhorts his readers to unite with him in conducting their lives properly as those who exist in the day, not by means of drunken parties, licentious promiscuity and jealous contention.

Romans 13:13 Let us for the duration continue to conduct our lives properly as those who, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist in the state of being in the day, not by means of drunken parties, not by means of licentious promiscuity, not by means of jealous contention. (Author’s translation)

“The day” refers again to the period of time when each and every church age believer is living in his or her resurrection body and is permanently delivered from living in Satan’s cosmic system. This period begins for the believer with the rapture of the church and will never end and will go on throughout eternity future. Therefore, when Paul exhorts his readers to unite with him in conducting their lives as

those who exist in the day he means that they are to conduct themselves as those who are positionally resurrected with Christ and delivered from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system. They are also to conduct themselves as those who exist in the day ultimately meaning they are to conduct themselves as those who will ultimately be resurrected and will be permanently delivered from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system at the rapture.

Then, to complete the verse he lists three pairs of vices that Christians are to avoid. They are not to conduct their lives by means of drunken parties, licentious promiscuity and jealous contention.

In Romans 13:14, the apostle Paul in this passage issues a command and a prohibition.

Romans 13:14 But rather, I solemnly charge all of you to make it your top priority to clothe yourselves with the Lord, who is Jesus, who is Christ. Also, all of you continue the discipline of not allowing yourselves to make provision with regards to the lusts produced by the flesh. (Author's translation)

In the command, Paul solemnly charges the Roman Christians to clothe themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. This refers to appropriating by faith the teaching of the Spirit in the Word of God that the Christian is union with Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, His spiritual and physical deaths, His resurrection and session. Then, in the prohibition, he wants his readers to continue not allowing themselves to make provision with respect to the desires produced by the flesh, i.e. the sin nature.

Stewardship of One's Spiritual Gift

As we noted in chapter nine, the second area of stewardship for the believer that the Lord Jesus Christ will evaluate at the Bema Seat is that of his spiritual gift. Every believer has been given a spiritual gift for the purpose of serving other members of the body of Christ (See 1 Peter 4:10). We covered spiritual gifts in detail in chapter nine. Thus, we are only touching of this aspect of the Christian's stewardship, which will be evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church.

Stewardship of Truth

Another area of stewardship that the believer will have to give an account at the Bema Seat is that truth. We must understand that the Word of God is a treasure that has been entrusted to each one of us as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1:13 Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you. (NASB95)

Here the apostle reminds us that this message, the message about the Lord Jesus that brings men into an eternal relationship and fellowship with the eternal God of the universe, is both a treasure and a trust. The only message (i.e. the Gospel) that brings men into the kingdom of God, reconciles them to God (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), and gives them eternal life and life more abundant (John 10:10) is truly a treasure beyond measure or a pearl of great value (Matthew 13:44-46).

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Timothy is charged with the responsibility of entrusting what he had learned from Paul to other faithful men who in turn would teach others and so on, and so on.

2 Timothy 2:2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (NASB95)

As stewards of God's Word, we must evangelize the unbeliever. We are not only royal priests but also royal ambassadors who have been entrusted with the privilege and responsibility of presenting the message of reconciliation, i.e. the Gospel to a lost and dying world (2 Corinthians 5:14-21).

In Romans 1:11-14, the apostle Paul is referring to the stewardship of "truth" meaning that Paul sought to communicate the Word of God to all men in order to multiply himself through evangelism and discipleship.

Romans 1:11 For I have been and continue up to the present moment to earnestly desire to visit all of you that I might impart a spiritual blessing to all of you with the result that all of you might be stabilized and strengthened. 12 Namely, that is, in order that it might cause me to be encouraged while among all of you by means of each other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 Now, I absolutely do not want all of you to be ignorant spiritual brothers that I have often planned in order to come to all of you and was prevented so far in order that I might also produce some fruit among all of you. 14 I am at the present time obligated to both the Greeks and the barbarians, to both the wise and the ignorant. (Author's translation)

Also, Paul is referring to the stewardship of "talent" meaning he functioned in his spiritual gift of apostle in order to provide the blessing of an eternal relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ for all men. Lastly, Paul is referring to the stewardship of "time" in that he was redeeming his time on earth for eternity by presenting the gospel to all men.

Stewardship of Treasure

The believer's stewardship of treasure will also be evaluated by the Lord at the Bema Seat. The believer also must be a good steward with money.

Scripture has a tremendous amount to say about money or material possessions. Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables of Jesus deal with money. It is interesting that one out of every ten verses in the New Testament deal with this subject.

Scripture has 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith, but over 2,000 verses on the subject of money. Money is an extremely important issue because a person's attitude toward it is so determinative of his relationship with God, on fulfilling his purpose in this life, and on his character.

Financial planning is biblical and is a means to good stewardship, to freedom from the god of materialism, and a means of protection against the waste of the resources God has entrusted to our care (Proverbs 27:23-24; Luke 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:40).

Financial planning should be done in dependence on God's direction and in faith while we rest in Him for security and happiness rather than in our own strategies (Proverbs 16:1-4, 9; Psalm 37:1-10; 1 Timothy 6:17; Philippians 4:19).

Financial faithfulness ultimately flows out of the recognition that everything we are and have belongs to the Lord (1 Chronicles 29:11-16; Romans 14:7-9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Life is a temporary sojourn in which Christians are to see themselves as aliens, temporary residents, who are here as stewards of God's manifold grace. Our spiritual gift, time and finances are all trusts given to us by God which we are to invest for God's kingdom and glory (1 Peter 1:17; 2:11; 4:10-11; Luke 19:11-26).

One of God's basic ways to provide for our needs is through work meaning an occupation through which we earn a living so we can provide for ourselves and our families (2 Thessalonians 3:6-12; Proverbs 25:27). The money we earn is also to be used as a means of supporting God's work and helping those in need, first in God's family and then for those outside the household of faith (Galatians 6:6-10; Ephesians 4:28; 3 John 5-8).

Believers must have discipline with regards to saving money. The first principle with regards to this is that the believer must maintain a proper view of ownership. Remember, all his wealth ultimately belongs to God. We are managers, not owners (1 Chronicles 29:11-16; Luke 16:12). Also, believer must maintain a proper view of our security. We are to put our trust in the Lord and not in our investments (1 Timothy 6:17).

The Christian must beware of impure and unbiblical motives, priorities, and reasons for saving such as anxiety and hoarding as a result of insecurity or covetousness (Matthew 6:25-33; Luke 12:13-31). He or she must make decisions concerning future investments by going to the Father in prayer in order seek His will (James 4:13-15). They must never use money in saving/investment programs that God desires be used for giving. This occurs when savings or investments become extreme and for the wrong reasons as seen above (Luke 12:16-21; 1 Timothy 6:18-19; 1 John 3:17). The Christian must avoid high-risk investments or get-rich-quick schemes (Proverbs 21:5; 28:20, 22; 1 Timothy 6:9). Lastly, the believer must watch his priorities in the sense that they are to make the kingdom of God his number one investment (Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:31; 1 Timothy 6:18-19).

The Christian is required by the Word of God to evaluate purchases according to Biblical principles. They must ask themselves, "Can I pay cash or will the purchase put me in debt?" They ask, "Do I have complete peace about this purchase with no doubt?" (Romans 14:23; Colossians 3:15)

We must be careful and understand that our sin nature can make us rationalize a purchase that we shouldn't make. The believer must ask "Is it a real need or a matter of greed?" (1 Timothy 6:9; 1 John 2:15) They must ask "Will it be profitable to my family, our spiritual growth, our health, our ministry, the Lord's reputation, and will it increase our love for the Lord or could it hinder it?" (1 Timothy 3:4: 5:8; 1 Corinthians 6:12). They should also ask "Is my lifestyle adequate or more than adequate?" or "Do I need to reduce my spending by lowering our expected standard of comfort?" (Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:15, 23; Proverbs 15:16-17; 16:8; Ecclesiastes 5:10-11).

God favors lending (investing) over borrowing because it promotes freedom and wise stewardship (Deuteronomy 15:5-6). The Bible teaches that unwise borrowing can put us in a position of servitude (Proverbs 22:7). It also teaches us to use credit wisely and avoid it whenever possible. Though not prohibited by Scripture, credit is generally mentioned in a negative sense.

Romans 13:8 is often used as an absolute prohibition against borrowing, but it does not necessarily forbid the use of credit. It simply teaches the necessity to pay one's obligations whether physical or spiritual as they come due.

Concerning credit there are two basic alternatives: (a) Buy now on credit and pay the installments with interest. (b) Save now and buy later with cash and save the interest.

Remember that interest adds to the cost of living and consequently reduces our capacity for wise stewardship. If we must borrow, we should seek low interest for short terms. We must be aware of the fact that credit can be risky because it can place people in bondage to creditors and to their own desires rather than to God's will. It makes impulsive buying too easy.

Satan's cosmic world system depends heavily on impulsive buying to cover over a bored, frustrated life. Credit can be used as a substitute for trusting God or to get what we want in place of waiting on Him. Sometimes people use credit to prevent themselves getting into a situation where they have to depend on God. They do this because they are afraid He won't give us what we want when we want it (Psalm 37:7-9, 34; 147:11; Matthew 6:30-34; Philippians 4:19).

Another important principle to remember is that credit reduces our ability to give to God and to those in need. The use of credit is often nothing more than a failure to be content with what we have (Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5). A materialistic person is never content with what he or she has but the spiritual person learns to be content with what he has or doesn't have. When it comes to borrowing, we must not purchase something on credit if it will jeopardize our financial freedom. We must never go into debt today based upon a future event like a raise or a potential sale. This is nothing more than presuming upon the Lord and His sovereignty.

Another principle is that we are never to go into debt for a house before we have secured a source of income (Prov. 24:27). We are never to finance daily needs, living expenses, or pleasure items.

A Christian should never finance items that depreciate quickly, except on very short terms (i.e., 30-90 days). On appreciating items, such as a house or for business investments, the Christian should never borrow beyond their ability to cash out of the obligation through sufficient collateral plus the value of the item, should it be necessary to sell.

A believer must never allow debts (excluding mortgage) to exceed 20 percent of their take-home pay. They must seek after ten percent or less. They must never allow a mortgage payment (including insurance and taxes) to exceed 25 or 30 percent of their take-home pay.

In regards to borrowing the believer must always ask himself or herself the question, "Do I really need this?" or "Have I asked the Father for it in prayer and waited long enough for Him to supply it?" or "Am I impatient and seeking immediate gratification?" or "Is God testing my faith, values, or my

motives?” The believer should ask himself or herself, “Did I wrongly spend the money God provided for this item or have I violated God’s financial principles?” or “Am I guilty of being stingy?”

In Romans 13:8, Paul prohibits the Roman Christians to owe nothing to anyone meaning that they are to fulfill their financial obligations to everyone, thus he is teaching by way of implication that they are to be good stewards with their finances.

Romans 13:8 All of you continue making it your habit to owe absolutely nothing to anyone except to continue making it your habit of divinely loving one another because the one who, at any time does divinely love the other person fulfills the Law. (Author’s translation)

Chapter Fifteen: Mystery Dispensation

In Scripture, the church age is called a “mystery” dispensation. Dispensations are the divine outline of history. A dispensation is a period of human history defined in terms of divine revelation. According to the Bible, history is a sequence of divine administrations. These consecutive eras reflect the unfolding of God’s plan for mankind.

A dispensation is a period of history where God has designed a particular plan for man and man is tested as to whether or not he will be obedient to that particular plan. Since God has revealed to us in His Word information pertinent to each dispensation, we can determine what the near and distant future impact will be on world events (Dt. 29:29).

The dispensational interpretation of Scripture is the key to the correct understanding of current and future conflicts in the world. Jesus Christ warned of wars and rumors of wars until He returns (Matthew 24:6). In spite of these persistent conflicts in the world His immutable promise of a future return assures that human history will complete the full dispensational course.

The dispensations constitute the divine viewpoint of history and the theological interpretation of history. The doctrine of dispensations is the vehicle by which believers living at a specific time can orient to God’s will, plan and purpose for their lives.

The essence of dispensationalism is the distinction between Israel and the Church. This arises out of the dispensationalist’s consistent utilization of normal or plain interpretation.

Dispensationalism recognizes distinctions in God’s program in history. The dispensationalist follows the principle of interpreting the Bible literally, and does not allegorize away the Bible, thus he is consistent in his interpretation. It recognizes that God’s message to man was not given in one single act but was unfolded in a long series of successive acts and through the minds and hands of many men of varying backgrounds.

This principle of progressive revelation from God is seen in the pages of Scriptures:

Acts 17:30 “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” (NASB95)

Hebrews 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (NASB95)

John 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

Scofield Reference Bible states on page 5, “A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God.” The English word

dispensation is an anglicized form of the Latin dispensation, which the Vulgate uses to translate the Greek word.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary the English word contains 3 principal ideas: (1) The action of dealing out or distributing. (2) The action of administering, ordering or managing; the system by which things are administered. (3) The action of dispensing with some requirement.

In further defining the same word theologically, the same dictionary says that a dispensation is “a stage in a progressive revelation, expressly adapted to the needs of a particular nation or period of time...also, the age or period during which a system has prevailed.”

In the papyri the officer (*oikonomos*) who administered a dispensation was referred to as a steward or manager of an estate or as a treasurer. Thus the central idea in the word dispensation is that of managing or administering the affairs of a household. As far as the use of the word in Scripture is concerned, a dispensation may be defined as a stewardship, administration, oversight or management of others' property. A dispensation is primarily a stewardship arrangement and not a period of time (though obviously the arrangement will exist during a period of time). A dispensation is basically the arrangement involved, not the time involved. Ryrie, “A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose.”²⁵⁷

The dispensations are economies instituted and brought to their purposeful conclusion by God.

To summarize: (1) Dispensationalism views the world as a household run by God. (2) In this household-world God is dispensing or administering its affairs according to His own will and in various stages of revelation in the process of time. (3) These various stages mark off the distinguishably different economies in the outworking of His total purpose, and these economies are dispensations.

Classification of the Dispensations

Theologians may debate the issue of where precisely to divide the dispensations on the timeline of human history. Some disagree on how to classify biblical distinctions, thus arriving at different numbers of dispensations. Some scholars even reject the doctrine in order to perpetuate tradition or justify a particular emphasis. The recognition of historical eras in the Bible unlocks the Scriptures, revealing profound truths with tremendous positive impact on our lives. When Biblical distinctions are overlooked, particularly those between Israel and the Church, there are adverse practical and theological repercussions.

Human history may be classified into six dispensations. These six can be grouped into three categories of two dispensations each. (I) Theocentric: Old Testament Dispensations (from the creation of Adam to the virgin birth of Christ) (A) Gentiles (from the creation of Adam to the Exodus, Genesis 1-Exodus 11) (1) Edenic: Adam to the Fall (Genesis 1:26-3:6). (2) Ante-Diluvian: Fall of Adam to the Flood (Genesis 3-9). (3) Post-Diluvian: Noah Leaving Ark to Call of Abraham (Genesis 9-12). (4) Patriarchal: Call of Abraham to Giving of Law on Sinai (Genesis 12-Exodus 19). (B) Jews (from the Exodus to the birth of Christ 1441-4 B.C.; Exodus 12-Malachi) (1) Theocratic Kingdom: Exodus to Samuel (B.C. 1441-B.C. 1020) (2) United Kingdom: Saul to Rehoboam (B.C. 1020-926 B.C.) (3)

²⁵⁷ Dispensationalism Today, page 29

Northern Kingdom: Jeroboam to Hosea (B.C. 926-B.C. 721) (4) Southern Kingdom: Rehoboam to Zedekiah (B.C. 721-B.C. 586) (5) Babylonian Captivity: (B.C. 586-536 B.C.) (6) Restoration of Israel as a nation: Judah (B.C. 536-B.C. 4).

(II) Christocentric: New Testament Dispensations (from the birth of Christ to the yet future resurrection, or Rapture of the Church) (A) Hypostatic Union: Birth of Christ to His death, resurrection, ascension and session (the era of the New Testament Gospels; B.C. 4-30 A.D.) (B) Church Age: Pentecost to the Rapture (30 A.D.-Rapture) (1) Precanon period (the era commencing with the Book of Acts and continuing until John wrote Revelation, completing the canon of Scripture; A.D. 30-96) (2) Postcanon period (the current era governed by Christ's Upper Room Discourse [John 14-17], the New Testament epistles, and Revelation 2-3; from A.D. 96 to the Rapture).

(III) Eschatological: Dispensations after the Rapture of the Church (A) Tribulation: Rapture of the Church to the 2nd Advent of Christ (approximately 7 years from the Rapture of the Church to the 2nd Advent of Christ; prophesied in the Old Testament, Christ's Olivet Discourse [Matthew 24-25], and Revelation 6-19) (1) Satan's Failed Utopia (from the Rapture until Satan's expulsion from heaven) (2) Great Tribulation (from Satan's expulsion until the 2nd Advent of Christ). (B) Millennium (the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth from His 2nd Advent of Christ to the end of human history, prophesied throughout the Old Testament and in Revelation 20) (C) Eternal State (following the final dispensation of human history, Revelation 21-22)

Romans 16:25

Romans 16:25, "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past."

"According to the revelation of the mystery" is composed of the preposition *kata* (κατά), **"according to"** and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *apokalupsis* (ἀποκάλυψις), **"the revelation"** and the genitive neuter singular form of the noun *musterion* (μυστήριον), **"of the mystery."**

The noun *apokalupsis* is a compound word composed of the preposition *apo*, "from" and the verb *kalupto*, "to cover, hide," thus the word literally means, "unveiling, revelation."

It is a word that conveys the Biblical concept of divine revelation and denotes God's self-revelation to men and may be expressed in historical events or God revealing Himself through the Scriptures.

Louw and Nida define *apokalupsis*, "to uncover, to take out of hiding,' not occurring in the NT) to cause something to be fully known—"to reveal, to disclose, to make fully known, revelation".²⁵⁸

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition lists the following meanings for *apokalupsis*: (1) making fully known, revelation, disclosure (2) as part of a book title Revelation.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ 28.38

In Romans 16:25, the noun *apokalupsis* means “receiving revelation” and refers to what God the Holy Spirit disclosed to Paul with reference to the gospel that centers upon Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection, which accomplishes the Father’s plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentile. The prophets of Old Testament Israel testify to the gospel and is now made fully known by the Spirit through the apostles and New Testament prophets and is now recorded in the Greek New Testament.

The noun *apokalupsis* should be translated in a verb form rather than as a noun since *musterion* functions as an objective genitive meaning that it functions semantically as the direct object of the verbal idea implicit in the noun *apokalupsis*.

The noun *apokalupsis* is the object of the preposition *kata*, which functions as a marker of a norm of similarity introducing the norm and reason which governs something indicating that Paul publicly proclaimed the gospel as a herald “based upon” or “on the basis of” receiving revelation from the Holy Spirit concerning the mystery, which has been kept secret from eternity past.

The precise origin of the noun *musterion* is itself a mystery according to Bornkamm.²⁶⁰ The word is found from the time of the “Tragic Poets” onwards and comes from the verb *muo*, “to shut, to close.”

The noun means “that which must not or cannot be said.” It was a term for the many ancient mystery cults, which developed from the seventh century B.C. to the fourth century A.D.

The basic features of these mysteries were the guarding of secrets and the initiation process where the participants share through a ritual act in the life of the god. Another feature was the promise of cosmic salvation.

Finkernath states “The mystery celebration gave a ceremonial and dramatic representation of the deity suffering and overcoming death and the initiated attained salvation and deification by sharing in the deity’s fortunes through resurrection.”²⁶¹

Over time, these mystery cults infiltrated philosophical circles with terminology, concepts and speculation. Magic was influenced as well.

“Mysteries” were “secrets” that were disclosed to the Gnostic practitioner.

The majority of the documents containing the noun *musterion* are non-canonical intertestamental writings that do not have Hebrew behind them. However, it appears that the concept of *musterion* appears in Daniel which is reflected in the Aramaic word *raz*, “secret, mystery.”

This word describes the mystery revealed to Daniel as the interpreter of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Both the Septuagint and Theodotion’s version render *musterion* with the *raz*. In Daniel, the meaning of *musterion* went from “secret” to “revealed secret.”

²⁵⁹ Page 112

²⁶⁰ Kittel 4:803

²⁶¹ The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown, General Editor, volume 3, page 501; Regency, Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967, 1969, 1971

Bornkamm writes, “In Daniel *musterion* takes on for the first time a sense which is important for the further development of the word, namely that of an eschatological mystery, a concealed intimation of divinely ordained future events whose disclosure and interpretation is reserved for God alone...and for those inspired by His Spirit.”²⁶²

The noun *musterion* appears 28 times in the Greek New Testament, 21 are attributed to Paul. Of the remaining seven, three occur in the Synoptic Gospels in parallel texts (Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10). The other four appear in Revelation (1:20; 10:7; 17:5, 7).

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition commenting on this word *musterion*, writes, “Secret, secret rite, secret teaching, mystery, a technical term applied in the Greco-Roman world mostly to the mysteries with their secret teachings, religious and political in nature, concealed within many strange customs and ceremonies. The principal rites remain unknown because of a reluctance in antiquity to divulge them.”²⁶³

They list the following meanings for the word: (1) the unmanifested or private counsel of God, (God’s) secret, the secret thoughts, plans and dispensations of God, which are hidden from human reason, as well as from all other comprehension below the divine level and await either fulfillment or revelation to those for whom they are intended (2) that which transcends normal understanding, transcendent/ultimate reality, secret, with focus on Israelite/Christian experience.²⁶⁴

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains defines the word “the content of that which has not been known before but which has been revealed to an in-group or restricted constituency – ‘secret, mystery’”.²⁶⁵

In relation to the Greek New Testament and in Romans 16:25, the noun *musterion* referred to Bible doctrine that was never revealed to Old Testament saints but was revealed through the Spirit to the church. It referred to God’s set of instructions for the church age believer, which were not known to Old Testament saints.

The noun *musterion* was used by the Greeks of the content of the doctrines and the actual principles and points that had to be learned by the initiated. It was used in the ancient fraternities of Athens, Greece. These ancient fraternities had secret doctrines, which they called mystery doctrines and only those initiated into those fraternities knew the mystery doctrines or the secrets. Every Greek fraternity had its own secret doctrines and cultic rites.

The mystery doctrine that the Apostle Paul taught and is found in the New Testament is truth. Paul took the noun *musterion* away from the secrets of the ancient mystery cults and used it in technical theological language. He did this to indicate that the doctrine that he was teaching was totally unknown in Old Testament times.

²⁶² Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 4, page 814-815; Gerhard Kittel, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1964

²⁶³ Page 661

²⁶⁴ Page 662

²⁶⁵ volume 2, page 345

Musterion is something that is hidden from those outside the fraternity. The fraternity is the royal family of God formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion. Only members of the royal family of God have received the mystery doctrine of the church age.

Our Lord taught this principle to us disciples and employed it Himself (Matthew 13:10-11). Only the initiated or within our Lord's circle of students were given the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The Person of Christ is called the "**mystery of godliness**" (1 Timothy 3:16). In Colossians 1:24-2:3, Paul taught that the indwelling of Christ in church age believers is a mystery not known to Old Testament saints. It was a mystery that the Gentiles would be "**fellow heirs with Christ**" (Ephesians 3:4-6). Ephesians 3:1-13 teaches that it was a mystery that the Gentiles through faith in Christ would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel.

"**Mystery**" is the noun *musterion*, which refers to doctrines that centered upon the Person of Christ and members of His body and were doctrines never revealed to Old Testament saints.

The mystery is *not* that the Gentiles would be saved since this was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 11:10; 60:3). Rather, the mystery concerning the Gentiles is that they would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members with Jewish believers in the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the covenant promises to Israel.

The content of this mystery is three-fold: (1) The Gentile believers are fellow heirs with Jewish believers in the sense that they share in the spiritual riches God gave them because of His covenant with Abraham.

(2) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow members of the body of Christ with Jewish believers. There is one body, the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:4), which has no racial distinctions (1 Corinthians 12:13) and has the Lord Jesus Christ as its head (Ephesians 5:23). Each individual member of the body of Christ shares in the ministry (Ephesians 4:15-16).

(3) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel. The four great unconditional covenants to Israel will be fulfilled: (1) Abrahamic deals with the race of Israel (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18). (2) Palestinian is the promise of land to Israel (Genesis 13:15; Numbers 34:1-12). (3) Davidic deals with the aristocracy of Israel (2 Samuel 7:8-17) (4) New deals with the future restoration of Israel during the millennium (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Although, the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel were specifically given to Israel (Romans 9:1-6), the church will still and does benefit from them since they are in union with Christ who is the ruler of Israel.

Ephesians 3:7 teaches us that the Gentile believer's union with Christ gives them the 100% availability of divine power that was manifested in the life of Paul and His proclamation of the Gospel. Ephesians 3:8 teaches that the Gentile believer's union with Christ gives them infinite wealth. Ephesians 3:9-10 teaches that this mystery concerning the Gentiles is important to the angels both elect and non-elect since it reveals the multifaceted wisdom of God.

In Ephesians 5:22-33, Paul taught that the eternal union between church age believers and the Lord Jesus Christ is also described by Paul as a “**mystery**.” The resurrection of the church is a mystery (1 Corinthians 15:51-53).

In Romans 16:25, the noun *musterion* means “mystery” and refers to the plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentiles and is now fully revealed during the church age by the Spirit through the apostles to the church, which was not fully known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel. The content of this mystery is Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection for both Jew and Gentile.

The “hidden” nature of the gospel is not that it was totally unknown since the Old Testament prophets, all the way back to Abraham, were told that salvation would be provided for both Jew and Gentile through the Jewish Messiah. What Paul means by *musterion* in Romans 16:25 is that through the Spirit, God the Father has “fully” disclosed the gospel in the person of Jesus Christ and in the proclamation of the gospel by the apostles.

Musterion in this verse is a revelation of the “divine decree,” which is God’s eternal and immutable will, regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence. The decree of God is the chosen and adopted plan of all God’s works. *Musterion* is the revelation of the chosen and adopted plan of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ for Israel and the Gentiles. It is His eternal purpose according to the counsels of His own will, whereby for His own glory He has foreordained whatever comes to pass.

In eternity past, God had figured into His plan every negative and positive decision towards His sovereign will exercised by every human being who have lived, are living and will live in the future, so as to fulfill His sovereign will and thus to bring glory to Himself. This eternal plan is called the “divine decree” by which God has rendered certain all the events of the universe, including both angelic and human history-past, present and future. Therefore, God rendered certain to take place all every decision, both negative and positive that human beings, both Jew and Gentile would make during the course of their lifetimes and thus figured them into His plan.

God’s decree rendered all things as certain to occur and He decided that they would exist and so therefore, God rendered certain to occur all the various decisions that human beings would make during the course of their lifetime and God decided that these things would exist.

The divine decree took place in eternity past before anything was ever created and is God’s eternal and immutable will. Therefore, it was a part of God’s plan from eternity past that the proclamation of Jesus Christ’s victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that through faith in Him they could receive eternal salvation.

The “providence” of God is the divine outworking of the divine decree, the object being the final manifestation of God’s glory and expresses the fact that the world and our lives are not ruled by chance or fate but by God. Therefore, every decision for or against the sovereign will of God was ordained by God to take place during the course of a person’s lifetime and thus do not happen by chance or fate but because God ordained for them to take place in order to fulfill His plan and to bring glory to Himself.

The decree of God is the chosen and adopted plan of all God’s works and so it was a part of God’s chosen and adopted plan that the proclamation of Jesus Christ’s victory over sin and Satan through His

death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile.

The decree of God is His eternal purpose according to the counsels of His own will, whereby for His own glory He has foreordained whatever comes to pass. Therefore, it was part of God's eternal purpose according to the counsels of His own will for His own glory that the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile.

The decree of God is the sovereign choice of the divine will (His sovereignty) and mentality (His omniscience) by which all things are brought into being and controlled, made subject to His pleasure, and producing His glorification. Therefore, the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile was brought into being and was controlled and made subject to God's pleasure and glorified Him.

The "decree of God" is His eternal, holy, wise and sovereign purpose, comprehending at once all things that ever were or will be in their causes, courses, conditions, successions, and relations and determining their certain futurity (i.e., that they will certainly take place). When I say "comprehending" I mean that the omniscience of God is the source of the divine decrees by "determining" I mean that the sovereignty of God chose before anything existed which things would actually become historical events. Therefore, the omniscience of God comprehended at once in eternity past that the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile.

God also comprehended at once in eternity past the course that these events would take and their conditions and relations and determined that these events would take place. Therefore, the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile was sovereignly determined by God to take place and was known by God in eternity past before anything was created.

The decree of God is His eternal and immutable will regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence. Therefore, it was God's eternal and immutable will that the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile.

Furthermore, God decreed that this proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile would take place in time and the precise order of events and the manner in which this would transpire.

The will of God in common usage refers to what God desires of an individual or group in a particular situation. In relation to the divine decree the will of God refers to the decision God made in eternity past, from His attribute of sovereignty, which established that certain things would actually

come into being while other things would not. The will of God is His sovereign choice as to what will take place in time. God from His sovereignty decided in eternity past that the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile. He also decided the exact time that it would take place.

God in eternity past decreed that angels and human beings would have volition and would be allowed to make decisions contrary to His sovereign will and without compromising His justice. In giving angels and men volition, God decreed that their decisions, whatever they might be, would certainly take place-even those that are contrary to His desires. In the divine decree, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man co-exist in human history. Therefore, God decreed that the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile and that this would all take place in time and even those negative decisions, which were contrary to His desires. His desire is that all men receive eternal salvation.

Being omniscient, God had the good sense to know ahead of time what men and angels would decide, and He not only decreed that those decisions would exist but He also decreed the exact manner, consistent with His integrity, in which He would handle their decisions. Since God is omniscient He knew ahead of time the decisions that each and every member of the human race would make during the course of their lifetime and decreed that they would exist and He also decreed the exact manner in which He would handle their decisions. Therefore, each and every positive and negative that Jews and Gentiles would make was a part of God's sovereign will that is based upon His omniscient knowledge of all the facts concerning what will take place in the future.

The Lord knows perfectly, eternally and simultaneously all that is knowable, both the actual and the possible and thus has all knowledge of every event in human and angelic history. Therefore, the Lord looked down the corridors of time and decreed to take place the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection and Gentile and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile.

So, the **"mystery"** in Romans 16:25 refers to the proclamation of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection and that faith in Him for salvation would be proclaimed to both Jew and Gentile. It refers to the manifestation of the divine decree eternity past. It is a secret known only by God but has now been revealed to the church by the Spirit through the apostles.

The word functions as an objective genitive meaning that it functions semantically as the direct object of the verbal idea implicit in the noun *apokalupsis*, **"revelation,"** which should thus be converted into the verbal form *apokalupto*.

"Which has been kept secret" is the genitive neuter singular perfect passive participle form of the verb *sigao* (σιγάω), which means "to be silent, quiet" in classical Greek. It appears 16 times the Septuagint and 10 times in the Greek New Testament.

In Romans 16:25, the verb means "to keep secret, to keep something from becoming fully known, to conceal" and is used in relation to the gospel. It speaks of the act of God in previous dispensations not fully revealing all the details concerning the gospel.

Again, the “hidden” nature of the gospel is not that it was totally unknown since the Old Testament prophets, all the way back to Abraham, were told that salvation would be provided for both Jew and Gentile through the Jewish Messiah. What Paul means by *musterion* in Romans 16:25 is that through the Spirit, God the Father has fully disclosed the gospel in the person of Jesus Christ and in the proclamation of the gospel by the apostles.

The verb *sigao* is a genitive of simple apposition meaning it is further describing for the reader what Paul means when he uses the term *musterion*, “**mystery**.” It also functions as an attributive participle meaning it is making an assertion about the noun *musterion*, “**mystery**” and should be translated as though it were a relative clause.

The passive voice is a “divine passive.” The passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject here is the mystery and the unexpressed agency is the Holy Spirit, which is indicated by the 2 Peter 1:20-21. Thus, the passive voice of the verb *sigao* indicates that in the dispensation prior to the First Advent and church age dispensation, God the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Father’s plan did not fully disclose the gospel in the person of Jesus Christ and in the proclamation of Christ’s death and resurrection by the apostles.

The perfect tense of the verb *sigao* is an extensive or consummative perfect used to emphasize the completed action of a past action from which a present state emerges. The present state refers to the dispensations prior to the First Advent and church age when Holy Spirit did not fully disclose all the detail of gospel. During the First Advent and church age the Spirit has fully disclosed all the details in the person of Christ and in the proclamation of His death and resurrection by the apostles to both Jew and Gentile. The completed action of a past act is the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Father’s not fully disclosing the gospel in the person of Jesus Christ in the proclamation of His death and resurrection by the apostles to both Jew and Gentile.

“**For long ages past**” is composed of the dative masculine plural form of the noun *chronos* (χρόνος), “**for ages**” and the dative masculine plural form of the noun *aionios* (αἰώνιος), “**long past**.”

In classical Greek, the noun *chronos* can refer to a long period of time or it may refer to time in the abstract sense. It may describe the passing of time, the effects of time, the duration of time, or a specific point of time. The word entered the philosophical and cosmological discussions of antiquity, especially among the Greek philosophers.

In the Septuagint, the word depicted at times, the “times” in which people lived such as Abraham (Genesis 26:1, 15). It could refer to the time frame in which individuals live (Joshua 4:24; 24:31). In a number of passages, *chronos* refers to eternity (Isaiah 9:1-8). It was also used of the finality of judgment (Isaiah 13:20).

The noun *chronos* appears approximately fifty times in the Greek New Testament. Of these, 23 are attributed to Luke and 9 to Paul. The word was used to speak of a precise “time” of an event (Matthew 2:7; Acts 1:6) or an extended or shortened period of time (Mark 9:21). It could refer to a significant theological event (Luke 1:57).

In Romans 16:25, the noun *chronos* refers to an indefinite period of time referring to past human and angelic history. It functions as a dative of time indicating “when” God the Holy Spirit in accordance

with the Father's will did not fully disclose the gospel in the person of Christ and in the proclamation of His death and resurrection. It emphasizes an indefinite period of time.

In Romans 16:25, the noun *aionios* means “eternal” pertaining to an unlimited duration of time. It functions as a dative of simple apposition meaning that it is appositive to the noun *chronos* and is clarifying the latter for the reader. *Chronos* speaks of an indefinite time in the past whereas *aionios* speaks of this past history as stretching to eternity.

“**But**” is the “adversative” use of the post-positive conjunction *de*, which is introducing a statement that stands in contrast with the previous statement that the revelation Paul received from the Holy Spirit concerning the mystery was concealed from eternity past. The statement it introduces states that this mystery has now been manifested and by the prophetic Scriptures.

“**Now**” is the adverb of time *nun* (νῦν), which is employed with the aorist tense of the verb *phaneroo*, “**is manifested**” to contrast the past denoting an action beginning in the present. It refers to two dispensations, namely, the First Advent of Christ and the present period of human history that is called the church age dispensation, which began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and will end with the rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). We will translate *nun*, “**now**.”

“**Is manifested**” is the genitive masculine singular aorist passive participle form of the verb *phaneroo* (φανερῶω).

In Romans 16:26, the verb *phaneroo* means “to manifest” and is used of the mystery being “manifested” during the First Advent of Christ and the dispensation of the church age.

The word functions as an attributive participle modifying *musterion*, “**mystery**” describing it further. It is also a genitive of simple apposition meaning it stands in apposition to the noun *musterion*, “**mystery**” describing further for the reader what Paul means by this term.

The aorist tense is a constative aorist used to describe in summary fashion the period of history that includes the First Advent of Christ and the church. During these dispensations, the gospel has been fully disclosed to the human race in the person of Christ and in the proclamation to both Jew and Gentiles of His victory over sin and Satan through His death and resurrection.

The passive voice indicates that the mystery, as the subject, is being acted upon by the Old Testament Scriptures, which is expressed agency.

“**And**” is the emphatic use of the conjunction *te* (τέ), which is used to connect the connect the four prepositional phrases in Romans 16:26 with the verb *gnorizo*, “**has been made known**” and indicates that these prepositional phrases are not connected with the previous participle *phaneroo*. These four prepositional phrases give an additional description of the mystery. We will translate the word “**indeed**.”

“**By the Scriptures of the prophets**” is composed of the preposition *dia* (διὰ), “**by**” and the genitive neuter plural form of the noun *graphe* (γραφή), “**the Scriptures**” and the genitive feminine plural form of the adjective *prophetikos* (προφητικός), “**of the prophets**.”

The noun *graphe* refers to the Old Testament Scriptures and the adjective *prophetikos* means “prophetic” and pertains to the Old Testament belongs to the prophets of Israel and are divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit and reveals the will of the Father. The noun *graphe* is the object of the preposition *dia*, which functions as a marker of the instrument by which something is accomplished indicating that the mystery was manifested by the Spirit “through” the Old Testament Scriptures.

“**Prophet**” is the noun *phophetes*, which is a reference to the writings of the Old Testament prophets who were authorized spokesman for God and proclaimed His will, purpose and plan (See Hebrews 1:1-2).

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was foretold by the prophets in the Old Testament Scriptures (See 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

“**According to the commandment of the eternal God**” is composed of the preposition *kata* (κατά), “**according to**” and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *epitage* (ἐπιταγή), “**the commandment**” and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), “**of the God**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the adjective *aionios* (αἰώνιος), “**eternal.**”

The noun *epitage* means “command, order, decree” referring to that which has been specifically decreed by God the Father in eternity past and is thus a reference to the Father’s decree in eternity past. Thus, *theos* refers to the Father since He is the author of the divine decree and the plan of salvation, which the gospel manifests to the human race. *Theos* is modified by the noun *aionios*, which describes God the Father as being “eternal” meaning that He has no beginning and no end and is an ever present now.

The noun *epitage* is the object of the preposition *kata*, which functions as a marker of a norm of similarity introducing the norm which governs something indicating that the mystery has been manifested during the First Advent of Christ and the church age “in accordance with” the decree of the Father.

“**Has been made known**” is the genitive neuter singular aorist passive participle form of the verb *gnorizo* (γνωρίζω), which means “to make known publicly and explicitly” the mystery. It functions as an attributive participle meaning it is making an assertion about the noun *musterion*, “**mystery,**” that it is now being made known to all the nations. Thus, it should be translated as though it were a relative clause. The verb is a genitive of simple apposition meaning it is further describing for the reader what Paul means when he uses the term *musterion*, “**mystery.**”

The passive voice is a “divine passive.” The passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject here is the mystery and the unexpressed agency is the Holy Spirit, which is indicated by the 2 Peter 1:20-21. Thus, the passive voice of the verb *gnorizo* indicates that during First Advent and church age dispensation, God the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Father’s plan is making fully known publicly and explicitly the gospel in the person of Jesus Christ and in the proclamation of Christ’s death and resurrection by the apostles.

The aorist tense is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the mystery being made fully and publicly known to all the nations during the First Advent of Christ and church age dispensation.

“**To all the nations**” is composed of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), “**to**” and the accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), “**all**” and the articular accusative neuter plural form of the noun *ethnos* (ἔθνος), “**the nations**.”

The noun *ethnos* means “the Gentiles” and is used in contrast to the Jews and thus refers to all those individuals who are “not” of Jewish racial descent and thus “not” members of the covenant people of God, Israel. The articular construction of the word is “generic” distinguishing the Gentiles from the Jews. The adjective *pas* is modifying the word and is used to describe the Gentile race as a corporate unit. The preposition *eis* is a marker of persons benefited by an event with the implication of something directed toward them indicating that the mystery being made known during the church age is “on behalf of” or “for the benefit of” the Gentiles. Therefore, we will translate this prepositional phrase “**for the benefit of all the Gentiles**.”

“**Leading to obedience of faith**” is composed of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), “**to**” and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *hupakoe* (ὑπακοή), “**obedience**” and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *pistis* (πίστις), “**of faith**.”

The noun *hupakoe* means “obedience” and is used with reference to the Gentiles obeying the gospel message and trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior as well as referring to Gentile obedience to the gospel after their conversion. The word is the object of the preposition *eis*, which functions as a marker of purpose with the implication of expected result indicating that the purpose of God the Father making fully known publicly the mystery for the benefit of all the Gentiles through the prophetic Scriptures according to His decree in eternity past was to affect their obedience, which is produced by faith.

In Romans 16:25, the noun *pistis* means, “trust, confidence, faith in the active sense, believing, faith, trust, confidence in God.” It speaks of faith in Jesus Christ resulting in being declared justified by the Father and faith in the Word of God after conversion, which results in spiritual growth and maturity. The word functions as a production meaning that it produces the noun to which it stands related. The noun to which it stands related is *hupakoe*, “obedience,” thus indicating that obedience to the gospel is “produced by” faith in the gospel. Faith in the gospel results in obedience to the gospel. This principle is illustrated with Noah and Abraham in Hebrews 11:8 and with Abraham in James 2.

So in Romans 16:25, the noun *pistis* means, “trust, confidence, faith in the active sense, believing, faith, trust, confidence in God.” It speaks of faith in Jesus Christ resulting in being declared justified by the Father and faith in the Word of God after conversion, which results in spiritual growth and maturity. The word functions as a production meaning that it produces the noun to which it stands related. The noun to which it stands related is *hupakoe*, “**obedience**,” thus indicating that obedience to the gospel is “produced by” faith in the gospel. Faith in the gospel results in obedience to the gospel. Obedience is the fruit of faith.

Chapter Sixteen: The Church's Relationship to Israel

One of the great discussions in theology is the church's relationship to Israel. Many contend that the church has replaced Israel altogether while others state that there will be a future regeneration and restoration of the nation of Israel at the Second Advent of Christ and His subsequent millennial reign. Others say that there will be a future regeneration of Israel but not a future restoration of the nation to the land of Palestine. Many contend that the church has no relationship to Israel whatsoever while others say they are connected.

This chapter will attempt to demonstrate that there is continuity between the church and Israel or in other words, they are definitely connected in some way. This author will also show that there is discontinuity between the two.

There are several points that this author will develop which will demonstrate that there is not only discontinuity but continuity between the two.

Romans 2:28 - Authentic Jewishness and Circumcision are not Based on Externals

First, the apostle Paul taught in Romans 2:28-29 and 3:21-31 that a true Jew is one who is not only a biological descendant of Jacob whose name was changed by God to "Israel," but also they have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Romans 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. (NASB95)

Romans 2:28-29 concludes the paragraph that began in Romans 2:17 and summarizes Romans 2:17-27 in which Paul destroys the unsaved Jews' false security in his racial background, possession of the Law and the ritual of circumcision. All of which, the Jew erroneously and presumptuously and arrogantly believed would gain him entrance into the kingdom of God and prevent him from receiving eternal condemnation.

The Greek text of Romans 2:28-29 is elliptical but Paul's meaning is clear and emphatic to the unsaved, self-righteous Jew, namely that their racial background, possession of the Law and circumcision will not gain them entrance into the kingdom of heaven and protect them from eternal condemnation.

"For" is the "inferential" use of the post-positive conjunction *gar*, which introduces a self-evident conclusion that is based upon Paul's teaching concerning circumcision in Romans 2:25-27. The term "post-positive" means that the word does not come first in the sentence but rather second and sometimes is the third word in the sentence. The first word in the sentence is the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, **"not."** So the conjunction *gar* introduces a self-evident conclusion regarding the value of the ritual of circumcision to the Jew, which is based upon Paul's teaching in Romans 2:25-27.

In Romans 2:25, Paul teaches his unsaved, self-righteous Jewish audience that circumcision cannot deliver them from eternal condemnation since disobedience to the Law negates the value of circumcision. This passage teaches the principle that Jewish disobedience makes the ritual of circumcision meaningless and constitutes unrighteousness in the eyes of God.

In Romans 2:26, Paul poses a rhetorical question to his unsaved Jewish audience, which demands a positive response from them who believed that because they were circumcised that they could escape eternal condemnation and gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven. This rhetorical question implies in a hypothetical sense that although the Gentile is uncircumcised his perfect obedience to the principles of the moral code of the Mosaic Law would make him circumcised in the eyes of God and is designed to destroy Jewish confidence in circumcision to be justified before God. This passage teaches the principle that perfect Gentile obedience without the ritual of circumcision is righteousness in the eyes of God.

Then, in Romans 2:27, Paul teaches that the perfect obedient conduct by the uncircumcised Gentile would serve as evidence against the disobedient, circumcised Jew. So in Romans 2:27, the apostle Paul addresses his unsaved Jewish audience with a hypothetical case that would destroy their confidence in circumcision as the means of avoiding eternal condemnation and receiving entrance into the kingdom of heaven. He presents to the unsaved Jew a hypothetical case of the Gentiles fulfilling perfectly the Ten Commandments that are inherent in their soul, which would serve as evidence against them resulting in condemnation at the Great White Throne Judgment. Therefore, in Romans 2:28, the conjunction *gar* introduces a self-evident conclusion from the facts derived from Paul's statements that appear in Romans 2:25-27. The self-evident conclusion is that being a true Jew does not pertain to being merely a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Externals, such as one's racial background, i.e. being a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or circumcision, did not constitute being a true Jew since circumcision is of no value without perfect obedience to the Law of God.

“He is” is the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi*, which means, “to possess certain characteristics” or “a state.” The characteristic or state in view is that of being a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and being a member of the nation of Israel, which is denoted by the proper name *Ioudaios*, **“Jew.”** The meaning of the verb *eimi* is negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou*, **“not.”** Therefore, these three words denote that the state of being a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thus a member of the nation of Israel emphatically does not constitute being a true Jew in the eyes of God.

The verb *eimi* functions as a substantive. The present tense is “gnomic” indicating that it is a “spiritual axiom” that being a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thus a member of the nation of Israel does not constitute being an authentic Jew in the eyes of God. The active voice is “stative” indicating that a true Jew is not identified as existing in the state of being merely a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as an unqualified statement of Bible doctrine. The subject is implied in the verb *eimi* and should be translated **“he”** since Paul is explaining to his readers how to identify a true Jew.

“Jew” is the nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Ioudaios*, which refers to those members of the human race who are descendants biologically of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thus members of the nation of Israel and thus, denotes nationality distinguishing the Jew from the Gentile. Therefore, Paul's use of the term **“Jew”** in Romans 2:28 indicates that he is referring to the Jew's false security in his racial background or nationality, which he erroneously and presumptuously believed would gain him entrance into the kingdom of heaven and protect him from eternal condemnation.

Prior to the first century, the most common terms used for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were “Hebrew” and “Israelite.” However, by the first century, the term “Jew” had become the most common designation for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

“**Jew**” is from “**Judah**,” (“praise”) and was one of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob’s son Judah and was also a designation for the southern half of Solomon’s kingdom after his death. From the time of the Babylonian captivity, the whole race bore this title.

In Romans 2:28, the proper name *Ioudaios*, “**Jew**” functions as a “predicate nominative” meaning that it is making an assertion that a true Jew is emphatically not identified by the fact that he descended biologically from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and is thus not based upon nationality.

“**Who is one outwardly**” is composed of the nominative masculine singular form of the definite article *ho* and the preposition *en* and the articular dative neuter singular form of the adjective *phaneros*.

The nominative masculine singular form of the definite article *ho* functions as a “substantiver” meaning it nominalizes (i.e. converts to a noun) the prepositional phrase *en to phanero*, “**outwardly**” and thus we can translate it with the noun phrase “**who is one.**”

The article functions as a “nominative in simple apposition” meaning that is “clarifies, describes,” or “identifies” for the reader what a true Jew is emphatically not.

The adjective *phaneros* pertains to that which appears clear, evident or manifest. Therefore, the word describes an authentic Jew as not being identified by mere “outward appearance” or “externals that can be easily seen by the human eye.” This word refers specifically to the unsaved, self-righteous Jews’ security in his racial heritage or nationality.

The definite article preceding the adjective *phaneros* particularizes a general quality denoted by the word it is modifying and is thus emphasizing or focusing upon the concept of externals, which in context refers to being a biological descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The adjective *phaneros* functions as a “dative instrumental of means” indicating that the word is used to indicate the “means” or “instrument by which” the verbal action of the verb *eimi* is accomplished. Therefore, it indicates that an authentic Jew is never identified “by means of” the external of being a biological descendant from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The preposition *en* is a marker of means indicating that an authentic Jew is never identified “by means of” the external. Therefore, we will translate the word “**by means of.**”

This first statement that appears in Romans 2:28 destroys the unsaved, self-righteous Jews’ security in his racial background, heritage or nationality, which he erroneously and presumptuously believed would gain him entrance into the kingdom of heaven and protect him from eternal condemnation.

“**Nor**” is the adverb *oude*, which is composed of the negative particle *ou*, “never” and the conjunction *de*, “and,” and thus is rendered means, “neither, nor.”

The adverb *oude* is related to the Greek word *mede*, “and not, but not.” *Oude* is used with the negative *ou* in the previous causal clause and together, they combine the two negative clauses together. They serve to connect two concepts: (1) An authentic Jew is not identified by the external of being a descendant biologically of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (2) An authentic Jew is not identified because he is circumcised.

“**Is**” does not translate a Greek word but is added by the translators in order to make for a smoother translation. The apostle Paul omits the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* deliberately since he is employing the figure of ellipsis.

The verb *eimi* means, “to possess certain characteristics” or “a state” and the characteristic or state in view is identified by the noun *peritome*, “**circumcision**.”

The meaning of the verb *eimi* is negated by the adverb *oude*. Therefore, these three words denote that the state of being circumcised emphatically does not constitute being a true Jew. The present tense is “gnomic” indicating that it is “an eternal spiritual truth” or “spiritual axiom” that the state of being circumcised emphatically does not constitute being a true Jew in the eyes of God. The active voice is “stative” indicating that a true Jew emphatically does not exist in the state of being circumcised. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as an unqualified statement of Bible doctrine.

“**Circumcision**” is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *peritome*, which refers to the ritual act of cutting of the foreskin of the male’s penis and was given as a sign of God’s covenant with Abraham and his biological descendants that they were set apart by God and yet was not given to justify or saved them and implied that one was obedient to God.

The noun *peritome*, “**circumcision**” functions as a “predicate nominative” meaning that it is making an assertion that a true Jew is emphatically not identified by the fact that he is circumcised.

“**That which is outward**” is composed of the nominative feminine singular form of the definite article *ho* and the preposition *en* and the articular dative neuter singular form of the adjective *phaneros*.

The nominative masculine singular form of the definite article *ho* functions as a “substantiver” meaning it nominalizes (i.e. converts to a noun) the prepositional phrase *en to phanero*, “**outwardly**” and thus we can translate it with the noun phrase “**that which is**.”

The article functions as a “nominative in simple apposition” meaning that is “clarifies, describes,” or “identifies” for the reader what a true Jew is emphatically not.

As we noted earlier in our study of Romans 2:28, the adjective *phaneros* pertains to that which appears clear, evident or manifest. Therefore, the word describes an authentic Jew as not being identified by mere “outward appearance” or “externals that can be easily seen by the human eye.”

In this second declarative negative statement that appears in Romans 2:28, this word refers specifically to the unsaved, self-righteous Jews’ security in his being circumcised.

The definite article preceding the adjective *phaneros* particularizes a general quality denoted by the word it is modifying and is thus emphasizing or focusing upon the concept of externals, which in context, would be circumcision.

The adjective *phaneros* functions as a “dative instrumental of means” indicating that the word is used to indicate the “means” or “instrument by which” the verbal action of the verb *eimi* is accomplished. Therefore, it indicates that an authentic Jew is never identified “by means of” the external of circumcision.

The preposition *en* is a marker of means indicating that an authentic Jew is never identified “by means of” the external of circumcision. Therefore, we will translate the word “**by means of.**”

“**In the flesh**” is composed of the preposition *en* and the dative feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, which refers to the human body and functions as a “locative of place” indicating that the location of where circumcision takes place. The preposition is a marker of location denoting that the ritual of circumcision takes place in the human body.

Romans 2:28 Therefore, as an eternal spiritual truth, he is absolutely never a Jew who is one by means of the external, nor, as an eternal spiritual truth, is circumcision, that which is by means of the external in the human body. (Author’s translation)

This second statement that appears in Romans 2:28 destroys the unsaved, self-righteous Jews’ security in his being circumcised, which he erroneously and presumptuously believed would gain him entrance into the kingdom of heaven and protect him from eternal condemnation.

An authentic Jew is one who has been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The First Church Council in Jerusalem that is recorded in Acts 15 deemed that a person does not get saved through the practice of circumcision but through faith alone in Christ, thus the Gentiles were not required to be circumcised.

Authentic circumcision also takes place the moment a person trusts in Jesus Christ as their Savior, which results in their being regenerated by the Holy Spirit and thus receiving the nature of Christ called the new creation, or new spiritual species.

Galatians 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. (NASB95)

“Regeneration” is a ministry performed by the Holy Spirit on behalf of a person the moment they believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior where He creates a human spirit for the person so that they might receive the imputation of eternal life.

Titus 3:5 He (God the Father) saved us, not on the basis of deeds (human works) which we have done in (human power) righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. (NASB95)

This act of regeneration makes the believer a new spiritual species, which is the nature of Christ that can never sin and that is described in Scripture by many phrases such as the “**new self, new man, newness of life, new creation.**”

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new spiritual species; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB95)

The human spirit is the receptacle for eternal life and together they give the believer the capacity to metabolize and apply spiritual phenomena communicated by the Holy Spirit through the teaching of the Word of God and to pray according to the will of God and to worship and serve God.

Philippians 4:23 May the grace which originates from the Lord Jesus Christ be communicated to your human spirit. Amen. (Author's translation)

According to Colossians 2:11-12, authentic circumcision also involves the “baptism of the Spirit” where the believer in Jesus Christ is identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session.

1 Corinthians 7:19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God. (NASB95)

One of the symbolic meanings of the act of circumcision where the cutting of the foreskin spoke of a surgical removal spoke of a complete separation, from the sins of the flesh so widely prevalent in the world around Abraham and his descendants. The nations and tribes around Abraham were involved in sins largely centered in the misuse of the male organ in adultery, fornication and sodomy. Circumcision symbolized to the Jewish man that he was a member of an elect nation, a peculiar people, distinctly holy before God, in relation to sexual conduct, so it came indirectly to speak of holiness in every phase of life. Therefore, we can see that authentic circumcision involves sanctification and reflecting the holiness of God.

Romans 2:29 - Authentic Jewishness and Circumcision are Based on the Internal Work of the Holy Spirit

We conclude our study of Romans chapter two by noting Romans 2:29, which teaches that authentic Jewishness is by means of the internal and authentic circumcision which is by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. As we will note from a comparison of Scripture, an authentic Jew is one who exercises faith in Jesus Christ in his soul, which is invisible and authentic circumcision involves “regeneration” by the Holy Spirit at the moment of faith in Christ as well as the “baptism of the Spirit.”

Romans 2:29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God. (NASB95)

“**But**” is the adversative use of the conjunction *alla*, which introduces a statement that presents a contrast to the preceding statement in Romans 2:28.

In Romans 2:29, in the adversative clause, the phrase “**He is**” does “not” appear in the original Greek text due to Paul’s use of the figure of ellipsis of repetition where the 3rd person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* is to be supplied from the preceding clause in Romans 2:28.

The verb is omitted deliberately by Paul in order to emphasize the remaining words in the adversative clause. Thus, Paul omits the verb *eimi* in order to emphasize that an authentic Jew is one inwardly.

The verb *eimi* means, “to possess a certain inherent characteristic or state” and the characteristic or state in view is identified by the proper name *Ioudaios*, “**Jew**.”

The verb *eimi* functions as a substantive. The present tense is “gnomic” indicating that it is a “spiritual axiom” that being a true Jew in the eyes of God is that which is inward, in the soul. The active

voice is “stative” indicating that being a true Jew is an inward state of being. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as an unqualified statement of Bible doctrine. The subject is implied in the verb *eimi* and should be translated “**he**” since Paul is explaining to his readers what God considers a true Jew.

“**Jew**” is the nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Ioudaios*, which refers to those members of the human race who are descendants biologically of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and denotes nationality distinguishing the Jew from the Gentile. It functions as a “predicate nominative” meaning that it is making an assertion that a true Jew is an inward or internal phenomena that takes place in a Jew biologically who trusts in Jesus Christ as His Savior.

“**Who is one inwardly**” is composed of the nominative feminine singular form of the definite article *ho* and the preposition *en*, which is followed by the articular dative neuter singular form of the adjective *kruptos*, which means, “hidden, concealed, secret” and comes from the verb *krupto*, “to hide, conceal, cover, keep secret.”

In Romans 2:29, the adjective *kruptos* means, “internal” and refers to what takes place in the soul of the biological or racial Jew when he exercises faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior, thus, an authentic Jew is one who has been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The nominative masculine singular form of the definite article *ho* functions as a “substantiver” meaning it nominalizes (i.e. converts to a noun) the prepositional phrase *en to krupto*, “**inwardly**” and thus we can translate it with the noun phrase “**who is one.**” The article functions as a “nominative in simple apposition” meaning that is “clarifies, describes,” or “identifies” for the reader that a true Jew is one inwardly through faith in Jesus Christ.

The adjective *kruptos* functions as a “dative instrumental of means” indicating that the word is used to indicate the means or instrument by which the verbal action of the verb *eimi* is accomplished. Therefore, it indicates that an authentic Jew is identified “by means of” what happens to him internally in his soul when he exercises faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior.

The preposition *en* is a marker of means indicating that an authentic Jew is one “by means of” what takes place internally in the soul of the racial Jew who exercises faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior. Therefore, we will translate the word “**by means of.**”

This statement destroys the unsaved, self-righteous Jews’ security in his racial heritage or nationality, which he erroneously and presumptuously believed would gain him entrance into the kingdom of heaven and protect him from eternal condemnation.

“**And**” is the “connective” use of the conjunction *kai*, which connects the first declarative statement with a second one. The word connects the concept that an authentic Jew is one internally through faith alone in Christ alone with the concept that authentic circumcision is the work of the Holy Spirit through regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit.

“**Circumcision**” is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *peritome*, which refers to the ritual act of cutting of the foreskin of the male’s penis and was given as a sign of God’s covenant with Abraham and his biological descendants that they were set apart by God and yet was not given to justify or save them and implied that one was obedient to God.

The phrase “**is that which is**” does not translate any word or words in the Greek text but is added by the translators in order to make for a smoother translation.

“**The heart**” is the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *kardia*, which refers to the dominant right lobe of the soul, where the mental activity or function of the soul takes place. The word functions as a “genitive of source,” which means that the genitive substantive is the source from which the head noun derives or depends. Therefore, authentic circumcision “originates” in the human heart.

“**By the Spirit**” is composed of the preposition *en* and the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, which refers to the exercise of God the Holy Spirit’s omnipotence at the moment a person trusts in Jesus Christ as his Savior since we have the figure of metonymy where the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence.

The word functions as a “dative instrumental of means” indicating that circumcision is accomplished “by means of” the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit. The preposition *en* is a marker of means indicating that the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit is the “means by which” authentic circumcision takes place.

“**Not by the letter**” is composed of the emphatic objective negative adverb *ou* and the dative neuter singular form of the noun *gramma*, which refers to the “written” code of the Mosaic Law. The noun *gramma* refers to the mechanical observance of the written code of the Mosaic Law and in particular obeying the command to circumcise all Jewish males as eight day old infants (Genesis 17:1-27; Leviticus 12:3).

In Romans 2:9, the emphatic negative adverb *ou* emphatically negates the meaning of the noun *gramma* and should be translated “**never**.”

The noun *gramma* functions as a “dative instrumental of means” indicating that authentic circumcision is emphatically not “by means of” observing the command to circumcise a Jewish boy as an eight day old infant. Therefore, the expression *ou grammati*, “**never by means of the letter**” means that authentic circumcision is never accomplished by means of the mechanical observance of the command to circumcise a Jewish boy as an eight day old infant but rather by means of the Spirit in the person who exercises faith in Jesus Christ.

In John 3, the Lord Jesus Christ taught a leader of the Jews, Nicodemus about the importance of the Spirit’s work.

Israel was commanded to circumcise their hearts, which means to turn to the Lord in faith so that they might be able to obey His commands.

Deuteronomy 10:16 “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.” (NASB95)

Jeremiah 4:4 “Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else My wrath will go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.” (NASB95)

Circumcision of the heart involves accepting Jesus Christ as Savior, which enables the Holy Spirit to regenerate the believer, giving him a new nature that will always be obedient to the commands of God. Circumcision of the heart is connected to regeneration since it is through regeneration that one receives a new nature enabling one to obey the commands of God.

In Ezekiel 36:25-27, Israel was promised by God that He would remove their heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh and give them the Holy Spirit so that they might obey His commands.

An “uncircumcised heart” means a will that is rebellious and negative to God’s commands and is another way of saying the person is stubborn. It refers to possessing an old Adamic sin nature that needs to be crucified with Christ through faith in Christ. Therefore, the command to Israel to circumcise their hearts assumes that human hearts are naturally rebellious and need correction.

In Acts 7:51, addressing unsaved Jews, Stephen called them “uncircumcised in heart” meaning they were arrogant and had not accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior so as to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit and identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial, which would deal with the problem of their old sin nature.

The nation of Israel will have circumcised hearts at the Second Advent of Christ and subsequent millennial reign meaning they will accept Jesus Christ as Savior and as a result will be regenerated by the Holy Spirit so that they will have a nature that will obey the commands of God (Deuteronomy 30:1-6).

“**His**” is composed of the genitive masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos*, which agrees in gender and number with its antecedent, namely, the nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Ioudaios*, that refers to the authentic Jew.

The word functions as an “objective genitive” meaning it is receiving the verbal action implicit in the head noun *epainos*, “**praise**.” Therefore, this means that the authentic Jew is receiving praise and the prepositional phrase *ek tou theou*, “**from God**” indicates the source of this praise. We will translate the relative pronoun *hos*, “**whose**” and not “**his**” since it is not functioning as a possessive pronoun but rather an objective genitive.

“**Praise**” is the articular nominative masculine singular form of the noun *epainos*, which refers to “approval” that comes from God. The authentic Jew receives the approval of God rather than men since as we noted earlier, he has a new nature through regeneration that enables him to experience eternal life and gives him the capacity to obey the commands of God in order to receive God’s approval. He also has been identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session, which also enables him to experience eternal life, thus giving him the capacity to obey the commands of God and receive approval from God.

The unregenerate, self-righteous Jews in the first century sought the approval and praise of men rather than God (Matthew 6:5; 23:1-12; John 5:39-47; 12:42-43). In 1 Corinthians 4:6 and 2 Corinthians 10:18, the apostle Paul teaches the Corinthians that praise from God is what is important.

In the last declarative statement in Romans 2:29, word “**is**” does “not” appear in the original Greek text due to Paul’s use of the figure of ellipsis of repetition where the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* is to be supplied from the context.

The verb is omitted deliberately by Paul in order to emphasize the remaining words in the adversative clause. Thus, Paul omits the verb *eimi* in order to emphasize that an authentic Jew will receive God’s approval.

The verb *eimi* functions as a copula uniting the subject *epainos*, “**praise**” with the phrase *ouk ex anthropon*, “**not from men.**” The present tense is “gnomic” indicating that it is a “spiritual axiom” that an authentic Jew receives his praise from God and never men.

“**Not from men**” is composed of the emphatic objective negative adverb *ou*, which is followed by the preposition *ek* and the genitive masculine plural form of the noun *anthropos*, which is used in a generic sense for unregenerate humanity.

The emphatic negative adverb *ou* negates the idea of the authentic Jew, i.e. the Jewish believer in Jesus Christ of receiving praise from men since unregenerate men enslaved to old Adamic sin nature and the cosmic system of Satan are antagonistic to Jesus Christ and the believer (Galatians 5:17; John 15:17-19; 1 John 2:15-17).

The preposition *ek* is a marker of source indicating that the authentic, regenerate Jew emphatically does not receive his praise from unregenerate mankind as a “source.”

“**But**” is the adversative use of the conjunction *alla*, which introduces a prepositional phrase that presents a contrast to the idea of receiving the approval of unsaved men.

“**From God**” is composed of the preposition *ek* and the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos*, which refers to the Lord Jesus Christ since He is the member of the Trinity that will represent the Holy Spirit and the Father at the evaluation of the believer.

The definite article preceding the noun *theos* indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ is in view here since the article indicates that God is “well-known” to Paul’s unsaved Jewish readership since he is referring to the God who manifested himself to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Son of God is that member of the Trinity who manifested God to men (John 1:18).

The noun *theos* functions as a “genitive of source” indicating that the authentic, regenerate Jew praise “originates from” God as a “source.” The preposition *ek* is a marker of source indicating that the authentic, regenerate Jew will receive praise from God as a “source.”

Romans 2:29 But rather, as an eternal spiritual truth, he is a Jew who is one by means of the internal and circumcision originates in the heart by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit, never by means of the letter whose praise is as an eternal spiritual truth never from men but from God. (Author’s translation)

In Romans 2:29, the word *epainos*, “**praise**” is a play on the term “**Jew**,” which as we noted in our study of the word in Romans 2:17 comes from the Hebrew “**Judah**,” which means, “praise.”

Therefore, in Romans 2:29, Paul's point to the unsaved Jew is that it is God who ultimately determines what an authentic Jew is rather than men. The external ritual of circumcision did not constitute an authentic Jew in the eyes of God but rather an authentic Jew is made one by God through faith in Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in baptism, sanctification and regeneration.

A True Jew is One Justified by Faith in Jesus

In Romans 3:21-26, Paul teaches that whether a person is a Jew or a Gentile, they can only be declared justified by God as a gift of His grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Romans 3:21a teaches that the righteousness of God as revealed by the Person and Work of Jesus Christ is manifested through the communication of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Romans 3:21b teaches that the righteousness of God as revealed by the Person and Work of Jesus Christ and the gospel, which offers the gift of God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ were attested to by the Old Testament Scriptures.

Romans 3:21 But now, independently of seeking to be justified by obedience to the Law, the righteousness originating from God is being manifested at the present time while simultaneously being attested to by the Law and the Prophets. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:22 teaches that the righteousness of God can be received by anyone whether Jew or Gentile, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:22 Namely, the righteousness originating from God through faith in Jesus who is the Christ for the benefit of each and every person who does believe for there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no distinction. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:23 teaches that the reason why anyone, whether Jew or Gentile can receive the gift of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ and be declared justified by God is that both groups have sinned and thus are always failing to measure up to the glory of God, who is Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:23 For each and every person has sinned consequently, they are always failing to measure up to the glory originating from God. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:24a teaches that justification is based upon God's grace. Romans 3:24b teaches that justification is made possible by means of the work of redemption that was accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ's spiritual death on the Cross.

Romans 3:24 with the result that they might, as an eternal spiritual truth, be undeservedly justified based upon His grace by means of the redemption, which is by means of the spiritual death of Christ who is Jesus. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:25a teaches that God the Father offered publicly at the Cross of Calvary His Son Jesus Christ to sinful mankind as a propitiatory gift. Romans 3:25b teaches that the spiritual death of Jesus Christ on the Cross demonstrated the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:25 Whom God the Father offered publicly as a propitiatory gift through faith by means of His blood in order to demonstrate His righteousness because of the deliberate and

temporary suspension of judgment of the sins, which have taken place in the past on the basis of the tolerance originating from the character and nature of God the Father. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:26 teaches the communication of the gospel during the church age demonstrates the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:26 Correspondingly, in relation to the demonstration of His righteousness during this present distinct period of history, that He Himself is, as an eternal spiritual truth, inherently righteous, even while justifying anyone by means of faith in Jesus. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:27, Paul teaches that the law or the principle of faith in Jesus Christ in order to be justified before God excludes human merit and pride.

Romans 3:27 Under what conditions then, is there at any time pride and boasting? It has, as an eternal spiritual truth, been excluded! By what kind of principle? By means of actions produced by obedience to the Law? Absolutely not! But rather by means of the principle, which is faith. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 3:28, he teaches that justification is by means of faith in Jesus Christ, independently of actions produced by obedience to the Law.

Romans 3:28 Because we are always of the firm conviction that a person is, as an eternal spiritual truth, justified by means of faith independently of actions produced by obedience to the Law. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:29, Paul teaches that God is not the God of the Jews only but also the God of the Gentiles as well.

Romans 3:29 Or, is God, as an eternal spiritual truth, in authority over the Jews only? Is He, as an eternal spiritual truth, unequivocally not in authority over the Gentiles also? Absolutely! Also, over the Gentiles. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:30, Paul writes that there is one and the same God for both Jew and Gentile and who therefore has only one means of justifying both groups, namely, faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:30 If, in fact-and let us assume that it's true for the sake of argument, there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, one and the same God, who will certainly, as an eternal spiritual truth, justify the circumcision by means of faith as a source and the uncircumcision by means of faith. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:31, Paul teaches that faith in Jesus Christ upholds the Law rather than rendering it useless.

Romans 3:31 Are we then attempting to render useless at the present time the Law by means of faith? Absolutely not! On the contrary, we do uphold the Law. (Author's translation)

Romans 9:1-5

Paul teaches in Romans 9:1-5 that the nation of Israel was given the covenants which is a reference to the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants.

In Romans 9:1, Paul implicitly appeals to Christ and the Holy Spirit as witnesses as to the veracity of his statements in Romans 9:2-3. Paul feels the need to do this since in his day he was accused by many in Israel as being a traitor to the nation.

Romans 9:1 I am speaking the truth in accordance with the code of Christ. I am by no means lying, while my conscience does confirm to me in accordance with the code of the Holy Spirit. (Author's translation)

Then in Romans 9:2, Paul expresses his great sorrow and unceasing grief over the nation of Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

Romans 9:2 That, as far my feelings are concerned, there is always great sorrow as well as unceasing anguish in my heart. (Author's translation)

Paul in Romans 9:3 communicates to his readers his great love for the nation of Israel by expressing his desire to be separated from Christ for their sake.

Romans 9:3 In fact, I could almost wish that I myself could be accursed, totally and completely separated from Christ as a substitute for my brothers, specifically, my fellow countrymen with respect to racial descent. (Author's translation)

Next, in Romans 9:4-5, he lists eight privileges that were given to the nation of Israel by God that helps the reader understand the depth of his sorrow and grief.

Romans 9:4 Who indeed by virtue of their unique, privileged character are, as an eternal spiritual truth, Israelites. To them belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service and the promises. 5 To them belong the fathers and from them, the Christ with respect to human racial descent, the one who is, as an eternal spiritual truth, God over each and every living and non-living thing, worthy of praise and glorification throughout eternity. Amen! (Author's translation)

The eight privileges listed by Paul in Romans 9:4-5 are as follows: (1) "To whom belongs the adoptions as sons" (2) "The glory" (3) "The covenants" (4) "The giving of the Law" (5) "The temple service" (6) "The promises" (7) "The fathers" (8) "From whom is the Christ according to the flesh".

The term "Israelites" serves to identify who are Paul's fellow countrymen with respect to racial descent and as a heading for the list of eight privileges that identify Paul and his fellow countrymen.

Like Romans 3:1-2, these two verses list the spiritual privileges of the Jews. In Romans 3:1, the apostle Paul asks two direct questions of his audience. The first direct question pertains to Paul's teaching in Romans 2:17-24 regarding the Jew's false security in his racial heritage and anticipates the

objection of the Judaizers. It asks the question: “If the Jews are just as worthy of eternal condemnation as the Gentiles since their racial heritage cannot save them, then what advantage is there to being a Jew?” The second direct question pertains to Paul’s teaching in Romans 2:25-29 regarding the Jew’s false security in circumcision and anticipates another objection of the Judaizers who were champions of circumcision (Acts 15; Philippians 3:2). It asks the question: “If the Jews are just as worthy of eternal condemnation as the Gentiles since circumcision cannot save them, then what advantage is there to being circumcised?”

In Romans 3:2, Paul answers his own question in order to anticipate the objections of the Judaizers by writing that the primary advantage of being a Jew was that God had entrusted the Old Testament Scriptures to the care of the Jews. This verse answers both direct questions that appear in Romans 3:1 and not just one since the concept of being a Jew and circumcised are inextricably tied to one another because circumcision was the sign of not only God’s covenant with the descendants of Abraham but also the mark of his being a new racial species.

The Old Testament contains not only the Mosaic Law and Messianic prophecies but also it records the promises and covenants that God has made with the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from which, originated the nation of Israel.

In the book of Genesis alone, God reveals to the nation of Israel through Moses the origins of the universe, the solar system, the atmosphere, life, man, sin, the total depravity of man, marriage, evil, language, government, culture, the nations, religion, the chosen people (Israel). In the Old Testament, the prophets predict the First and Second Advents of Christ, His crucifixion, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father as well as His Messianic Reign in Jerusalem with Israel as head of the nations.

Now in Romans 9:4-5, Paul lists more spiritual privileges of the nation of Israel that are directly tied to the Old Testament Scriptures which were mentioned as the first and foremost privilege of the Jews. The reason why they are related is that from these Scriptures is God’s revelation to the nation of Israel of the spiritual privileges bestowed upon her, which are listed in Romans 9:4-5.

In Romans 9:4, “**adoption**” is the articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *huiiothesia*. This is the third time that we have seen this word in the Roman epistle. We saw this word in Romans 8:15 and 23. In both instances, the word refers to the Christian’s Roman style adoption into the royal family of God. At the moment the Christian was declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone, he was adopted *Roman style* into the royal family of God through the Baptism of the Spirit thus making him an heir of God and spiritual aristocracy.

Romans 9:4 is the only instance in the Greek New Testament that *huiiothesia* is used in relation to the nation of Israel. It is not used of the Christian but rather is of the members of the nation of Israel, the majority of whom rejected Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. Thus, it is surprising that Paul would attribute this word to unregenerate Israel.

Furthermore it is never used in the Old Testament or in Judaism for Israel. Some erroneously conclude that this indicates that the nation of Israel remains the children of God just as church age believers, i.e. Christians are God’s people. However, this interpretation totally contradicts Paul’s teaching in the first eight chapters of Romans where he teaches that it is only through faith alone in

Christ alone that one becomes a son and child of God. Also, we cannot explain Paul's great sorrow and unceasing grief for the nation of Israel in verses 2 and 3, if we do not interpret *huiiothesia* as referring to Israel. Also, Paul teaches in Romans 9:6 that not all who have descended from Israel constitute spiritual Israel or those whom God recognizes as His covenant people. Therefore, we can conclude that Paul's use of *huiiothesia* in Romans 9:4 means something totally different when the word is applied to Christians in Romans 8:15, 23, Galatians 4:5, and Ephesians 1:5.

The adoption as sons in Romans 8:15, 23, Galatians 4:5 and Ephesians 1:5 is related to the "individual" whereas the adoption as sons in Romans 9:4 is "national." In Romans 9:4, Paul's refers to the Old Testament teaching concerning the nation of Israel that they were "God's son" in a "national" sense meaning that God had set apart Israel from all the nations of the earth for blessing and service (Exodus 4:22-23; Deuteronomy 14:1-2; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1).

"**The glory**" refers to the visible manifestation of God's presence that appeared to the nation of Israel throughout her history. The glory was also manifested ultimately in the Person and Finished Work of Jesus Christ in hypostatic union during the First Advent (Matt. 17:2-5; John 1:14; 1 Cor. 11:7; 2 Cor. 4:4, 6; Heb. 2:9; Rev. 19:1, 7).

The "**covenants**" is a reference to the four unconditional covenants God established with the nation of Israel.

1) Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18; 26:4; 28:14; 35:11; Ex. 6:2-8). (2) Palestinian (Gn. 13:15; Ex. 6:4, 8; Num. 34:1-12; Dt. 30:1-9; Jer. 32:36-44; Ezek. 36:21-38). (3) Davidic (2 Sam. 7:8-17; Psa. 89:20-37) (4) New (Jer. 31:31-34; cf. Heb. 8:8-12; 10:15-17).

There are seven great features that are distinct in each of these four unconditional covenants to Israel: (1) Israel will be a nation forever. (2) Israel will possess a significant portion of land forever. (3) Israel will have a King rule over her forever. (4) Israel will have a throne from which Christ will ruler, forever. (5) Israel will have a kingdom forever.

The entire expectation of Old Testament Israel is involved with its earthly kingdom, the glory of Israel and the promised Messiah seated in Jerusalem as ruler of the nations. Since the Lord Jesus Christ literally fulfilled prophecy during His First Advent, then it follows that He will certainly literally fulfill the prophecies related to the millennium at His Second Advent.

"**The giving of the Law**" refers of course to the Mosaic Law.

In Romans 9:4, the translation "**temple service**" is incorrect since the word "temple" does not convey the idea of the noun *latreia*, which simply means, "service." The translators added it since worship in the temple service connected to the worship of God was of major importance to the nation of Israel as expressed in the Mishnah, "By three things is the world sustained: by the Law, by the [Temple] service, and by deeds of loving-kindness" (m. 'Abot 1:2). However, it is more likely that when he uses the noun *latreia* in Romans 9:4, Paul is referring to the service in the tabernacle since it preceded the building of the temple by Solomon, which was designed by David.

"**The promises**" refers to the promises contained in the five covenants that God established with the nation of Israel. These promises include Messianic promises.

“**The fathers**” refers to the patriarchs or progenitors of the nation of Israel, namely, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose name was changed later by the Lord to Israel. This is an important privilege because the promises contained in the covenants were given to these men.

The eighth and final privilege is that the Savior of the world would be Jewish.

Romans 11:17

In Romans 11:17, Paul also teaches that Gentile believers, who he describes as a “wild olive tree,” are engrafted into regenerate Israel who he describes as an “olive tree.” Consequently, regenerate Gentiles benefit from the promises of the covenant. The Abrahamic covenant is the “rich root” in Romans 11:17.

Romans 11 will teach us quite a bit about the relationship between regenerate Jews and Gentiles and in turn help us to understand the church’s relationship to Israel.

Beginning in Romans 11, the apostle Paul teaches concerning the future salvation of the nation of Israel. The single basic theme throughout Romans chapter eleven is stated at the beginning of the chapter, namely that God has not rejected the nation of Israel. If this is the case, then God is surely not employing the church to replace Israel.

Romans chapter eleven completes the fifth major section in the book of Romans, which began with chapter nine. This section is a defense of God’s righteousness in His dealings with the nation of Israel since the question arises that if God is for the elect and that nothing can separate them from God’s love as Paul says in chapter 8, then why has He set aside His chosen people, the Jews, the nation of Israel.

In this section, Paul attempts to explain God’s dealings with the Jews as a vindication of His righteousness. Paul does it by demonstrating through the Old Testament Scriptures that Israel’s rejection is related to the spiritual pride of the Jews (9,10), that Israel’s rejection is not complete because some are being saved (11), and that Israel’s rejection is not final because it will be reversed before the coming of the Lord (the end of chapter 11). Therefore, in Romans 9-11, the apostle defends the righteousness of God in His dealings with the nation of Israel in the past (9), present (10) and future (11).

It appears that these chapters are an interruption or a parenthesis but rather they are a continuation of Paul’s argument for justification by faith. In Romans 1-8, Paul presents the great spiritual truths or doctrines of the Christian faith and then in Romans 9-11, he demonstrates how these doctrines or spiritual truths apply to God’s dealings with Israel in the past, present and future.

In Romans 11, he instructs his readers that all God’s promises to the patriarchs of Israel and the nation itself will be fulfilled. This chapter makes clear that even though the nation of Israel has rejected Jesus Christ as Savior, God is not through with the nation since He has set aside a remnant of believers in the nation in the future. That God has not rejected the nation of Israel altogether is also due to God’s faithfulness in fulfilling the four unconditional covenants that He made to the patriarchs of Israel and the nation itself.

The four great unconditional covenants to Israel: (1) Abrahamic deals with the race of Israel (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18). (2) Palestinian is the promise of land to Israel (Gn. 13:15; Numbers

34:1-12). (3) Davidic deals with the aristocracy of Israel (2 Samuel 7:8-17) (4) New deals with the future restoration of Israel during the millennium (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Thus, Paul makes clear that God has not totally abandoned the nation of Israel and that in the future she will be restored.

In Romans 11:1, Paul posing a rhetorical question that is the result of an inference that could be implied from his teaching in Romans chapters nine and ten, namely that God has rejected Israel. He emphatically rejects this idea and then presents himself as living proof that this is not the case.

Romans 11:1 Therefore, I ask, God the Father has not rejected His people, has He? Absolutely not! Because I myself also am an Israelite, a biological descendant of Abraham, descended from the tribe of Benjamin. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 11:2a, he emphatically declares that God has by no means rejected the nation of Israel whom He foreknew. In Romans 11:2b, Paul poses a question in order to introduce the subject of God setting aside a remnant for Himself in Israel in the days of Elijah.

Romans 11:2 God the Father has by no means rejected His people whom He knew in advance. Or, have you totally forgotten what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he repeatedly pleaded with God the Father against Israel? (Author's translation)

Next, in Romans 11:3, he cites 1 Kings 19:10 to demonstrate that God has not rejected Israel. In this passage, Elijah pleaded with the Father against Israel when he was the lone surviving prophet in Israel who was alone in the desert because he was fleeing Jezebel who sought to murder him.

Romans 11:3 Lord, they have murdered Your prophets. They have destroyed Your altars. I myself alone am left. Also, they are making it a top priority to diligently, earnestly and tenaciously seek my life, sparing no expense to do so because it is of great value to them! (Author's translation)

In Romans 11:4, Paul presents the Father's response to Elijah's complaint against Israel by citing 1 Kings 19:18, which records God telling him that He had set aside a remnant composed of seven thousand men in Israel that had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Romans 11:4 However, in direct contrast, what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for the benefit of Myself seven thousand men, who are indeed of such character and of a particular class of individuals that have never bowed a knee to Baal." (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 11:5, the apostle teaches that in the same way that God set aside a remnant for Himself in Elijah's day so He had done so in Paul's day in the mid first century according to His sovereign grace.

Romans 11:5 Therefore, in the same way also, there is in existence at this particular moment in history, a remnant in accordance with election by means of grace. (Author's translation)

Paul in Romans 11:6 argues with his readers that if you agree with me that God had set aside for Himself a remnant in Israel on the basis of grace, then it follows logically that this election of the remnant is never at any time on the basis of meritorious actions otherwise grace never at any time exists as grace.

Romans 11:6 For you see if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that it is, as an eternal spiritual truth on the basis of grace. And we agree that it is true! Then, it is never at any time on the basis of meritorious actions as constituting its source, otherwise grace never at any time exists as grace. (Author's translation)

In Romans 11:7, we have the second paragraph in the chapter and in this verse, Paul poses a question that is the result of an inference from his teaching in Romans 9:6-11:6.

Romans 11:7 What shall we conclude then? That which Israel has in the past diligently sought after and continues to do so up to the present moment, this they never obtained. However, the elect obtained it but the rest were hardened. (Author's translation)

His statement in Romans 11:7 teaches that Israel never obtained the righteousness that they diligently sought after in the past and continued to do so up to the time he wrote this epistle. He then says that in contrast with this group that sought after righteousness through obedience to the Law, the elect remnant obtained righteousness through faith in Christ and the majority were hardened by God for their unbelief.

In Romans 11:8, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 29:4 and Isaiah 29:10 to support his contention that Israel was hardened because of unbelief.

Romans 11:8 As it stands written for all of eternity, "God the Father caused them to experience an insensitive attitude, eyes that never see as well as ears that never hear up to and during this very day and period of history." (Author's translation)

In this passage, he teaches that as a result of their rejection of Christ, the Father caused unregenerate Israel to experience an insensitive attitude towards spiritual truth. He then explains this by pointing out that unregenerate Israel did not have the capacity to receive and understand spiritual truth as a result of their rejection of Christ. He also teaches that this was continuing to take place up to and during the very day when Paul wrote this epistle.

Then, in Romans 11:9, the apostle quotes Psalm 69:22 as further support for his contention that Israel was hardened because of their rejection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:9 Also, David says, "May their table become as a snare and as a trap and as a bait stick of a trap and as a retribution against them." (Author's translation)

In this passage, Paul quotes Psalm 69:22 as further support for his contention that Israel was hardened because of their rejection of Jesus Christ. He also teaches that the righteousness produced by unsaved Israel in his day through obedience to the Law in an attempt to be justified would be equivalent to judgment (snare), prepare them for judgment (trap), trigger judgment upon them (stumbling block) and retribution.

In Romans 11:10, Paul quotes from Psalm 69:23 to again further support for his contention that Israel was hardened because of their rejection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:10 “May their eyes be darkened so that they never see. Also, bend their back forever.” (Author’s translation)

Romans 11:11 begins the third paragraph in the chapter and in this passage Paul argues that Israel’s fall as a nation is by no means final but was to save the Gentiles so as to make them jealous.

Romans 11:11 Therefore, I ask, did they stumble so as to fall down in complete in ruin? Absolutely not! On the contrary because of their transgression salvation is experienced by the Gentiles in order to provoke them to jealousy. (Author’s translation)

The rhetorical question that in Romans 11:11 is the result of an inference that could be implied from Paul’s teaching in Romans 11:8-10, namely that Israel’s rejection of Christ as a nation is the end of her as a national entity.

“**May it never be!**” is the strongest negative Greek expression emphatically denying any possibility or thought of the nation of Israel being in complete ruin as a result of rejecting Christ.

The statement “**On the contrary because of their transgression salvation is experienced by the Gentiles in order to provoke them to jealousy**” stands in direct contrast with the idea that Israel stumbled by rejecting Christ so as to fall in complete ruin as a nation. It indicates that salvation is experienced by the Gentiles because of Israel’s transgression in rejecting Christ in order to provoke Israel to jealousy.

The apostle Paul in Romans 11:12 argues that if Israel’s transgression and failure meant riches for the Gentiles, how much more then will Israel’s full restoration bring to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:12 But, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that their transgression, as an eternal spiritual truth does mean infinite wealth possessed by the world’s inhabitants. Specifically, their failure, as an eternal spiritual truth does mean infinite wealth possessed by the Gentiles. And of course, we agree that this is a fact of history! Then how much more will their full restoration bring? (Author’s translation)

In Romans 11:12, Paul is contrasting the infinite spiritual benefits that the Gentiles received through Israel’s rejection of Christ with that of the infinite spiritual benefits they will receive in the future when the nation of Israel is fully restored at the Second Advent of Christ and His subsequent millennial reign.

This passage is a first class conditional statement. The protasis expresses the fact that Paul and his readers would agree that this is a fact of history that salvation has come to the world’s inhabitants, the Gentiles because of Israel’s rejection of Christ. It would persuade his reader to agree with his apodosis that Israel’s restoration in the future at the Second Advent of Christ will result in greater blessings for the world’s inhabitants, the Gentiles.

Now remember Paul statement “**their failure, as an eternal spiritual truth does mean infinite wealth possessed by the Gentiles**” “explains” in specific terms the previous statement that Israel’s

transgression meant infinite wealth possessed by the world's inhabitants. In both statements, Paul is speaking of the same individuals, the Gentiles even though identifies them in the previous clause with the noun *kosmos*, which is a reference to the world's inhabitants. This is indicated in that the noun *paraptoma*, “**transgression**” in the previous statement and the noun *hettema*, “**failure**” both refer to Israel's sin in rejecting Jesus Christ.

Paul again is writing rhetorically in that he is using parallelism meaning that *paraptoma* and *hettema* are both speaking of Israel's rejection of Christ but from different perspectives. It is further indicated in that both statements use the noun *ploutos* to describe what was received by these individuals because Israel's rejection of Christ.

This question “**Then how much more will their full restoration bring?**” emphasizes that Israel's full restoration at Christ's Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign will bring even greater blessings to the Gentiles than when Israel rejected Christ. It emphasizes the certainty that if Israel's rejection of Christ meant infinite spiritual wealthy possessed by the Gentiles, how much more will blessing will come to the Gentile when Israel is fully restored in the future at Christ's Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign.

Therefore, Paul's statement in Romans 11:15 explains his statement in Romans 11:12 in that it provides additional information with regards to the latter. His statement in Romans 11:12 that Israel's transgression in rejecting Christ meant infinite wealth (unmerited blessings) for the Gentiles is explained from in Romans 11:15 as God rejecting Israel. The infinite wealth (unmerited blessings from salvation) for the Gentiles is explained as the Gentiles being reconciled to God. Paul's reference to the restoration of Israel at the Second Advent of Christ in Romans 11:12 is further explained as a national regeneration. That Romans 11:15 is explaining Romans 11:12 is indicated also by the fact that Paul is writing once again rhetorically, which is indicated by the parallelism.

Now, in Romans 11:13, Paul addresses his Gentile Christian readers in Rome specifically and expresses the fact that he takes great pride in his ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:13 Now, I am at this particular time speaking to and for the benefit of all of you Gentiles. Contrary to what you might be inclined to conclude, to the very extent that I myself am sent to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry. (Author's translation)

In Romans 11:14, Paul completes the thought that he began in Romans 11:13 by relating to his Gentile Christian readers in Rome that he takes great pride in this ministry to the Gentiles because he hopes that it would perhaps provoke his fellow Jews to jealousy so as to save some of them.

Romans 11:14 If, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that I take pride in my ministry and of course I do because I already told you that, then perhaps (by this ministry) I will provoke to jealousy my nation and thus deliver some from among them. (Author's translation)

The protasis in this verse reiterates the fact that Paul established from his statement in Romans 11:13 that he took pride in his ministry to the Gentiles. The protasis would then persuade them to respond to the apodosis that perhaps by his ministry to the Gentiles he hopes to provoke his fellow Jewish countrymen to jealousy so as to save some of them.

In Romans 11:15, Paul employed a first class conditional statement that explains his statements in Romans 11:12-14.

Romans 11:15 For you see, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that their rejection reconciled the world's inhabitants and of course, we agree that this is a fact of history, then what will their acceptance bring about but life out from the spiritually dead ones. (Author's translation)

Paul's statement in Romans 11:15 explains his statement in Romans 11:12 in the sense that Israel's transgression in rejecting Christ meant infinite wealth for the Gentiles is explained as God rejecting Israel and the infinite wealth for the Gentiles is explained as the Gentiles being reconciled to God. The statement in Romans 11:15 explains Paul's statements in Romans 11:13-14 in the sense that his desire to provoke his fellow unsaved Jews to jealousy through the function of his ministry to the Gentiles so as to save some of them has reconciled the Gentiles to God. The inference from this protasis teaches that if God's rejection of Israel for their rejection of His Son reconciled the Gentiles to Himself, then how much more will result from God accepting Israel when they have faith in His Son at His Second Advent.

The protasis in Romans 11:15 reiterates and explains further his statement in Romans 11:12 by establishing the historical fact that God's rejection of Israel because of their rejection of Christ reconciled those Gentiles who trusted in Christ. From this protasis, Paul infers in the apodosis assuring his readers that when God accepts the nation of Israel for having faith in His Son at His Second Advent there will be a national regeneration. Therefore, Paul is teaching that if God rejected the nation of Israel for rejecting His Son Jesus Christ during His First Advent, there will certainly be a national regeneration of the nation of Israel when they have faith in Christ at His Second Advent.

The apostle Paul in Romans 11:16 employs two metaphors to illustrate his assertion in Romans 11:2 that God has by no means rejected Israel forever and his assertion in Romans 11:11-15 that there will be a future national regeneration of Israel.

Romans 11:16 Now, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that the first portion is, as an eternal spiritual truth holy and of course, we agree it is because it is taught in the Scriptures, then the lump is, as an eternal spiritual truth also. Furthermore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that the root is, as an eternal spiritual truth holy and of course, we agree it is because it is taught in the Scriptures, then the branches are, as an eternal spiritual truth, also. (Author's translation)

This passage contains two metaphors to further illustrate Paul's assertion in Romans 11:2-6 that God has by no means rejected the nation of Israel forever and his assertion in Romans 11:11-15 that Israel's rejection by God is not final but there will be a future regeneration and restoration of the nation.

The first metaphor, the first piece of dough and the lump is taken from Numbers 15:17-21. The first piece of dough is analogous to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who were the progenitors of the nation of Israel because they accepted by faith the promises that God made to them.

The second metaphor, the root and the branches parallels the first. The root parallels the first piece of dough in that it is analogous to the patriarchs whereas the branches are analogous to the lump in that they are analogous to the saved biological descendants of Abraham, Israel.

Let's take a look at the first metaphor, which is taken from Numbers 15:17-21.

Numbers 15:17 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 18 “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land where I bring you, 19 then it shall be, that when you eat of the food of the land, you shall lift up an offering to the LORD. 20 Of the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake as an offering; as the offering of the threshing floor, so you shall lift it up. 21 From the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD an offering throughout your generations.’” (NASB95)

In this passage, the Lord instructs Moses to instruct Israel to take a cake from the first of their ground meal and present it as an offering to Him after they entered the land of Canaan and reaped their first wheat harvest and this was to be repeated every year. The cake made from the first ground meal of the wheat harvest was sanctified or set apart for God by being offered to God. So the first part of the dough was to be offered up to God as a symbol that the entire lump belonged to Him.

Numbers 15:17-21 implicitly teaches the principle that what is considered first contributes its character to what is related to it. (The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament; page 484; Walvoord and Zuck Victor Books; SP Publications, 1985) In other words, as Wiersbe states, “when God accepts the part He sanctifies the whole.” (Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, volume 1, page 551; Victor Books, SP Publications, 1989)

Numbers 15:17-21 does not explicitly state that the first piece of dough offered to the Lord sanctified the rest of the lump. However, it does imply this since the Lord explicitly tells Israel when they eat of the food of the land that they shall present the offering of the first of their dough to the Lord, which implies that the food of the land they eat is sanctified by that first piece of dough they offered to the Lord.

In Romans 11:16, Paul takes the principle taught in Numbers 15:17-25 to teach that if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are holy, then their descendants who compose the nation of Israel and had faith in the Lord like Abraham are sanctified as well. If God had accepted the progenitors of the nation of Israel, especially, Abraham, He has then sanctified or set apart those descendants of his who had faith in the Lord like him.

The first piece of dough and the root parallel each other and are analogous to the patriarchs and in particular Abraham. The lump and the branches also parallel each other and are analogous to the saved biological descendants of Abraham through Sarah.

In the protasis of the first metaphor, Paul's readers would agree that the first piece of dough is holy because this principle is implicitly taught in Numbers 15:17-21. Paul takes the principle implicitly taught in Numbers 15:17-21 and applies it to Israel in the sense that if God had accepted the progenitors of the nation of Israel, especially, Abraham, He has then sanctified or set apart his saved descendants as well. He is not attempting to prove that his protasis is true rather he is saying with the first class condition that we agree that it is taught in the Old Testament Scriptures that the first piece of dough is holy. The first class condition would then persuade them to respond to the conclusion that the whole lump of dough is as well. Therefore, Paul's audience would have to come to his conclusion if they submit to this line of argumentation.

“**The branches**” (*klados*) refer to the biological descendants of Abraham who like Abraham had faith in the Lord. This is indicated in that they are on the olive tree in contrast to the “**branches broken off**” in Romans 11:17, which refers to the unsaved biological descendants of Abraham. This is indicated by the statement in Romans 11:20 “**they were broken off for their unbelief.**”

In Romans 11:17-24, “**the branches**” are connected to an “**olive tree**,” which in the Old Testament was a figure for the nation of Israel (See Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:4-6). Thus, “**the branches**” of the “**olive tree**” is a reference to born-again Jews since the latter is used in Jeremiah 11:16-17 and Hosea 14:4-6 as a figure for Israel and unbelieving Jews are broken off.

Now we know that the Jews originated from Abraham and that branches originate from the root of a tree. Therefore, “**the branches**” are analogous to born-again Jews and since they come from “**the root**,” then *aparche*, “**the first portion**,” which parallels *rhiza*, “**root**” must refer to Abraham as well.

Furthermore, in Romans 11:16, Paul is arguing that the beginning of the nation of Israel guarantees that Israel has a future. Paul is taking from the principle implicitly taught in Numbers 15:17-21 that when God accepts the first part, He sanctifies the whole.

Further indicating that *rhiza*, “**the root**” is a reference to Abraham is Paul’s statement in Romans 4:16 where he teaches that the patriarch is the spiritual “father” or “progenitor” of both Jews and Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Now, the remnant of believers in Israel does not constitute the first part or the beginning of the nation of Israel and neither does Christ Himself but rather Abraham is the progenitor of Israel. Therefore, in Romans 11:16, Paul uses this first portion/lump metaphor to teach that if God had accepted the progenitors of the nation of Israel, especially, Abraham, He has then sanctified those of his descendants who had faith like him. He sanctified these biological descendants of Abraham because they like Abraham had faith Him.

In the protasis of the second first class condition, Paul’s readers would agree that it is taught in the Scriptures that the root, which is analogous to Abraham, is holy. Again, the first class condition would then persuade them to respond to the conclusion in the apodosis that the branches, which are analogous to saved Israelites, are as well. Therefore, Paul’s audience would have to come to his conclusion if they submit to this line of argumentation.

In both of these first class conditional statements, Paul wants his readers to come to his line of argumentation because he does not want them to be prejudice against the Jews because of their rejection of Christ and to think that they are superior to the Jews. Therefore, it is essential that they agree with him on this point since it will help them to understand that God has a future planned for the nation of Israel and has not rejected her as a national entity. He is also attempting to build unity between Jew and Gentile Christians.

In Romans 11:17, Paul presents the protasis of a first class conditional statement. In this protasis, he reminds his Gentile Christian readers that branches were broken off, i.e. unsaved Israelites and they as a wild olive tree have been grafted in among the branches, i.e. born-again Israelites. He also reminds them in this protasis that they have become partakers of the rich root of the olive tree, Abraham and in particular the divine promises given to him contained in the “Abrahamic covenant.”

Romans 11:17 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that some, which are a part of the branches were broken off but because you are a wild olive, you were grafted in among them so that you became joint-partakers of the olive tree's root, which produces abundant oil and of course, we agree that this is a fact of history. (Author's translation)

Gentile Christians are joint-partakers with regenerate Israel of these divine blessings because they are his spiritual descendants and they are his spiritual descendants because like Abraham they exercised faith in the Lord. The protasis in Romans 11:17: "If and let assume that it is true for the sake argument some branches were broken off (unsaved Israelites) and you (Gentile Christians), being a wild olive tree were grafted in among them (saved Jews) and became partaker with them (saved Israel) of the rich root (Abraham) of the olive tree (Israel)." The responsive condition would say: "Of course we agree that this is an historical fact." Paul's readers would agree that some branches were broken off because it was a historical fact the majority of Jews rejected Jesus Christ. His readers would also agree that they have been grafted in among Jewish Christians and had become partakers with them of the promises to Abraham who is the progenitor of the nation of Israel because he taught in Romans 4:16 that Abraham is the spiritual father of their faith.

"Were broken off" is the third person plural aorist passive indicative form of the verb *ekklao*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *ek*, "out from" and the verb *klao*, "to break off," thus the word literally means "to break off from."

The verb appears only three times in the Greek New Testament, namely Romans 11:17, 19 and 20. In each instance, it is used to describe God's rejection of those Jews who rejected His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior by not exercising faith in Him. Paul's statement in Romans 11:20 makes clear that these branches were rejected by God because of their unbelief and no other reason.

"You" is the nominative second person singular personal pronoun *su*, which refers to Gentiles who trusted in Christ but with emphasis upon their racial background as indicated by the statement to follow, **"being a wild olive (tree) were grafted in among them and became a partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree."**

"A wild olive" is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *agrielaïos*, which is related to the adjective *agriôs*, "wild" and *elaion*, "olive" and denotes the wild shoot of the wild olive tree.

As a rule, the wild olive is but a shrub, with small leaves, a stem more or less prickly, and a small, hard drupe with but little or no oil. The wild olive tree was very unproductive and actually a shoot or slip of a cultivated tree was inserted into a wild one in order to produce fruit. The varieties of olive are grafted on to seedlings of the wild olive. Paul uses the noun *agrielaïos* in a metaphorical sense for the Gentiles in contrast to the **"olive tree,"** which in the Old Testament was used metaphorically of Israel (Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:4-6).

"Were grafted in" is the second person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *enkentrizo*, which means "to cause (a shoot or bud: scion), to unite with the stock of a growing plant, graft of trees."

In Romans 11:17, the verb is used in a metaphorical sense of Paul's Gentile Christian readers being united with Jewish Christians.

Now the usual procedure was to insert a shoot or slip of a cultivated tree into a wild one. However, in Romans 11:24 Paul makes clear that the metaphor he is using is “**contrary to nature**” of grafting a wild olive branch (a Gentile) into a cultivated olive tree.

Such a procedure was unnatural and would be unfruitful, which is precisely Paul’s point with his Gentile Christian readers. He wishes to underscore the miraculous nature of their new relationship with God and other Jewish Christians.

The normal procedure was to take a shoot from an olive tree that bears good fruit and graft it onto a wild olive stock whose fruit is poor. The result is a tree with vigorous growth, which bears good olives. However, Paul reverses the procedure and speaks of grafting a wild olive onto the stock of a good olive and then later he speaks of grafting back some of the good olive branches that have been cut out.

So, a procedure of grafting a wild olive onto a good olive was not the normal process, which is why Paul reverses the normal procedure in order to humble those Gentile Christians who might become arrogant towards Jewish Christians and unsaved Jews. He rebukes those Gentile Christians who might be arrogant towards the Jews, saved and unsaved because their spiritual heritage is from the Jews, salvation is of the Jews (John 4:23).

The second person singular form of the verb *enkontizo* refers to Paul’s Gentile Christian readers.

“**Among them**” is composed of the preposition *en*, “**among**” and the dative third person masculine plural form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos*, “**them**.”

The intensive personal pronoun *autos* refers to Jewish Christians since Paul is reminding his Gentile Christian readers that they were grafted onto the olive tree with the other branches, who are Jewish Christians since they are in contrast to those branches, which were broken off because of their unbelief. Paul is saying that the Gentile Christians, “**wild olive**” were united with Jewish Christians who unlike the Jewish Christians were related to the root, Abraham by race or in a biological sense.

The preposition *en* is used in a distributive sense with respect to persons indicating that the “**wild olive**” (Gentile Christians) was grafted in “among” the Jewish Christians. Gentile Christians like Jewish Christians are a part of the olive tree, which is a symbol of Israel.

Now, Paul is not saying in Romans 11:17-24 that saved Gentiles are members of the nation of Israel but rather the olive tree metaphor simply illustrates the importance of Israel in relation to God’s plan of salvation. It also demonstrates to Paul’s Gentile Christian readers that they owe much to the Jews since salvation is of the Jews. With this passage, Paul is attempting to illustrate to his Gentile Christian readers that they owe their spiritual heritage to the nation of Israel. He is not teaching that Gentiles are now members of the nation of Israel along with Jewish believers. Rather, he is attempting to illustrate how Gentile Christians are related to Jewish Christians through Abraham, the progenitor of the Jews and all believers so as to produce unity in the churches between both groups and to prevent anti-Jewish sentiment creeping in among the Gentile believers.

“**Partaker**” is the nominative masculine singular form of the noun *sunkoinonos*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *sun*, “with” and the noun *koinonia*, “partnership,” thus the word literally means “joint-partners.”

The word refers to one who shares jointly with someone else in a possession or relationship, with emphasis upon that which is in common.”²⁶⁶

The noun denotes that Gentile Christians are “joint-partakers” with Jewish Christians of the divine promises that God made to Abraham. This word excludes the idea that Gentile Christians are now members of the nation of Israel since they maintain their racial character and saved Jews do so as well. Israel is a racial descendant of Abraham who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Gentile and Jewish Christians share jointly in a relationship with the Trinity and possess through faith the divine promises that God made to Abraham, who is “**the root**” and. Paul speaks of this Ephesians 3:6. The mystery in Ephesians 3:3 is *not* that the Gentiles would be saved since this was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 11:10; 60:3). Rather, the mystery concerning the Gentiles is that they would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members with Jewish believers in the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the covenant promises to Israel.

The content of this mystery is three-fold: (1) The Gentile believers are fellow heirs with Jewish believers in the sense that they share in the spiritual riches God gave them because of His covenant with Abraham. (2) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow members of the body of Christ with Jewish believers. (3) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel.

The four great unconditional covenants to Israel will be fulfilled: (1) Abrahamic deals with the race of Israel (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18). (2) Palestinian is the promise of land to Israel (Gn. 13:15; Numbers 34:1-12). (3) Davidic deals with the aristocracy of Israel (2 Samuel 7:8-17) (4) New deals with the future restoration of Israel during the millennium (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Although, the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel were specifically given to Israel (Romans 9:1-6), the church does benefit from them since they are in union with Christ who is the ruler of Israel.

“**Of the rich root**” is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *rhiza*, “**the root**” and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *piotes*, “**rich**.”

The noun *rhiza* as we noted in our study of Romans 11:16 refers to Abraham as indicated by Paul’s statements in Romans 11:17-24.

As we noted earlier in our study of the “**first portion**” in this passage, “**the branches**” (*klados*) refer to the biological descendants of Abraham who like Abraham had faith in the Lord. This is indicated in that they are on the olive tree in contrast to the “**branches broken off**” in Romans 11:17, which refers to the unsaved biological descendants of Abraham. This is indicated by the statement in Romans 11:20 “**they were broken off for their unbelief**.”

In Romans 11:17-24, “**the branches**” are connected to an “**olive tree**,” which in the Old Testament was a figure for the nation of Israel (See Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:4-6). Thus, “**the branches**” of the

²⁶⁶ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, volume 2, page 559; United Bible Societies, New York, 1988, 1989

“**olive tree**” is a reference to born-again Jews since the latter is used in Jeremiah 11:16-17 and Hosea 14:4-6 as a figure for Israel and unbelieving Jews are broken off.

Now we know that the Jews originated from Abraham and that branches originate from the root of a tree. Therefore, “**the branches**” are analogous to born-again Jews and since they come from “**the root**,” then *rhiza*, “**root**,” which parallels *aparche*, “**the first portion**” must refer to Abraham as well.

Further indicating that *rhiza*, “**the root**” is a reference to Abraham is Paul’s statement in Romans 4:16 where he teaches that the patriarch is the spiritual “father” or “progenitor” of both Jews and Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The noun *piotes* in classical literature means “fattiness” and is often used metaphorically to mean “wealth” or “prosperity” (Liddell-Scott, page 1406). The word appears only once in the Greek New Testament, namely, here in Romans 11:17 and refers to the state of oiliness and denotes the sap produced by the root.²⁶⁷

The noun *piotes* functions as a genitive of product meaning that the word is the “product” of the noun to which it stands related, which in our context is the noun *rhiza*, “**root**.” This indicates that the root produces the olive tree’s abundant sap or oil that extends to the branches of the tree and their leaves. Paul is saying then that the Gentile Christians are joint-participants of the root, i.e. Abraham, which produces the olive tree’s abundant oil, which is analogous to the abundant blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. He teaches the Galatians this in Galatians 3.

The apodosis of this first class condition appears in Romans 11:18, which infers from the protasis a warning, namely his Gentile Christian readers were not to be arrogant towards either saved Jews or unsaved Jews.

Romans 11:18 Do not assume arrogant superiority over the branches. However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that you are assuming arrogant superiority then remember that you, as an eternal spiritual truth, by no means sustain the root. But rather on the contrary, the root, as an eternal spiritual truth, sustains you. (Author’s translation)

This passage not only contains the apodosis from the first class condition in Romans 11:17 but also a first class condition, which presents a contrast. The contrast is between Paul’s Gentile Christian readers obeying his prohibition in the apodosis of the previous first class condition with that of disobeying the prohibition, which is assumed for the sake of argument in the protasis of the next first class condition in Romans 11:18.

The protasis presents a hypothetical situation for the sake of argument. In it Paul says that “if and let assume that it is true for the sake argument some of you do assume arrogant superiority over the branches.” The apodosis of the first class condition is “Remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.”

The first class condition is indicating the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. The force of the indicative has the idea of the presentation of reality and in the first class condition the conditional

²⁶⁷ Danker, Frederick William, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*; page 814; Third Edition; University of Chicago Press; Chicago and London

particle turns such a presentation into a supposition. However, this does not mean that the condition is true. It does mean that as far as the portrayal is concerned, the point of the argument is based on the assumption of reality. The context does not indicate that Paul is affirming the truth of the protasis that Paul's Gentile Christians were arrogant towards the Jews. Rather Paul is using the first class condition in Romans 11:18 in a rhetorical sense, which has the idea of a polite command, couched in indirect language.

There is nothing in Romans 11:1-17 or Romans 11:19-24, which indicates that Paul's Gentile readers were assuming arrogant superiority over the Jews. This first class condition is preventive maintenance or as a simple reminder to supplement the teaching they were already receiving from their pastors. This passage and the fact that Paul had not yet met face to face the Christians in Rome makes it more likely that the Gentile Christians in Rome were not assuming arrogant superiority over the Jews and that Paul was only attempting to remind them of what they had already been taught. Thus, the first class condition in Romans 11:18 indicates that Paul is speaking of a hypothetical situation that could possibly take place among the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome.

In contrast with the apodosis, Paul teaches his Gentile Christian readers in Rome that they by no means sustain in a spiritual sense Abraham. But rather on the contrary, Abraham sustains them since God established a covenant with Abraham, which provided salvation for Gentiles through Abraham and his descendants, the Jews and in particular his greatest descendant, Jesus Christ. So, the apodosis of this first class condition appears in Romans 11:18, which infers from the protasis a warning, namely his Gentile Christian readers were not to be arrogant towards either saved Jews or unsaved Jews.

The prohibition **"Do not assume arrogant superiority over the branches"** is addressing the Gentile Christians' attitude towards both saved and unsaved Jews. This is indicated in that he reminds his readers in the apodosis of the first class condition in Romans 11:18, that the root, Abraham supports them, implying that these branches are referring to saved Jews since saved Jews are on the olive tree due to their faith in Christ and are thus connected to the root. That this prohibition is also to prevent arrogance towards unsaved Jews is indicated by Paul's statements in Romans 11:19-20 where he reminds his readers that these branches were broken off because of their unbelief and that his Gentile Christians are grafted in because of their faith in Christ.

The reason why Paul does not want his Gentile Christian readers to assume arrogant superiority over the saved Jews is that they are on equal footing with the saved Jews since both are on the olive tree and connected to the root because of their faith, which is non-meritorious. They are both in union with Christ because of the grace of God and the merits of Jesus Christ and His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths. Thus, with regards to salvation there are no racial distinctions (Galatians 3:26-28). So, this prohibition is designed to maintain and build unity among Jew and Gentile Christians in Rome.

The reason why Paul does not want his Gentile Christian readers to assume arrogant superiority over the unsaved Jews is so that they might continue to evangelize the unsaved Jew so as to save some of them. Furthermore, salvation is of the Jews, thus the Gentile Christians owe much to the Jews. The Gentile Christians are joint-partakers of the divine promises given to Abraham and the Savior Jesus Christ is a Jew. The Old Testament Scriptures were given to the Jews. Therefore, Paul is reminding his Gentile Christian readers in Rome that they owe much to the Jews and that there is no place for anti-Jewish sentiment in the Christian way of life.

“However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that you are assuming arrogant superiority” stands in contrast with Paul’s Gentile Christian readers obeying his prohibition in the apodosis of the previous first class condition and denotes a hypothetical situation in which they disobey the prohibition.

The first class condition is indicating the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. The context does not indicate that Paul is affirming the truth of the protasis that Paul’s Gentile Christians were arrogant towards the Jews. Rather Paul is using the first class condition in Romans 11:18 in a rhetorical sense, which has the idea of a polite command, couched in indirect language. Thus, he is simply issuing a friendly warning and performing preventive maintenance in Romans 11:18 by issuing this prohibition. The first class condition in Romans 11:18 indicates that Paul is speaking of a hypothetical situation that could possibly take place among the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome.

“Then remember that you, as an eternal spiritual truth, by no means sustain the root. But rather on the contrary, the root, as an eternal spiritual truth, sustains you” contains the apodosis and is a reminder to Paul’s Gentile Christian readers in Rome that they by no means sustain the root, Abraham but rather Abraham sustains them. He sustains them in the sense that through your faith in Christ you have become joint-partakers with Jewish Christians of the promises, blessings, privileges and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant.

The Abrahamic covenant reveals that God planned to save Gentiles through Abraham’s descendants, the Jews and in particular his greatest descendant, Jesus Christ. Therefore, there is no place Paul says for Gentile Christians to assume arrogant superiority over the Jews whether saved or unsaved.

Next, in Romans 11:19, Paul once again employs a diatribe style by presenting an argument of a hypothetical Gentile Christian who seeks to justify assuming arrogant superiority over both saved and unsaved Jews.

Romans 11:19 Therefore, you will contend, Branches were broken off in order that I myself could be grafted in.” (Author’s translation)

In this passage, Paul is assuming the position of a hypothetical Gentile Christian who seeks to justify assuming arrogant superiority over both saved and unsaved Jews. The statement that appears in Romans 11:19 is the result of an inference that could be implied from Paul’s teaching in Romans 11:17. Paul taught in Romans 11:17 that branches (Jews) were broken off (rejected by God) and Gentiles (wild olive) were grafted into the olive tree in their place.

“Branches were broken off” describes God’s rejection of those Jews who rejected His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior by not exercising faith in Him.

“So that I might be grafted in” refers to the perspective of a hypothetical Gentile Christian and emphasizes that they arrogantly assume that God’s purpose in rejecting the Jews was to graft Gentiles in, with the implication that God prefers the Gentiles to the Jews, which is false.

In Romans 11:19-21, Paul is seeking to prevent what took place among his fellow Jews, namely, they erroneously and presumptuously believed that they merited being the covenant people of God, and inheriting the promises made to the patriarchs. They erroneously and presumptuously thought that they

merited receiving the Temple service, the Shekinah glory, the giving of the Law, the adoption as sons, the covenants, Old Testament Scriptures and being descendants of the patriarchs. They erroneously and presumptuously thought that they merited the fact that the Messiah would be like them, Jewish. Therefore, Paul in Romans 11:19-21 is seeking to prevent this type of arrogance that was in the Jew from taking place among Gentile Christians. Paul does not want his Gentile Christians to assume arrogant superiority over the Jews just as the Jews assumed arrogant superiority over the Gentiles because of their many privileges bestowed upon them. He also does not want the Gentile Christians to have a racial prejudice towards the Jews just as the Jews had towards the Gentiles.

In Romans 11:19-21, Paul is also emphasizing with his Gentile Christian readers in Rome that they do not merit their salvation and thus there is no room for arrogance to the either unsaved or saved Jews since they were saved based on the merits of Christ! Also, Paul does not want his Gentile Christian readers in Rome to erroneously assume that they merit their salvation since God's faithfulness to the promises of the Abrahamic covenant made it possible for them to get saved in the first place.

In Romans 11:20, Paul answers the argument of his hypothetical Gentile Christian by first acknowledging the fact that unsaved Jews were rejected by God for their unbelief in His Son Jesus Christ. However, he then reminds his hypothetical Gentile Christian that he stands by his faith in Christ. Also, in this passage, Paul issues a prohibition to those Gentile Christians who might think they are superior to the Jews to stop thinking arrogantly about themselves but to have reverence for God.

Romans 11:20 Absolutely! They were broken off because of their unbelief but you are inserted because of your faith. Do not think arrogantly but rather make it a habit to reverence God the Father. (Author's translation)

In this passage, Paul is affirming the statement by his hypothetical Gentile Christian in Romans 11:19 that **"branches were broken off,"** which refers to God's rejection of those Jews who rejected His Son Jesus Christ as Savior. He does not affirm that these branches were broken off in order to graft Gentile Christians in but only that branches were broken off. This implies that Paul's hypothetical Gentile Christian was correct in saying that branches were broken off because this is an historical fact but they were incorrect and arrogant to say that they were broken off in order to graft them in.

Paul corrects them in verse 20 by stating that they were broken off **"because of their unbelief"** and not in order to graft Gentiles in. He reminds his Gentile Christian readers who might hold this presumptuous and erroneous viewpoint. His Gentile Christian readers stand by their faith not because they merited their salvation. They stand by their faith in the sense that they are accepted by God based on the merits of His Son Jesus Christ and His death on the cross.

"They were broken off because of their unbelief" indicates that the nation of Israel was rejected by God because of unbelief or in other words failure to accept by faith Jesus Christ as their Savior.

"But you are inserted because of your faith" presents a contrast between the Jews rejection by God because of their unbelief and the Gentiles' acceptance by God because of their faith in Christ and indicates that Gentile Christians were accepted by God because of their faith in Jesus Christ. Their faith in Christ is non-meritorious, thus they have no business thinking themselves better than the Jews.

“**Do not think arrogantly**” prohibits Paul’s Gentile Christian readers in Rome of thinking arrogantly by thinking that they merited their salvation or that God thought that they merited their salvation more than the Jews.

In Romans 11:20, Paul is prohibiting the Gentile Christians from thinking arrogantly about themselves in the sense of thinking they are superior to the Jews because God accepted them and rejected the Jews for their unbelief in Christ.

In this command “**But rather make it a habit to reverence God the Father**” Paul is saying instead of thinking yourself superior to the Jews I command you to have reverence and respect for God so that you worship Him for saving you through faith in His Son!

Next, the apostle teaches in Romans 11:21 that the reason why Gentile Christians should never think arrogantly but rather reverence God is that God did not spare the natural branches, unsaved Jews because of their unbelief and He will not spare unsaved Gentiles either for their unbelief.

Romans 11:21 Because, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that God the Father by no means spared some of the natural branches and of course, we agree that He didn’t, then, neither will He spare you. (Author’s translation)

This passage teaches Paul’s Gentile Christian readers in Rome that the reason why they should never think that they are superior to the Jews as a race but rather reverence God is that God did not spare the unsaved Jews because of their unbelief and He will not spare unsaved Gentiles either for their unbelief. Thus, Paul is instructing his readers that you are not saved based upon the fact that your race has more merit with God than the Jewish race because God will not spare Gentiles who reject His Son like He did not spare Jews who rejected His Son. He is saying to his Gentile Christian readers in Rome in Romans 11:20-21 that you are saved based upon your faith in Christ and not because your race has more merit than the Jewish race.

In Romans 11:21, we must address a textual problem. After the protasis and before the adverb *oude* some manuscripts contain the negative particle *me*, which is followed by the enclitic particle of indefinite manner *pos* and together they mean “perhaps.” Both the NIV and NASB Updated Version do not translate the word. However, the NET Bible does.

The following witnesses do not contain this expression: a A B C P 6 81 365 630 1506 1739 1881 pc lat co. These witnesses indicate that the omission of the expression has very strong support in the Alexandrian textual family (the primary uncials a and B, the secondary MSS C, 81 and 1739).

The following witnesses do contain the clause: P⁴⁶ D F G Ψ 33, Majority Text, latt syr; Ir^{lat}. We can see also that there is widespread textual support for including this expression in the text. The 27th edition of Nestle-Aland’s *Novum Testamentum Graece* puts the preposition in brackets to indicate the conjecture with regard to this word.

Bruce M. Metzger commenting on this textual problem, writes, “On the one hand, the strong combination of a B C P 81 1739 in support of the shorter text would normally be preferred. On the other hand, however, (a) *me pos* is a typically Pauline expression (it occurs in nine other passages in Paul; only once elsewhere in the New Testament), and (b) copyists may have taken offense at its presence

here because of its apparent unrelatedness (Origen substituted the more appropriate πόσω μᾶλλον and πόσω πλέον— see Tischendorf *in loc.*) and its grammatical inappropriateness with the following future. In order to give due weight to both external evidence and internal considerations, a majority of the Committee considered it necessary to retain *me pos* in the text, but to enclose it within square brackets.”²⁶⁸

If we include the expression *me pos*, then Paul is saying, “If and let assume that it is true for the sake of argument that God did not spare the natural branches and we agree that He didn’t, then *perhaps* He will not spare you (Gentiles) either.” This would indicate some doubt as to whether or not God will not spare Gentiles. It would indicate that God did not spare the Jews who rejected His Son and He “might not” spare the Gentiles or “He might” spare the Gentiles. However, Paul is not teaching that God might or might not reject the Gentiles when He did not spare the Jews who rejected His Son since when he is speaking of the Gentiles he is referring to those Gentiles who reject His Son. Thus, he is saying God did not spare those Jews who rejected His Son and He will not spare Gentiles as well who reject His Son.

If we omit the expression *me pos*, then Paul is saying “If and let us assume for the sake of argument God did not spare the natural branches, i.e. those Jews who rejected His Son Jesus Christ and we agree that He didn’t, then, He will certainly not spare the Gentiles who do so as well.” He is paralleling the Jews who rejected His Son with those Gentiles who do the same.

The personal pronoun *su*, “**you**” is not referring to saved Gentiles since God does not judge those whom He justifies through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. It refers to Gentiles who do not have faith in Christ.

The expression *me pos* appears to have been added by some copyists because they were confused about whether Paul is speaking of saved or unsaved Gentiles or both when he uses the personal pronoun *su*, “**you**.” Or more than likely, many copyists added the expression because they interpreted Paul used it to convey that maybe some of his Gentile readers would not be spared by God because of unbelief and maybe some would because they had faith in Christ.

This can be rejected because he is addressing Gentile Christians in Rome regarding Gentiles who reject Christ like most of the Jews did. That Paul is addressing Gentile Christians is indicated in that in Romans 11:20 he reminded his readers that they should never think that they are superior to the Jews because they were never accepted by God on their own merits but because of their faith in Christ. That he is addressing Gentile Christians about Gentiles who reject Christ is indicated in that in Romans 11:21 Paul is teaching that God did not spare those Jews who rejected His Son and He will not spare Gentiles who do the same. He is paralleling unsaved Jews with unsaved Gentiles in Romans 11:21.

In Romans 11:22, Paul commands his Gentile Christian readers in Rome to consider God’s kindness and uncompromising justice. In this passage, he teaches that those Jews who rejected Christ experience God’s uncompromising justice but those Gentiles who had faith in Christ experience God’s kindness. He also warns them that the Gentiles will continue to experience God’s kindness if they continue to respond to His kindness as expressed in the gospel by exercising faith in Christ but if they don’t, God will reject them just as He rejected those Jews who rejected Christ.

²⁶⁸ A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament; second edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: 1994, pages 464-465

Romans 11:22 Therefore, I solemnly charge you now to consider God's kindness and uncompromising justice! On the one hand towards those who fell into complete ruin-uncompromising justice while on the other hand towards you-God's kindness, if you continue to respond to His kindness otherwise you too will be cut off. (Author's translation)

The command in Romans 11:22 is the result of an inference from Paul's argument recorded in Romans 11:17-21. He commands his Gentile Christian readers in Rome to consider God's kindness and uncompromising justice. In the correlative clause, he contrasts unsaved Jews with saved Gentiles and teaches that those Jews who rejected Christ experience God's uncompromising justice whereas those Gentiles who had faith in Christ experience His kindness. In the third class condition, he also warns his Gentile readers that Gentiles will continue to experience God's kindness if they continue to respond to God's kindness as expressed in the gospel by exercising faith in Christ. In the causal clause, he presents the reason why they must continue to respond to the gospel by exercising faith in Christ, namely they too like the unsaved Jews will be rejected forever by God.

"Will be cut off" is the verb *ekkopto*, which means "to cut off" and is used in a figurative sense of God rejecting the Gentiles if they do not continue to respond to the gospel by exercising faith in Christ. With this word, Paul is saying that if the Gentiles do not continue to respond to the gospel, then they too will be rejected by God just as He rejected those Jews who rejected the gospel.

Does Paul mean cut off from the olive tree? No. He is not saying that Gentile believers can lose their salvation if they do not continue to walk by faith since Gentile Christians are engrafted onto olive tree as a result of faith in Christ and as a result have eternal security. The moment a Gentile exercises faith in Christ, they received as a gift through imputation the righteousness of God and as a result God declared them justified (Romans 3:21-30; 4:1-6). Thus, Paul teaches in Romans 8:1 that there is never any condemnation whatsoever for those in Christ Jesus. Nor, is he saying that Gentile unbelievers will be cut off the olive tree since Gentiles whose race is depicted in the analogy as a wild olive tree are not connected by race to the nation of Israel whose race is depicted by the olive tree.

The Jews on the other hand who were broken off the olive tree were on the olive tree from the beginning to denote the fact that unsaved Jews belong racially to saved Israel, which is depicted by the olive tree and cultivated olive tree. However, the Gentiles were not, of course related to the nation of Israel by race as expressed in depicting the Gentiles as a wild olive. Therefore, when Paul says in Romans 11:22 that the Gentiles were cut off he cannot possible mean that they are cut off the olive tree since Gentiles are not related by race to the nation of Israel and Gentile believers have eternal security.

Some contend that Paul is speaking of the Gentiles in a corporate sense as being cut off but this is not correct. First of all, **"the branches"** in Romans 11:16-18 refer to individual Jews. Those broken off are those Jewish individuals who rejected Christ. The **"wild olive"** in Romans 11:17 does not speak of the Gentiles as a corporate unit but rather individual Gentiles since the noun *agrielaios*, **"wild olive"** does not speak of wild olive tree but rather a branch from a wild olive tree. The wild olive tree would be the Gentile race as a whole whereas the wild olive branches speak of individual Gentiles who are not connected to the nation of Israel by race. The olive tree speaks of regenerate Israel, i.e. true spiritual Israel (See Romans 2:28-29; 9:6, 27-29). **"The branches"** would speak of individual Jews who are connected to the nation of Israel of course by race. **"The branches"** broken off refers to unsaved Jews. Those branches on the olive tree are on it because of their faith in Christ, which is the same reason why the Gentile believers are engrafted in.

In Romans 11:17, Paul uses the verb *ekklao*, “**were broken off**” to denote God’s rejection of those Jews who reject His Son Jesus Christ, thus preventing these Jewish unbelievers from experiencing the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. However, Paul does not use this verb in Romans 11:22 when discussing Gentile unbelief but rather he uses *ekkopto*. This is significant. The implication is that Paul in Romans 11:22 could not be speaking of individual Gentile unbelievers who were at one time on the olive tree since we would expect Paul to use *ekklao*, which he does with reference to Jewish unbelievers. The other implication is that he could not be speaking of the Gentiles as a corporate unit since he could have used *ekklao* as he did with reference to the Jews but he didn’t. The reason he doesn’t use the word *ekklao* but rather *ekkopto* is that the Gentiles who are depicted by Paul as a “**wild olive**” are not connected by race to the nation of Israel, which is depicted as the “**olive tree**.”

The implication of all this is that *ekkopto* in Romans 11:22 could not possibly be referring to individual Gentile unbelievers, or Gentile believers losing their salvation or the Gentiles as a corporate unit being cut off from the olive tree for unbelief. The reason is that the olive tree depicts the race of the nation of Israel and Gentiles whose race is depicted as a wild olive tree in the analogy are not connected to the nation of Israel by race.

So, when Paul teaches in Romans 11:22 that if the Gentiles don’t respond to the gospel by rejecting Christ as Savior and as a result will be cut off he means that they will suffer eternal condemnation and will be separated forever from the covenant blessings and promises that saved Jews and Gentiles are experiencing and will experience forever.

The verb *ekkopto* in Romans 11:22 therefore, does not refer to Gentiles being cut off “from the olive” after being engrafted onto it through faith in Christ but rather it speaks of unsaved Gentiles being cut off from experiencing the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant depicted by Paul in Romans 11:17 as the “**rich root of the olive tree**.” The cutting off does not imply that these Gentiles were formerly on the olive tree after being engrafted in. Rather, it speaks of being cut off from experiencing the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant.

Therefore, *ekkopto* in Romans 11:22 does not speak of the Gentiles being cut off in a corporate sense from the olive tree since Gentiles are not connected to the nation of Israel by race. Nor does it refer to individual Gentiles believers being cut off the olive tree since Gentiles believers were engrafted onto to the olive tree by faith in Christ and Paul teaches in Romans 8:1 that there is no condemnation for those in Christ. They have eternal security and could never be broken off. Rather *ekkopto* refers to those Gentiles who reject Christ as being cut off from experiencing the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, which Jew and Gentile believers in Christ will experience forever.

In Romans 11:23, Paul teaches his Gentile Christians readers in Rome that the Jews will be accepted by God if they do not continue in their unbelief.

Romans 11:23 However, if they also, as an eternal spiritual truth, do not continue in the sphere of unbelief then they will be grafted in because God the Father is, as an eternal spiritual truth able to graft them in again. (Author’s translation)

In this passage, Paul presents a contrast between God rejecting Gentiles for rejecting His Son Jesus Christ with His accepting Jews if they have faith in His Son. Paul teaches his Gentile Christian readers that if the Jews do not continue in unbelief by having faith in Christ, then God will unite them with

born-again Jews and Gentiles. He also instructs them that God can do this because He is omnipotent. All of this is to instill humility in Paul's Gentile readers in the sense of understanding that they are accepted by God because of the merits of the object of their faith, His Son Jesus Christ and not based upon the fact that they have more merit than the Jews. This is to protect them being anti-Jewish and to motivate them to evangelize the Jews along with their fellow Gentiles. This statement is also designed to build unity among Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome and the churches throughout the Roman Empire.

Now, many expositors of this passage stumble over the fact that Paul uses an unlikely bit of horticulture by stating that God can engraft the branches broken back onto the olive tree. However, they fail to recognize that Paul is not talking about orchardists but rather He is instructing His readers regarding the power of God. The engrafting of the Jews back onto the olive tree because of their faith in Christ is nothing more than an illustration that speaks of the power and grace of God.

In Romans 11:17, Paul teaches his Gentile Christian readers in Rome that they were analogous to a wild olive shoot of a wild olive tree that has been engrafted onto a cultivated olive tree, which is analogous to born-again Israel.

Now the usual procedure was to insert a shoot or slip of a cultivated tree into a wild one. However, in Romans 11:24 Paul makes clear that the metaphor he is using is “**contrary to nature**” of grafting a wild olive branch (a Gentile) into a cultivated olive tree.

The normal procedure was to take a shoot from an olive tree that bears good fruit and graft it onto a wild olive stock whose fruit is poor. The result is a tree with vigorous growth, which bears good olives. However, Paul reverses the procedure and speaks of grafting a wild olive onto the stock of a good olive and then later he speaks of grafting back some of the good olive branches that have been cut out. Such a procedure was unnatural and would be unfruitful, which is precisely Paul's point with his Gentile Christian readers. He wishes to underscore the miraculous nature of their new relationship with God and other Jewish Christians.

Now here in Romans 11:23, Paul again uses a horticultural analogy, which again speaks of an unlikely procedure of regrafting a branch that has been broken off to illustrate that God will accept those Jews who do not persist in unbelief by exercising faith in Christ. What the orchardist would never do, namely regrafting a broken off branch, God, with respect to salvation can and will do, namely accept those Jews who do not persist in unbelief by exercising faith in Christ.

Next, in Romans 11:24, the apostle Paul teaches his Gentile Christians readers in Rome that if they were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, then how much more will the natural branches will be grafted into their own olive tree. This illustration emphasizes with Paul's Gentile Christian readers in Rome that if God accepted Gentiles who had faith in His Son who did not belong to born-again Israel (olive tree) then He will certainly accept those Jews who were broken off the olive tree because of their unbelief if they have faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:24 Because if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that you were cut off from that which is by nature a wild olive tree and in addition were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree and of course, we agree that this is true then how much more will these which are natural be grafted into their own olive tree? (Author's translation)

Romans 11:24 presents the reason why God will accept unsaved Jews if they repent and believe in His Son Jesus Christ. This passage is composed of a first class conditional statement. In the protasis, Paul establishes by way of analogy the fact with his Gentile Christian readers that God accepted them through faith in His Son Jesus Christ even though they were not racially related to regenerate Israel, which is depicted by him as an olive tree. In the apodosis, he employs the logical argument of *a fortiori* to emphasize with his Gentile Christian readers that God will certainly accept Jews who are biologically related to regenerate Israel if they repent and believe in Christ.

The logical argument of *a fortiori* in the apodosis of Romans 11:24 argues that if God can do the greater and accept Gentiles through faith in Christ, then He certainly can do the lesser and accept Jews who do so as well. If God accepted Gentiles with whom He never established an unconditional covenant with like He did the Jews with the patriarchs, then certainly He will accept the Jews if they have faith in Christ. If God can save Gentiles with whom He is not in covenant relation with, then certainly He will save Jews who are in covenant relation with. If God can graft branches (Gentiles) into the cultivated olive tree (saved Israel) that do not naturally belong to the cultivated olive tree by nature, then certainly God can graft branches (Jews) into the cultivated olive tree which belong by nature to it.

Paul uses the *a fortiori* argument to emphasize with his Gentile Christian readers that they are not superior to the Jews. This first class condition is to promote unity in the churches between Jewish and Gentile Christians. He also wants to protect his Gentile Christian readers from getting arrogant towards unsaved Israel because of their rejection of Christ. He wants them to continue to evangelize the Jews.

Now, Paul is not saying in Romans 11:17-24 that saved Gentiles are members of the nation of Israel but rather the olive tree metaphor simply illustrates the importance of Israel in relation to God's plan of salvation. It also demonstrates to Paul's Gentile Christian readers that they owe much to the Jews since salvation is of the Jews. With this passage, Paul is attempting to illustrate to his Gentile Christian readers that they owe their spiritual heritage to the nation of Israel. He is not teaching that Gentiles are now members of the nation of Israel along with Jewish believers. Rather, he is attempting to illustrate how Gentile Christians are related to Jewish Christians through Abraham, the progenitor of the Jews and all believers so as to produce unity in the churches between both groups and to prevent anti-Jewish sentiment creeping in among the Gentile believers.

The apostle Paul in Romans 11:25 attempts to protect his Gentile Christian readers from arrogance by revealing to them the mystery that a partial hardening has occurred in Israel until the full number of Gentiles who will be saved has come to pass.

Romans 11:25 In fact, I by no means want each and every one of you spiritual brothers and sisters to be ignorant of this mystery in order that you will not be arrogant concerning yourselves, namely that a partial hardness is taking place in Israel until and during which time the full number of Gentiles has come into existence. (Author's translation)

Paul's statement in this verse confirms and advances upon his statements in Romans 11:11-24 and intensifies them. It not only summarizes what he has taught in Romans 11:11-24 but also advances upon these statements and goes beyond that which he has said in these statements.

In this passage, Paul is attempting to protect his Gentile Christian readers from arrogance by revealing to them a mystery, namely that a partial hardening has taken place in Israel until the full number of Gentiles who will be saved has come into existence.

The expression “**the fullness of the Gentiles**” or “**the full number of Gentiles**” is not the same as the expression used by our Lord in Luke 21:24, namely, “**the times of the Gentiles.**”

“**The times of the Gentiles**” refers to an extended period of time when the Gentiles are the dominant world powers and Israel is subject to those powers and extends from the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar (586 B.C.) and continues through the Tribulation (Revelation 11:2). This period of history includes the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the church age and the Tribulation period. This phrase does not rule out temporary Jewish control of Jerusalem as has occurred in the past during the Maccabean era (164-63 B.C), the first Jewish revolt against Rome (A.D. 66-70), the second Jewish revolt (A.D. 132-135) and now since 1967 and the Six-Day War. However, this control is only temporary because Revelation 11:1-2 predicts at least another three-and-one-half years of Gentile domination during the last half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week, also known as the Tribulation. Therefore, any Jewish takeover of the city of David before the Second Advent of Christ must be therefore viewed as a temporary one and does not mean that “**the times of the Gentiles**” has ended since it can only end with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which will forever stop Gentile powers waging war against Israel.

“**The times of the Gentiles**” is prophesied in Daniel 2:31-45 and Daniel 7 and refers to an extended period of time when the Gentiles are the dominant world powers and Israel is subject to those powers and extends from the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar (586 B.C.) and continues through the Tribulation (Revelation 11:2).

So “**the fullness of the Gentiles**” in Romans 11:25 and the “**times of the Gentiles**” in Luke 21:24 both end with the Second Advent of Christ. However, the former deals with the number of Gentiles who will be saved whereas as the latter is political dealing with the political control of Jerusalem.

The apostle Paul in Romans 11:26 cites Isaiah 59:20 to support his assertion that there will be a national regeneration of Israel and to teach that it will take place at Christ’s Second Advent.

Romans 11:26 And then, in the following way, all Israel will be delivered just as it stands written for all of eternity, “The Deliverer will arrive out from Zion. He will remove totally and completely the godless ones from Jacob.” (Author’s translation)

Romans 11:26 teaches that at the Second Advent of Christ and immediately after the full number of Gentiles that have been elected by the Father in eternity past have been saved there will be a national regeneration of Israel.

“**So**” is the adverb of manner *houtos*, which refers to the quotation from Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9 indicating that the manner in which there will be a national regeneration of Israel is through Christ’s Second Advent since this quotation refers to the Second Advent.

“**All**” is the nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *pas*, which is modifying the proper name Israel and is not referring to each and every citizen of the nation of Israel but rather it refers to

nation as a whole. It is used to denote a large and representative number from a group and refers to the majority of the citizens of the nation of Israel at the time of Christ's Second Advent who will trust in Him as their Savior. So *pas* is referring to the national regeneration of Israel at the Second Advent of Christ in which at that time the majority of Jews in Israel will exercise faith in Christ so as to be saved in contrast to His First Advent when the majority of Jews rejected and only a remnant believed.

We know that some in Israel at that time will reject Christ since the Scriptures teach that the Lord will judge Israel immediately after His Second Advent and will have His elect angels remove every unbeliever from the nation (Ezekiel 20:37-38; Zechariah 13:8-9; Malachi 3:2-3, 5; Matthew 25:1-30). So, Paul is using *pas* here in Romans 11:26 much like we would say in America that "the whole country watched the events of 911 transpire on television!" Of course, not each and every person would have done so but the idea behind the statement is that a good majority in the country did watch the events of 911.

"Israel" refers to the nation of Israel as a corporate entity at the time of Christ's Second Advent without reference to spiritual status whether saved or unsaved, which is denoted by the adjective *pas*, **"all."**

"Will be delivered" is the third person singular future passive indicative form of the verb *sozo*, which is used with reference to those Jews in Israel at the time of Christ's Second Advent who will trust in Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God as Messiah. It speaks of these Jews being delivered not only in a temporal sense from Satan, Antichrist and the Tribulational armies but more importantly being delivered in a spiritual sense from eternal condemnation as well as personal sin, the sin nature as well as Satan and his cosmic system. The verb is used here with reference to the national regeneration of Israel that will take place at the Second Advent of Christ, which is indicated by the quotation that follows that is from Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9, which is a reference to the Second Advent.

This prophecy in Romans 11:26 that there will be a national regeneration of Israel at Christ's Second Advent is taught throughout the Old Testament. Zechariah 12:10-14 records that at the Second Advent the nation of Israel will mourn as a nation over their rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah and will acknowledge as such and will turn to Him for deliverance from Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. On the Day of Atonement, at the Second Advent of Christ, Israel will as a nation trust in Jesus Christ as Savior (Ezekiel 37; Zechariah 12:10; 14:9-21).

In order to be the subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ during His millennial reign, Israel will be made righteous (Isaiah 1:25; 2:4; 44:22-24; 45:17-25; 48:17; 55:7; 57:18-19; 63:16; Jeremiah 31:11; 33:8 50:20; 34; Ezekiel 36:25-26 Hosea 14:4; Joel 3:21; Micah 7:18-19; Zechariah 13:9; Malachi 3:2-3).

Paul's statement in Romans 11:26a that **"all Israel will be saved,"** which refers to the national regeneration of Israel at Christ's Second Advent is echoing Paul's previous statements in Romans 11:12 and 15.

"Just as it is written" introduces an Old Testament passage, namely, Isaiah 59:20, which supports Paul's statement in Romans 11:26a that **"all Israel will be saved."**

In Romans 11:27, Paul cites a combination of Isaiah 59:21 and 27:9 as further support for his prediction in Romans 11:26 that there will be a national regeneration of Israel. So, in Romans 11:26b-27

to validate his assertion in Romans 11:26a that there will be a national regeneration of Israel and to teach that this will take place at Christ's Second Advent, Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9.

"The Deliverer" is a title referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. In Luke 21:25-28, the Lord Jesus in His Olivet Discourse replying to a question as to the time of His return to deliver Israel teaches that He will deliver Israel at His Second Advent. Revelation 19:11-20:3 teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver Israel at His Second Advent in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Deuteronomy 30:3; Psalm 2:1-9; 24:7-10; 96:10-13; 110; Isaiah 9:6-7; 63:1-6; Jeremiah 23:1-8; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:18-27; Zechariah 12; 14). Paul teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver Israel at His Second Advent (2 Thessalonians 1:1-10; 2:1-8).

"Will arrive out" is the third person singular future active indicative form of the verb *heko*, which means "to arrive" and refers to the Lord Jesus Christ's arrival on planet earth at the Mount of Olives at His Second Advent from the third heaven at the right hand of the Father.

"Out from Zion" is composed of the preposition *ek*, **"IN"** and the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *Sion*, **"ZION."**

"Zion" refers to heavenly Jerusalem located in the third heaven since the Scriptures teach that Christ will descend on the Mount of Olives on planet earth at His Second Advent to deliver Israel from Satan, Antichrist and the Tribulational armies prompting a national regeneration in Israel at that time.

"He will remove totally and completely the godless ones from Jacob" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ removing the unsaved from the nation of Israel when He judges the nation subsequent to His Second Advent. This judgment is prophesied in Ezekiel 20:33-38.

"The godless ones" refers to those Jews in Israel at the time of Christ's Second Advent and describes them as having a lack of reverence for God as manifested in their thinking, speaking and acting in a manner contrary or against the laws of God or His character and nature. The word is not speaking of godless acts but godless individuals since the way the Lord will remove godless acts is to remove the unbelievers whose behavior is ungodly as indicated by the prophesy in Ezekiel 20:33-38.

"From Jacob" indicates that the immediately after His Second Advent when He judges Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ will "totally and completely separate from" the unbelievers in Israel from those who are saved in the nation.

So, in Romans 11:26, the apostle Paul cites Isaiah 59:20 to support his assertion that immediately after the full number of Gentiles that have been elected by the Father in eternity past have been saved there will be a national regeneration of Israel at Christ's Second Advent.

In Romans 11:27, Paul cites Isaiah 59:21 and 27:9 to support his assertion that there will be a national regeneration of Israel, which will take place at Christ's Second Advent.

Romans 11:27 "Furthermore, this is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the covenant established by Me for their benefit when I act on My promise and remove their sins." (Author's translation)

Paul cites a combination of Isaiah 59:21 and 27:9 as further support for his prediction in Romans 11:26 that there will be a national regeneration of Israel. These quotations are alluding to the New Covenant recorded in Jeremiah 31:31-34, which refers to this national regeneration of Israel at Christ's Second Advent. Paul in Romans 11:27 quotes Isaiah 59:21 and 27:9 to teach that this national regeneration of Israel will involve the Lord fulfilling one of His promises in this covenant, namely removing the sins from those Jews who have faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

“The covenant established by Me” is composed of the preposition *para* and the genitive first personal singular form of the personal pronoun *ego*, **“by Me”** and the articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *diatheke*, **“the covenant established.”**

In Romans 11:27, the noun *diatheke*, **“covenant”** refers to specifically to the New Covenant since in context Paul is speaking of the future national regeneration of the nation of Israel at Christ's Second Advent, which the New Covenant speaks of. Also, he is presenting the provision of the forgiveness of sins, which appears in the New Covenant. The New Covenant is unconditional meaning that it is based upon the faithfulness of God rather than the faithfulness of Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-37).

The New covenant is related to the restoration of the nation during the Second Advent and His subsequent millennial reign. The blessings the nation of Israel will receive are based on the New Covenant (Isaiah 61:8-9; Hos. 2:18-20). The greatest blessing in this covenant is that of being brought in close relationship with God (Jeremiah 30:22; 31:33; 32:38-41; Ezek. 11:20; 34:25-27; 37:27).

The New Covenant with Israel was based upon the voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union (Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25). The Lord Jesus Christ is the mediator of this New Covenant to Israel.

Hebrews 12:24a, “and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.”

Therefore, in Romans 11:27, the noun *diatheke* refers to the New Covenant, which the Lord Jesus Christ will establish with Israel at His Second Advent and subsequent judgment of Israel and millennial reign.

“For their benefit” refers to the regenerate citizens of the nation of Israel since they receive the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ.

“When” is the temporal conjunction *hotan*, which is employed with the subjunctive mood of the verb *aphaireo*, **“I TAKE AWAY”** in order to denote that “whenever” those Jews who placed their faith in Jesus Christ at His Second Advent and as a result receive the forgiveness of sins this will be a manifestation of the New Covenant.

“I act on My promise and remove” is the first person singular aorist middle subjunctive form of the verb *aphaireo*, which means “to remove” and is used with the Lord Jesus Christ as its subject and its object are the sins of those Jews who trusted in Him as Savior at His Second Advent. This indicates that the manifestation of the New Covenant will be that the Lord Jesus Christ will remove the sins of those Jews who trusted in Him as Savior at His Second Advent in the sense that through their faith in Christ they will appropriate the forgiveness of sins.

So, as we can see from our study of Romans 11:27, Paul cites a combination of Isaiah 59:21 and 27:9 as further support for his prediction in Romans 11:26 that there will be a national regeneration of Israel. These quotations are alluding to the New Covenant recorded in Jeremiah 31:31-34, which refers to this national regeneration of Israel at Christ's Second Advent. Paul in Romans 11:27 quotes Isaiah 59:21 and 27:9 to teach that this national regeneration of Israel will involve the Lord fulfilling one of His promises in this covenant, namely removing the sins from those Jews who have faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:28 summarizes God's dealings with the nation of Israel and the Gentiles. The first part of the verse teaches that from the standpoint of the gospel, the nation of Israel corporately is God's enemy for the sake of evangelizing the Gentiles. The second half of the verse teaches that from the standpoint of God electing them in a national sense, the nation of Israel is the object of God's love because of unconditional promises to the patriarchs.

Romans 11:28 On the one hand, from the perspective of the gospel, they are, as an eternal spiritual truth, enemies on behalf of all of you while on the other hand from the perspective of their election, they are, as an eternal spiritual truth, divinely loved because of the promises to the fathers. (Author's translation)

This passage is a correlative clause. The declarative statement in this correlative clause teaches that the Gentiles benefited from the fact that the nation of Israel at the present time is God's enemy. However, the adversative clause teaches that from the standpoint of God electing them as a nation, Israel is the object of God's love because of His unconditional promises He made to the patriarchs.

"From the standpoint of God's choice" is composed of the preposition *kata*, **"from the standpoint"** and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *ekloge*, **"God's choice."**

In Romans 11:28, the noun *ekloge* does not refer to the election of individual Jews who trust in Christ as Savior but rather it refers to the "national" election of the nation of Israel. This is indicated in that in Romans 11:26-27, Paul quotes Old Testament Scripture to support his assertion that there will be national regeneration and restoration of the nation of Israel at Christ's Second Advent. This "national" election is referred to in Romans 9:4 with the term *huiiothesia*, **"adoption as sons."**

The term "adoption" refers to the Old Testament teaching concerning the nation of Israel that they were "God's son" in a "national" sense meaning that God had set apart Israel from all the nations of the earth for blessing and service (cf. Exodus 4:22-23; Deuteronomy 14:1-2; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1).

In Romans 11:28, the noun *ekloge* is in the accusative case and functions as the object of the preposition *kata*, which itself functions as a marker of a specific element bearing a relation to something else. Here the preposition denotes the relationship between the nation of Israel and God electing them in a national sense.

"For the sake of the fathers" is composed of the preposition *dia*, **"for the sake of"** and the articular accusative masculine plural form of the noun *pater*, **"the fathers."**

The noun *pater* contains the figure of metonymy meaning that the noun is put for God's faithfulness to the promises that He made to the patriarchs. The noun does not simply refer to the patriarchs

themselves. Paul is not saying with this noun that because of the merits of the patriarchs themselves that the nation of Israel is the object of God's unconditional love. Rather, he is saying that because of God's faithfulness to His unconditional promises He made to the patriarchs, the nation of Israel is the object of God's unconditional love.

Therefore, Paul is saying with this word *pater* that from the perspective of God electing them in a national sense, the nation of Israel is the object of God's love because of His faithfulness to the promises that He made to the patriarchs. Or we could say that from the perspective of God electing them in a national sense, the nation of Israel is the object of God's love because of the unconditional promises He made to the patriarchs.

The word functions as the object of the preposition *dia*, which itself functions as a marker of cause indicating that from the perspective of God electing them in a national sense, the nation of Israel is the object of God's unconditional love "because of" His faithfulness to the promises He made to the patriarchs.

Paul in Romans 11:29 then presents the reason why the nation of Israel can be both God's enemy and the object of His unconditional love.

Romans 11:29 Because the gracious privileges, especially, God the Father's invitation to privilege are, as an eternal spiritual truth, irrevocable. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul teaches in this passage that Israel is both the enemy of God and the object of His unconditional love because the eight gracious privileges that God bestowed upon the nation of Israel that are listed in Romans 9:4-5 and especially the invitation to privilege that He extended to that nation are irrevocable.

In Romans 11:30-31 Paul employs a correlative clause that compares God giving grace to the formerly disobedient Gentiles because of Israel's unbelief with extending grace to the presently disobedient Jews because of the grace obtained by the Gentiles.

Romans 11:30 For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy 31 because of their disobedience, so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. (Author's translation)

In Romans 11:30, Paul taught his Gentile Christian readers in Rome that they who were once unbelieving in God have now been obtained grace because of Israel's unbelief.

Romans 11:31 teaches that God's purpose for the present state of unbelief in Israel during the church age was in order that because of the grace obtained by the Gentiles through faith in Christ, the Jews might also obtain grace through faith in Christ. Therefore, we can see from our studies of this comparative clause that appears in Romans 11:30-31 that there is similarity between the Jews and Gentiles experience in that both have been unbelieving, the Gentiles prior to the church age and the Jews during the church age.

There is however differences in that the Gentiles obtained grace and salvation because of the nation of Israel rejected Christ. However, the nation of Israel will obtain grace and salvation because of the

grace that the Gentiles obtained since Paul teaches in Romans 11:25-27 that the nation of Israel will not repent and trust in Christ until the full number of Gentiles to be saved, have in fact been saved.

When the full number of Gentiles, have been saved between the first and second advents of Christ, then the Second Advent will take place when the majority of Jews in Israel will have faith in Christ in contrast to the majority in Israel who reject Him during the church age.

Then, in Romans 11:32, Paul draws an inference from his teaching in Romans 11:30-31, which states God has confined the entire human race to unbelief in order that He might extend the offer of grace to the entire human race.

Romans 11:32 Therefore, God the Father has confined the entire human race to unbelief in order that He may extend the offer of grace to the entire human race. (Author's translation)

This passage refers to a judicial decision that the Father rendered the moment that Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden when He condemned the entire human race along with Adam in order that He might extend the offer of grace to Adam and his posterity.

In Romans 11:33, Paul praises the Father for His infinite wealth, wisdom and knowledge as well as His unsearchable decrees and incomprehensible ways.

Romans 11:33 Oh, God's infinite wealth and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable, as an eternal spiritual truth, are His decrees and in addition, how incomprehensible, as an eternal spiritual truth, are His ways! (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 11:34, Paul cites the two rhetorical questions that demand a negative response that appear in Isaiah 40:13 to support his exclamation in Romans 11:33.

Romans 11:34 Indeed, who has fully comprehended the Lord's mind or who became His advisor? (Author's translation)

This quotation is related to Paul's praise of the Father's infinite wisdom and knowledge and unsearchable decrees and incomprehensible ways. This rhetorical question brings out the implication of Paul's doxology in Romans 11:33, which is that God is sovereign over His creatures and is transcendent of His creatures and self-sufficient unlike His creatures. The two rhetorical questions in Romans 11:34 deals with the believer's knowledge of God's eternal plan of salvation for mankind, both Jew and Gentile.

Lastly, in Romans 11:35, Paul cites the rhetorical question that demands a negative response that appears in Job 41:11 to support his praise of the Father in Romans 11:33. Paul teaches that the Father will receive praise and thanksgiving throughout eternity because all things exists from Him and through Him and for Him.

Romans 11:36 Because each and every thing, as an eternal spiritual truth, exists because of Him as their source and through Him and for Him. Glory (in the sense of adoring praise and worshipful thanksgiving) will be directed towards Him throughout eternity. Amen! (Author's translation)

This quotation relates to Paul's praise of the Father's infinite wealth. This rhetorical question in Romans 11:35 deals with the way in which the believer experiencing God's eternal plan of salvation for mankind. The quotations from Isaiah 40:13 and Job 41:11 that appear in Romans 11:34-35 serve to "confirm" Paul's doxology or praise of the Father in Romans 11:33.

So, we can see that Replacement theology is refuted by Paul's teaching in Romans 9-11. In Romans 9:27-29, he teaches that God has emphatically not rejected the nation of Israel as manifested by the fact that He set asides for Himself as He did in the days of Elijah a remnant of Jewish believers throughout every part of history. This doctrine of a remnant of believers in Israel, which constitutes in God's eyes the national entity, Israel, refutes replacement theology. The nation of Israel would be completely rejected by God if there wasn't a remnant of believers and would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah as Paul states in Romans 9:29. But the fact that there is a remnant in Israel and will always be the case is why the nation still exists according to Romans 9:27-29.

In Romans 9:27, Paul cites Isaiah 10:22 to teach that only a remnant of Jews throughout history will be saved, which supports his premise in Romans 9:6 that not all racial Israel is considered by God to be spiritual Israel, children of the promise and spiritual descendants of Abraham. Then, in Romans 9:28, Paul quotes from Isaiah 10:23 to warn unregenerate Israel of eternal condemnation in that the Lord Jesus Christ will execute this judgment thoroughly and decisively. In Romans 9:29, Paul quotes Isaiah 1:9 to teach that if the Lord had not been merciful by leaving a remnant in Israel that it would have become like Sodom and would have been make like Gomorrah in that not only would the nation have been destroyed but all its citizens would have suffered eternal condemnation as well. It would be ridiculous of God to elect the nation of Israel if He did not set aside a remnant of believers since the national election of Israel only makes sense if God has set aside a remnant of believers throughout human history. Therefore, the national election of Israel is based on the fact that God, in His foreknowledge, which is based on His omniscience, knew in eternity past a remnant of Israelites whom He would create in time and would in time accept His Son Jesus Christ as Savior. Consequently, this is the reason why God has by no means rejected Israel completely. Thus, refuting replacement theology.

If God had not set aside a remnant of believers in Israel, God would have rejected that nation. Moo is right when he says of Israel in this passage, that "it is this national entity whose status is called into question by what Paul said in 9:30-10:21 and about whom Paul then asks in verse 1." However, what Moo fails to see is that this national entity status is maintained because God has set aside a remnant of believers in the nation as he illustrates in Romans 11:2b-5 with God's response to Elijah's prayer against Israel. Otherwise, as Paul teaches in Romans 9:29, Israel would be non-existent as a nation, just as Sodom and Gomorrah.

Paul teaches in Romans 9:6 that not all racial Israel is considered by God to be His covenant people but only those who have trusted in His Son Jesus Christ as Savior. In Romans 2:28-29, Paul teaches that a true Israelite in God's eyes has faith in His Son Jesus Christ. These two passages make clear that God makes a distinction between Israelites and accepts those who accept His Son by faith and rejects those who reject His Son. The nation of Israel whom God foreknew is the remnant of believers because God considers a true Israelite to be one who has faith in His Son Jesus Christ and these constitute the national entity from God's perspective, thus refuting the claims of replacement theology.

In Romans 11:1-6, he teaches that God has emphatically not rejected the nation of Israel as manifested by the fact that He set asides for Himself as He did in the days of Elijah a remnant of Jewish

believers throughout every part of history. We have seen in Romans 11:1, Paul posing a rhetorical question that is the result of an inference that could be implied from his teaching in Romans chapters nine and ten, namely that God has rejected Israel. He emphatically rejects this idea and then presents himself as living proof that this is not the case. Then, in Romans 11:2a, he emphatically declares that God has by no means rejected the nation of Israel whom He foreknew. In Romans 11:2b, Paul poses a question in order to introduce the subject of God setting aside a remnant for Himself in Israel in the days of Elijah.

Next, in Romans 11:3, he cites 1 Kings 19:10 to demonstrate that God has not rejected Israel. In this passage, Elijah pleaded with the Father against Israel when he was the lone surviving prophet in Israel who was alone in the desert because he was fleeing Jezebel who sought to murder him. In Romans 11:4, Paul presents the Father's response to Elijah's complaint against Israel by citing 1 Kings 19:18, which records God telling him that He had set aside a remnant composed of seven thousand men in Israel that had not bowed the knee to Baal. Then, in Romans 11:5, the apostle teaches that in the same way that God set aside a remnant for Himself in Elijah's day so He had done so in Paul's day in the mid first century according to His sovereign grace. Paul in Romans 11:6 argues with his readers that if you agree with me that God had set aside for Himself a remnant in Israel on the basis of grace, then it follows logically that this election of the remnant is never at any time on the basis of meritorious actions otherwise grace never at any time exists as grace.

The fact that God deals with the nation of Israel based upon grace and not based upon their merit refutes replacement theology, which contends that God has rejected the nation forever because of her disobedience.

Furthermore, replacement theology is refuted by the nature of the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants, which are all unconditional meaning that their fulfillment is not based upon the faithfulness of Israel but rather they are based on the faithfulness of God. The unconditional nature of the promises of these four covenants means that Israel's unbelief throughout human history does not nullify or negate or stop them from being fulfilled. Therefore, the church cannot possibly replace Israel because God always set aside a remnant of Jewish believers throughout history based on His faithfulness to the unconditional promises He made to Israel in the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants.

Church is Composed of Regenerate Jews and Gentiles

So thus far we've seen that a true Jew is one who is a biological descendant of Jacob and has been declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. Next we noted that the Jews were given four unconditional covenants which are the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. The next point we need to establish in order to understand the relationship between Israel and the church is that the church is composed of both regenerate Jew and Gentiles.

The apostle to the Gentiles also taught in Galatians 3:26-28, Ephesians 2:11-22 and Colossians 3:11 that the church is composed of both regenerate Jew and Gentiles.

Colossians 3:11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (NASB95)

“A *renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew*” is composed of the following: (1) adverb *hopou* (ὅπου), “**in which**” (2) emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὐ), “**no**” (3) third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eni* (ἐνι), “**there is**” (4) nominative masculine singular form of the noun *Hellēn* (Ἑλλην), “**Greek**” (5) conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” (6) nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Ioudaios* (Ἰουδαῖος), “**Jew**.”

The adverb *hopou* means “in the sphere of which” since the word is functioning as a marker of the sphere in which an action takes place. Colossians 3:10 indicates that this sphere is the new man which is a reference to the new humanity under the headship of Christ. This new humanity under the headship of Christ is identified with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Therefore, this adverb *hopou* indicates that the new man is the sphere in which there never exists Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free.

The verb *eni* means “to exist with respect to a particular set of circumstances or a particular context, to exist within something or some group of people.” The verb’s meaning is emphatically negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou* which emphatically denies the reality of an alleged fact occurring. It is a clear cut, point-blank negative which is objective and final. In context, the third person singular form of this verb refers to distinctions among different groups of people. Therefore, these two words indicate that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, absolutely no distinctions exist between Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free.

The present tense of the verb *eni* can be interpreted as a customary or stative present, which is used to signal an ongoing state. This would indicate that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, distinctions between Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free are in a state of being non-existent.

The present tense of the verb *eni* can also be interpreted as a gnomic present, which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth. This would indicate that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, absolutely no distinctions “as an eternal spiritual truth” exist between Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free.

The active voice is a stative active indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. This would indicate that This would indicate that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, distinctions between Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free are in a state of being non-existent.

The indicative mood of the verb is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

The noun *Hellēn* is in the singular and means “Greek,” which refers to a Gentile and not necessarily an ethnic Greek and speaks the Greek language fluently and is knowledgeable of and immersed in Greek culture. Thus, it speaks of a person who participates in Greek culture. The word pertains to those Gentiles under the influence of the Greek language and culture as distinguished from Israel’s culture.

This word functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no Greek.

The conjunction *kai* is introducing a word which presents a comparison with a Greek.

The proper name *Ioudaios* means “Jew” and refers to those members of the human race who are descendants racially of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thus members of the nation of Israel and thus, denotes nationality distinguishing the Jew from the Gentile under the influence of Greek language and culture.

There are three titles used in Scripture for the racial descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: (1) *Hebraios*, “**Hebrew**” (2) *Ioudaios*, “**Jew**” (3) *Israelite*, “**Israelite**.”

The term “**Hebrew**” appears first in Scripture in Genesis 14:13 where it is used to describe Abram after rescuing his nephew Lot from the Eastern Mesopotamian Kings. In this passage, “**the Hebrew**” is the articular form of the proper noun *ivri*, which designates that Abram was a legitimate and well-known descendant of Shem through Eber and was therefore, in the Messianic line, or the Promised Seed of Genesis 3:15. The term denotes Abram’s nationality in contrast with other nationalities in the land of Canaan (cf. Gen. 43:32; Ex. 1:15; 2:11; 21:2) and the contrast in Genesis 14:13 is with the Amorites who inhabited the land of Canaan.

“**Hebrew**” distinguishes a Hebrew-speaking Jew from a Greek-speaking one and this is illustrated by Paul when describing his pre-salvation distinctions in Philippians 3:5.

The second title, “**Jew**” distinguishes a Jew from a Gentile and denotes nationality.

The third title, “**Israelite**” speaks of the fact that the Jew is a member of a theocracy and is the heir of the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose name was later changed by the Lord to “**Israel**.”

Prior to the first century, the most common terms used for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were “Hebrew” and “Israelite.” However, by the first century, the term “Jew” had become the most common designation for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

“**Jew**” is from “**Judah**,” (“praise”) and was one of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob’s son Judah and was also a designation for the southern half of Solomon’s kingdom after his death. From the time of the Babylonian captivity, the whole race bore this title.

In heathen writers, *Israel* is never used for the Jewish people either past or present, nor should we expect since Israel is a specifically Jewish term which is not based primarily on nationality or external factors. The cognate noun of “Israel” is “Israelites” and is the absolute name used to express the dignity and glory of a member of the theocratic nation in a unique covenant relation with God.

“Israelites” rarely occurs in the Septuagint but often was used by Josephus in his earlier history as a synonym for *Hebraios*. In the middle of his history, Josephus used Israelites to refer to a member of the ten tribes and toward the end of his history as a synonym for *Ioudaios*.

The term “Israelites” was the Jew’s special badge and title of honor. The honor of being descendants of Abraham was shared with the Ishmaelites (Gen. 16:15), and the honor of being descendants of Abraham and Isaac was shared with the Edomites (Gen. 24:25). Only the Jews, however, are descended from Jacob, a name that is declared in the title “Israelite.”

The Jews did not trace their descent from Jacob as Jacob but from Jacob as Israel, who as a prince had power with God and with men and prevailed (Gen. 32:28). There is ample proof that this title was the noblest of them all. When the ten tribes cast off their allegiance to the house of David, they proudly and pretentiously took the title “the Kingdom of Israel,” thus implying that their kingdom was heir to the covenant promises and the true successor of the early patriarchs.

Jesus could not have given a more noble title to Nathaniel than to have called him “**an Israelite indeed**” (John 1:47), one in whom all that the name involved might be found. When Peter and Paul wanted to obtain a hearing from the men of their own nation, they addressed them with the name they would most welcome, *andres Israelitai*, by whose use they sought to secure their favor.

Jacob or Israel had twelve sons who were the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel.

“**Reuben**” was the first child that Leah bore to Jacob and his name means, “behold or see, a son” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 29:32.

“**Simeon**” was the second child that Leah bore to Jacob and his name means, “the Lord has heard” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 29:33.

“**Levi**” was the third child that Leah bore to Jacob and his name means, “My husband will be attached to me” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 29:34.

“**Judah**” was the fourth child that Leah bore to Jacob and his name means, “I will praise the Lord” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 29:35.

“**Issachar**” was the fifth child that Leah bore Jacob and his name means, “reward” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 30:16-18.

“**Zebulun**” was the sixth child that Leah bore Jacob and his name means, “honor” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 30:19-20.

“**Gad**” was the first boy that Zilpah bore to Jacob, whose birth is recorded in Genesis 30:9-11 and his name comes from “What good fortune” indicating that Leah attributed this child to fortune or good luck rather than God and his birth.

“**Asher**” is the second son that Zilpah bore to Jacob, whose birth is recorded in Genesis 30:12-13 and his name means “women will call me happy” meaning that Leah thought she would be envied by other women because of this child.

“**Benjamin**” was the last child that Rachel bore to Jacob and his name means, “son of my right hand” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 35:16-18.

“**Dan**” was the first child that Bilhah bore Jacob and his name means, “God has vindicated me” and his birth is recorded in Genesis 30:5-6.

“**Naphtali**” was the second child that Bilhah bore to Jacob and his name means, “my wrestling” reflecting Rachel’s attitude in which she viewed her relationship with her sister Leah to be like a wrestling match and his birth is recorded in Genesis 30:7-8.

The name “**Joseph**” literally means, “He adds,” which is a play on the verb *yasaph*, “to add” and is also a prayer for another child, foreshadowing the birth of Benjamin. He was the first son of Jacob and Rachel (Genesis 30:22-24).

This word *Ioudaios* in Colossians 3:11 also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no Jew.

“**Circumcised and uncircumcised**” is composed of the following: (1) nominative feminine singular form of the noun *peritomē* (περιτομή), “**circumcised**” (2) conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” (3) nominative feminine singular form of the noun *akrobusia* (ἀκροβυστία), “**uncircumcised**.”

The noun *peritomē* means “circumcision, circumcised” and is a designation for those members of the human race who are descendants racially of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who have received circumcision as a sign of the covenant relationship between themselves and the God of Israel. It refers to those individuals who have received the surgical and ritual act of cutting the foreskin of the male’s penis under the Mosaic covenant.

So the word is another designation for the biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob but with emphasis upon the religion of Israel or in other words with emphasis upon the fact that these individuals who circumcised themselves under the Mosaic covenant and thus practice the law of Moses.

This word also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no circumcision.

The conjunction *kai* is introducing a word which presents a comparison with the circumcision.

The noun *akrobusia* means “uncircumcision” since it pertains to the physical condition of uncircumcision or in other words, the state of being uncircumcised and is thus a designation for the Gentiles but with emphasis upon the fact that these individuals do not participate in the religion of Israel. In other words, they do not practice the Mosaic Law which governed the spiritual life of Israel.

This word also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no uncircumcision.

“**Barbarian, Scythian**” is composed of the following: (1) nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *barbaros* (βάρβαρος), “**barbarian**” (2) nominative masculine singular form of the noun *Skythēs* (Σκύθης), “**Scythian**.”

The adjective *barbaros* means “barbarian” since the word pertains to a Gentile who does not speak Greek nor participates or is immersed in Greek culture. It refers to a Gentile who does not speak the Greek language or spoke it poorly and were ignorant of Greek culture. It is an onomatopoeic word meaning “to make unintelligible sounds.” From the Greek perspective this would designate anyone speaking a non-Greek language.

This word *barbaros* was used by those immersed in the Graeco-Roman culture in relation to those Gentiles who were considered by them to be uncivilized because they were not familiar or spoke the Greek language and were not familiar or were not participating in Greek culture.

This word also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no barbarian.

The noun *Skythēs* means “Scythian” and pertains a Gentile from Scythia. It was used by those Gentiles immersed in Greek language and culture to describe those Gentiles who were not immersed in Greek language and culture. Scythia was located in a region north of the Black Sea and was regarded by the Graeco-Roman world as utterly pagan and uncivilized because they did not worship the Graeco-Roman pantheon of gods.

This word also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no Scythian.

“**Slave and freeman**” is composed of the following: (1) nominative masculine singular form of the noun *doulos* (δοῦλος), “**slave**” (2) nominative masculine singular form of the adjective *eleutheros* (ἐλεύθερος), “**freeman**.”

The noun *doulos* means “slave” and pertains to a state of being completely controlled by someone. It is used in a literal sense referring to a person who is totally under the power and authority and control of another person in contrast to a master who is not but controls others. The term refers “to a man or woman who was the property of, in this case, a householder, and typically assigned any range of duties from the menial to those requiring special skills in the household.”²⁶⁹ Therefore, this word refers to a human being in Paul’s day in the first century A.D. who was a slave.

This word also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no slave.

The adjective *eleutheros* means “free, free person” since it pertains to a person who is not a slave and is thus socially and politically free.

²⁶⁹ Towner, Philip H., *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*; pages 334-335; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Grand Rapids, MI, 2006; cited B. J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*; rev. ed.; Louisville; Westminster/John Knox, 1993; page 381

In Colossians 3:11, the adjective *eleutheros* refers to the social status of being in a freeman in contrast to being a slave in the Roman Empire (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:21-22; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 6:8; 1 Corinthians 9:19).

This word also functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about the new humanity under the headship of Christ and identified with Christ. The assertion is that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, there is absolutely no free person.

“**But Christ is all, and in all**” is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *alla* (ἀλλά), “**but**” (2) nominative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), “**all**” (3) conjunction *kai* (καί), “**and**” (4) preposition *en* (ἐν), “**in**” (5) dative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), “**all**” (6) nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), “**Christ**.”

The strong adversative conjunction *alla* introduces an assertion which emphatically stands in direct contrast with the previous assertion. It is presenting an emphatic contrast between the old creation under the headship of Adam with its racial, religious and social distinctions and the new creation under the headship of Jesus Christ and identified with Him in which there none of these distinctions.

In Colossians 3:11, the noun *Christos* emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God delivered the believer from the sin nature, personal sins, the devil and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and eternal condemnation through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths and resurrection.

This word functions as a nominative subject meaning it is performing the action of the verb *eimi* which is omitted due to Paul’s use of the figure of ellipsis, though it is implied from the previous clause.

The verb *eimi* means “to exist a particular state or condition” and functions as a copula uniting the subject with the predicate nominative. The subject is the noun proper name *Christos* and the predicate nominative is the articular nominative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas*, “**all**.” Therefore, this verb indicates that Christ “exist in the state or condition” of being the all or the only one who matters.

The present tense of the verb *eimi* is a gnomic present, which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth. This indicates Jesus Christ “as an eternal spiritual truth” exist in the state or condition of being the all or the only one that matters or absolutely everything.

The present tense is also a customary present tense or stative present used to signal an ongoing state indicating that Jesus Christ “exists in the state or condition” of being the all or the only one who matters.

The active voice is a stative active indicating the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. This indicates that Jesus Christ “exists in the state or condition” of being the all or the only one who matters.

The indicative mood of the verb is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

The plural form of the adjective *pas* means “everything” in the sense of being all that matters implying that Jesus Christ is supreme over the new creation since He is the head of this new creation (cf. Col. 1:18).

This word functions as a predicate nominative meaning it is making the assertion that Jesus Christ is everything to the new humanity in the sense that He is all that matters with regards to the new creation since He is the head of this new humanity and reigns supreme over it.

The conjunction *kai* is adjunctive meaning it is introducing an assertion which is in addition to the previous assertion in this emphatic adversative clause.

This time the adjective *pas* is the object of the preposition *en*, which means “in” since it functions as a marker of location. In this instance, the word denotes totality referring to the members of the body of Christ, the church. It is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. Therefore, this prepositional phrase is presenting the assertion that Jesus Christ indwells each and every member of the body of Christ who compose the new creation.

Colossians 3:11 In the sphere of which, absolutely no distinctions are, as an eternal spiritual truth existing between Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free person. But rather, Christ as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being everything as well as in each and every person. (Author’s translation)

In Colossians 3:11, the apostle Paul continues his thought from Colossians 3:10. Specifically, he continues his discussion regarding the new man or the new humanity. Colossians 3:11 brings out the implication of the Colossians stripping off the old man and putting on the new man through their identification with Christ in His death and resurrection which was accomplished through the baptism of the Spirit.

This new man or new humanity belongs to the new creation and is the nature of Jesus Christ who reflects the Father’s nature. The new man speaks of the sinner who has been declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son and has consequently been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This justified sinner was not only regenerated at the moment of their justification but they were also identified with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were also simultaneously indwelt permanently by all three members of the Trinity. Therefore, the new man belongs to the new creation under the headship of Jesus Christ. This clothing of themselves with the new man also took place at the moment of the Colossians were declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. Like the stripping off of the old man, the clothing of themselves with the new man took place at justification for the Colossians through the baptism of the Spirit. However, stripping off of the old man took place when the Holy Spirit identified the Colossians with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial. On the other hand, the clothing of themselves with the new man took place when the Holy Spirit identified them with Christ in His resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Now, here in Colossians 3:11, Paul makes an assertion about the new man by stating that in the sphere of this new man or new humanity, absolutely no distinctions are existing between Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free person.

This verse reminds the Colossians that there are absolutely no racial and cultural distinctions in the body of Christ, the church. It also teaches that there are also absolutely no religious distinctions in the body of Christ. Lastly, it is stating that there are absolutely no social distinctions.

The first distinction between “**Greek and Jew**” refers to the fact that there are absolutely no distinctions in the body of Christ based upon race or nationality or culture.

The reference to the “**Greek**” speaks of a Gentile and not necessarily an ethnic Greek. It refers to a Gentile who speaks the Greek language fluently and is knowledgeable of and immersed in Greek culture. Thus, it speaks of a person who participates in Greek culture. The word pertains to those Gentiles under the influence of the Greek language and culture as distinguished from Israel’s culture.

The reference to the “**Jew**” speaks of those members of the human race who are descendants racially of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and thus members of the nation of Israel and thus, denotes nationality distinguishing the Jew from the Gentile under the influence of Greek language and culture.

The second distinction between “**circumcision and uncircumcision**” expresses the fact that there are absolutely no distinctions in the body of Christ based upon religion and specifically between Jew and Gentile. This abolishment of the barrier between Jew and Gentile is mentioned in greater detail in Ephesians 2:11-22.

“**Circumcision**” is a designation for those members of the human race who are descendants racially of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who have received circumcision as a sign of the covenant relationship between themselves and the God of Israel. It refers to those individuals who have received the surgical and ritual act of cutting the foreskin of the male’s penis under the Mosaic covenant. So the word is another designation for the biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob but with emphasis upon the religion of Israel or in other words with emphasis upon the fact that these individuals who circumcised themselves under the Mosaic covenant and thus practice the law of Moses.

“**Uncircumcision**” pertains to the physical condition of uncircumcision or in other words, the state of being uncircumcised and is thus a designation for the Gentiles but with emphasis upon the fact that these individuals do not participate in the religion of Israel. In other words, they do not practice the Mosaic Law which governed the spiritual life of Israel. So this word “uncircumcision” refers to a Gentile who does not practice the Jewish religion as manifested by the fact that they do not practice the rite of circumcision which is prescribed in the Mosaic Law and was the sign of the covenant relationship between Abraham and God.

There is no contrast between “**barbarian**” and “**Scythian**” since these two groups were also Gentiles and would thus fall under the category of the “**uncircumcision.**” These two designations refer to Gentiles not immersed in Roman-Graeco religion and culture.

The term “**barbarian**” was used by those immersed in Graeco-Roman culture and language and was a designation for a non-Greek or someone who was not Graeco-Roman in language and culture. This word was used by those immersed in the Graeco-Roman culture in relation to those Gentiles who were considered by them to be uncivilized because they were not familiar or did not speak the Greek language and were not familiar or did not participating in Greek culture.

“**Scythian**” pertains a Gentile from Scythia. It was used by those Gentiles immersed in Greek language and culture to describe those Gentiles who were not immersed in Greek language and culture. Scythia was located in a region north of the Black Sea and was regarded by the Graeco-Roman world as utterly pagan and uncivilized because they did not worship the Graeco-Roman pantheon of gods. So this term was used by the Graeco-Roman peoples to describe the lowest of the barbarians.

The third and final distinction between “**slave and freeman**” expresses the fact that there are absolutely no social, economic or political distinctions in the body of Christ.

“**Slave**” pertains to a state of being completely controlled by someone. It is referring to a person who is totally under the power and authority and control of another person in contrast to a master who is not but controls others. Therefore, this word refers to a human being in Paul’s day in the first century A.D. who was a slave.

“**Free person**” pertains to a person who is not a slave and is thus socially and politically free. It refers to the social status of being a freeman in contrast to being a slave in the Roman Empire. How this obliteration of the distinction between a slave and a free person in the body of Christ is worked out in life is found in Paul’s epistle to Philemon. The removal of this distinction through the gospel and specifically through Philemon’s runaway slave Onesimus becoming a believer and thus being identified with Christ in His death and resurrection was used by Paul to resolve the problem between this slave and his master.

Colossians 3:11 ends with the apostle Paul presenting an emphatic contrast with the assertion that within the sphere of the new man or new humanity, absolutely no distinctions are existing between Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman. It is presenting an emphatic contrast between the old creation under the headship of Adam with its racial, religious and social distinctions and the new creation under the headship of Jesus Christ and identified with Him in which there none of these distinctions. In this emphatic adversative clause, Paul asserts that Jesus Christ is everything to the new humanity in the sense that He is all that matters with regards to the new creation since He is the head of this new humanity and reigns supreme over it. He also asserts that Jesus Christ indwells each and every member of the body of Christ who compose the new creation which echoes his statement in Colossians 1:27.

All of these human distinctions mentioned by Paul in Colossians 3:11 are all related to the old creation or old man under the headship of Adam. None of them are related to the new creation or new humanity under the headship of Christ.

Paul’s statement in Colossians 3:11 echoes much of his statement in Galatians 3:28 but not all. In the latter, he mentions there are no gender distinctions in the body of Christ with his reference to there being no distinctions between male and female. In the former, he does not mention this distinction.

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

Taken together, Colossians 3:11 and Galatians 3:28 teach that there are no racial, cultural, religious, social, economic, political and gender distinctions in the body of Christ. The implication is that each and every person in the body of Christ regardless of their race, culture, religion, social status, economic status, political status or gender has equal privilege and equal opportunity to execute the Father's plan for the church age believer to become like Jesus Christ. Another implication is that regardless of one's race or ethnicity, culture, religion, social status, economic status, political status or gender, each and every member of the body of Christ has been given the victory over the indwelling sin nature and Satan in a positional sense and is guaranteed this victory in a perfective sense when they receive their resurrection body at the resurrection or rapture of the church. It also means that they have the potential to experience this victory in an experiential sense before the rapture. This potential becomes a reality when the believer appropriates by faith their identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection by considering themselves dead to the sin nature and alive to God (cf. Rom. 6).

Another implication is that each and every church age believer must never reject having fellowship with another believer because of their race, culture, religion they practiced in their past, their economic, political or social status. They should never reject another believer because they are male or female either.

Another implication which is related to the false teaching of the Judaizers, which we noted in our study of Colossians 2:8-23, is that one does not have to become a Jew to have the victory over sin and do God's will. One can be a Gentile and have this victory. The implication is that both Jew and Gentile if they have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior have the victory. The Gentile believer has the same opportunity to execute the Father's plan for the church age believer as the Jewish believer.

Another implication is that there is unity in the body of Christ which was accomplished by the Father through His Son and the Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit unifies in a positional sense the individual members of the body of Christ. This unity is experienced when these individual members of the body of Christ appropriate by faith by their union and identification with Christ and view each other as equals.

Therefore, here in Colossians 3:11, the apostle Paul is reminding the faithful believers in Colossae that all human distinctions in the body of Christ related to the old creation under Adam are obliterated because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Now, we must qualify this by stating that Paul does not mean that once a person becomes a Christian through faith alone in Jesus Christ that all these distinctions must no longer be recognized or rejected. Rather, he is speaking in the context of the new creation and with regards to the body of Christ and the relationship between believers in the church. He is teaching that these distinctions are not a hindrance in doing the Father's will. He is teaching that these distinctions can never prevent a member of the body of Christ from experiencing victory over sin. He is teaching that these distinctions do not prevent any member of the body of Christ from experiencing this victory. He is not saying that a person stops being male or female because of their identification with Christ. He is not teaching that God no longer recognizes a person's race or cultural background. He is not implying that a slave must run away from his or her master. Therefore, the apostle is reminding the church that there are absolutely no barriers which prevent the Colossians or any believer from doing God's will or experiencing victory over sin. Paul is teaching that the Gentile is not inferior to the Jew and the slave is not inferior to the free person.

In Galatians 3:28, he teaches that a woman is not inferior to a man. All of this is indicated by Paul's teaching in Colossians 3:18-4:1 where he addresses the relationships between husbands and wives and slaves and their masters. This passage makes clear the Christian community is comprised of people who maintain their gender, familial and social identities. In other words, Jews are still Jews in Christ and Gentiles are still Gentiles in Christ and slaves are still slaves in Christ. However, these earthly identities are no longer relevant with regards to the relationships between the individual members of the body of Christ.

So the gospel of Jesus Christ breaks down all barriers and any obstacle or hindrance to doing God's will and experiencing victory over sin and Satan. Specifically, the good news is that those sinners who have been declared justified by the Father as a result of trusting in His Son Jesus Christ as Savior and as a result have been identified with His Son in His death and resurrection through the baptism of the Spirit breaks down all barriers. It breaks down any obstacle or hindrance to doing God's will and experiencing victory over sin and Satan.

Remnant of Israel

The last point we need to establish in order to understand the relationship between Israel and the church is that regenerate Jews in the church compose the remnant of Israel.

One of the great doctrines contained in the Bible which has received a great deal of attention in recent decades in the church is that of "the remnant of Israel." It is very important for the church age believer to understand this doctrine since it first and foremost reveals the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His promises to the Jews. It is important because it will protect the church age believer taking Old Testament promises given directly to the Jews and applying them to the church. Thus, it will protect the church age believer from the false doctrine that the church is the "new" Israel and has replaced Israel in God's program for the ages.

What is the doctrine of the remnant of Israel? It asserts that within the Jewish nation, God will always set aside a certain amount of Jews who will believe in Him in every dispensation and in every generation of human history. It is based upon the unconditional promises contained in the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. All of which were given directly to the nation of Israel and not the church.

A member of the remnant must meet two requirements. First, they must be Jewish meaning that biologically or racially, they are descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose name was changed to "Israel" by God. It is not enough to be a descendant of Abraham because two other branches of Arabs descended from this man and not just the Jews. One branch of Arabs came from Abraham through Hagar and the other came from Abraham through Keturah who was Abraham's wife after the death of Sarah. The second requirement which must be met is that of trusting in the Lord. During the dispensation of Israel under the Mosaic Law, in order to become a member of the remnant of Israel, a biological or racial descendant of Jacob must place their trust in the God of Israel who the New Testament identifies as being the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. During the First Advent of Jesus Christ, a biological or racial descendant of Jacob must trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior. This holds true during the dispensations of the church, the seventieth week of Daniel and the millennial reign of Christ.

Fruchtenbaum writes “The doctrine of the remnant means that, within the Jewish nation as a whole, there are always some who believe and all those who believe among Israel comprise the Remnant of Israel. The remnant at any point of history may be large or small but there is never a time when it is non-existent. Only believers comprise the remnant, but not all believers are part of the remnant for the remnant is a Jewish remnant and is, therefore, comprised of Jewish believers. Furthermore, the remnant is always part of the nation as a whole and not detached from the nation as a separate entity. The remnant is distinct, but distinct within the nation. The concept of the remnant of Israel was true from the very beginning of Israel’s history as they began to multiply. As a doctrine, the theology of the remnant begins with the prophets and the development of the doctrine continues through the New Testament.”²⁷⁰

Pentecost writes “Even a casual survey of Israel’s recorded history will establish the principle that God dealt with a believing remnant within the nation. Caleb and Joshua (Num. 13–14), Deborah and Barak (Judges 4), Gideon (Judges 7), Samson (Judges 13–17), Samuel (1 Sam. 2), the Levites in Jeroboam’s day (2 Chron. 11:14–16), Asa (2 Chron. 15:9), the seven thousand faithful ones in the days of Elijah (1 Kings 19:18) all illustrate this point.... God preserved for Himself a faithful, believing, witnessing remnant in times of apostasy, persecution, and indifference.”²⁷¹

During the dispensation of Israel, there was a certain number of Jews within the nation of Israel who trusted in the God of Israel. God had also set aside a certain number of Jews within the nation of Israel who trusted in His Son Jesus Christ as Savior during the First Advent of Christ. Also, often overlooked and not understood by even many dispensationalists, there is a certain number of Jews during the church age who have become a part of the remnant of Israel through faith in Jesus Christ. Consequently, they not only are a part of the remnant of Israel but also they are members of the church as well. Therefore, they are a unique group of people in history. During the seventieth week of Daniel, there will be a believing remnant in Israel who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior. The Scriptures also teach that during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, there will be a believing remnant in Israel who will enjoy the blessings of this greatest time in human history.

The Remnant in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, in relation to the nation of Israel, a “remnant” referred to a certain number of the population of the nation of Israel who survived divine judgment in the form of the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions and deportations. The concept has its roots in Deuteronomy 4:27-31; 28:62-68; 30:1-10. In these passages, Moses warns Israel that they would be dispersed throughout the nations for their disobedience but would be brought back to the land based upon God’s grace and covenantal faithfulness. The prophets subsequent to Moses continued this doctrine when teaching the nation of Israel during the time each lived.

A.C. Meyers writes “The depletion of God’s people by his judgment (generally through war) is a primary theme in the Old Testament; indeed, the difficult history of Israel made possible frequent reference to the remnant of the people after God’s judgment. Those who survived the wilderness wanderings to enter the promised land were such a remnant, as were the inhabitants of the former northern kingdom of Israel who escaped the Assyrian deportation (2 Chr. 30:6; 34:9), those whom the Babylonian conquerors left in Judah and who then migrated to Egypt (Jer. 40:11, 15; 42:15, 19; 43:5;

²⁷⁰ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (1994). *Israelology: the missing link in systematic theology* (Rev. ed., p. 601). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

²⁷¹ Pentecost, *Things to Come*, pp. 291–292.

44:12, 14), those who returned to Judah after the Babylonian Exile (Hag. 1:12, 14; Zech. 8:6; cf. Neh. 1:2–3, “survivors”), and those to be brought back from the Dispersion into the land of Israel (Isa. 11:11, 16; Mic. 2:12). A faithful remnant could also be identified in the setting of national apostasy. Elijah considered himself the sole survivor of national apostasy and persecution of the faithful (1 Kgs. 19:10). That a remnant could be spoken of in such a situation meant that a distinction could be drawn between the people of Israel as a whole and the remnant, here specifically those who had remained faithful to God. In such a situation the remnant is the often small (Isa. 10:22; cf. 6:13; Ezek. 5:3; Zech. 13:9) segment of God’s people that survives through the ages. The remnant as that which survives apostasy is the same as the remnant that survives divine judgment when God eliminates those who are not faithful to him; thus those who remain can be a purified people (Isa. 1:24–26; Zeph. 3:11–13; Matt. 3:12).”²⁷²

The following Hebrew terms are used in relation to the doctrine of the remnant of Israel: (1) verb *šā’ar* (שָׁאַר), “to be remaining, to remain, stay behind” since the word pertains to the state of being left behind or the act of causing others to be left behind (cf. Is. 17:6; 1 Kgs. 19:18; 2 Kgs. 10:14; Jer. 50:20; Zeph. 3:12). (2) noun *šē’ār* (שְׂאֵר), “rest, remainder, excess” since in general terms it pertains to what is left remaining in various contexts (1 Chr. 11:8; 2 Chr. 24:14; Is. 7:3; 10:20–22). (3) noun *šē’ērît* (שְׂעִירִית), “remainder, remnant” since it pertains to anything left over in various contexts (Is. 14:30; 15:9; 37:4, 32; 44:17; Jer. 6:9; 23:3; Ezek. 5:10; 9:8). (4) noun *pēlētâ* (פְּלִיטָה), “remnant, one who escaped, a survivor” since the word pertains to those who escaped a disaster (cf. 2 Kgs. 19:31; Is. 4:2–3; 10:20; 37:31–32; Neh. 1:2). (5) nouns *pālîṭ* (פָּלִיט); *pālêṭ* (פְּלִיט), “fugitive, survivor” since the word pertains to the fugitives or survivors who escaped disaster (cf. Ezek. 6:8–9; 7:16; Jer. 44:14, 28). (6) noun *yeter* (יֶתֶר), “rest, survivor, remnant” since it pertains to the remainder or what is left when most are removed, often with the sense of what is extra or what is abundant (cf. Is. 4:3). (7) noun *sārîd* (סָרִיד), “someone fleeing, refugee, remnant, survivor” since the word pertains to one who survives a catastrophe by being rescued or by fleeing (cf. Jer. 47:5; Is. 1:9; Joel 2:32).

G.H. Livingston writes “Several Hebrew words express the remnant idea: *yeter*, ‘that which is left over’; *she’ar*, ‘that which remains’; *she’rit*, ‘residue’; *pelitah*, ‘one who escapes’; *sarid*, ‘a survivor’; and, *sherut*, ‘one loosed from bonds.’ In the NT ‘remnant’ or left over is the equivalent of the Greek words: *kataleimma*, *leimma*, and *loipos*. Several activities of everyday life are associated with these words. Objects or people may be separated from a larger group by selection, assignment, consumption (eating food), or by destruction. What is left over is the residue, or, in the case of people, those who remain after an epidemic, famine, drought, or war.”²⁷³

Peter Brown writes “In Hebrew, the concept is expressed by four terms, but the most commonly used are based on the root שָׁאַר (*šā’ar*, “to remain”), including שְׂאֵר (*šē’ār*, “remnant”) and שְׂעִירִית (*šē’ērît*, “remnant”). In the LXX, Hebrew remnant terms are usually translated by forms of ὑπολείπω (*hypoleipō*) or καταλείπω (*kataleipō*) and one also frequently sees the nominal forms τὸ λοιπὸν (*to loipon*, “what is left”), οἱ λοιποὶ (*hoi loipoi*, “the leftovers”) or τὰ λείμμα (*ta leimma*, “the remnant”), sometimes with the prefix *hypo-* or *kata-*.”²⁷⁴

²⁷² Myers, A. C. (1987). In *The Eerdmans Bible dictionary* (p. 879). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

²⁷³ Livingston, G. H. (2003). Remnant. In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 1374). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

²⁷⁴ Brown, P. (2014). Remnant. D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

The remnant doctrine appears in 2 Kings and is used in relation to the days of King Hezekiah when Sennacherib invaded Israel and threatened to destroy Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13-2 Kings 19:37). The prophet Jeremiah uses the word often of the remnant in his day (Jeremiah 40:11, 15; 41:10, 16; 42:2, 15, 19; 43:5; 44:7, 12, 14, 28; 44:28; 47:4, 5; 50:20). In Jeremiah 42:2 and 50:20 the remnant refers to those Israelites returning from the Babylonian captivity. Jeremiah uses the remnant of those Israelites who will experience the millennial reign of Christ (Jeremiah 23:3; 31:7).

Zechariah also speaks of a remnant of Israelites during the millennial reign of Christ (Zechariah 8:6, 11, 12). The prophet Micah also speaks of a future remnant of Israelites during the millennium (Micah 2:12; 4:7; 5:7-8; 7:18).

The remnant doctrine appears in the writings of Isaiah (Isaiah 10:20-22; 11:11, 16; 15:9; 16:14; 17:3; 28:5; 37:4, 31, 32; 46:3). It is used in Nehemiah (1:3) and in the writings of Ezra of the returning Israelites from Babylon (Ezra 9:8, 13, 14, 15). Haggai speaks of this remnant that returned from Babylon (1:12, 14; 2:2).

The concept of the remnant appears several times in the book of Zephaniah (2:3, 7, 9; 3:11-13).

Zephaniah 2:3 Continue making it your habit of diligently seeking after the Lord's will each and every one of you humble people of the land who are fulfilling His law. Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of seeking after righteousness. Each and every one of continue making it your habit of seeking after humility. Perhaps every one of you will be protected during the period characterized by the Lord's legitimate anger. (Author's translation)

Zephaniah 2:3 contains three commands. All of which are directed exclusively at the faithful Jewish believer. This is indicated by the fact that those who are to obey these commands are described as humble and who obey the Word of God. The Scriptures teaches that only those who are faithful believers are humble and obey the Word of God. Nowhere do they describe the unfaithful believer or the non-believer as humble and obeying the Word of God. Rather they are described as arrogant and proud.

Specifically, all three commands are directed at the faithful Jewish believers living in the seventh century B.C. and those living during the seventieth week of Daniel. That they are all directed at those Jews living in the seventh century B.C. in Zephaniah's day is indicated by several factors. First, the commands found in Zephaniah 2:1-3 are directly tied to the proclamation of judgment recorded in Zephaniah 1:2-18. Also, Zephaniah 1:4-6 and 8-13 is a description of Jerusalem and its inhabitants which could have only been fulfilled in the prophet's day. That these commands are directed at those Jews living during the seventieth week is indicated by Zephaniah 1:2-3 and 18 which assert that this judgment will be universal or will engulf the entire world. God's judgment of the earth through the Babylonian invasions did not engulf the entire world but only the Mesopotamian and Mediterranean regions of the world. However, His judgments during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week will engulf the entire world. Also, Zephaniah 3:8-20 contain references to the restoration and regeneration of the nation of Israel and millennial reign of Jesus Christ which immediately follow the tribulation portion of Daniel's seventieth week. Nowhere in Judah or Israel's history was Judah or Israel regenerated with their Messiah living in their midst rejoicing over them.

Zephaniah 2:7 Indeed, the coast will, as a certainty be for the remnant belonging to the kingdom of Judah. They will be shepherds by the sea. In the houses of Ashkelon, they will recline

during the evening because the Lord, their God will care for them. In fact, He will surely restore their prosperity. (Author's translation)

In this verse, “**the remnant**” refers to those Jews in the kingdom of Judah who would survive the day of the Lord in Zephaniah's day. Historically, it refers to those Jews who returned to the land occupied by Judah before the Babylonian invasions in 605, 597 and 586 B.C. as a result of returning from the Babylonian exile.

So this promise of a remnant surviving the Babylonian invasions in the sixth and seventh centuries B.C. is not only promised in Zephaniah 2:7 and 9 but it is also promised elsewhere by the prophets of Israel (Isa. 37:31; Jer. 29:1-14; 32:36-44; 50:20; Ezek. 6:8). The books of Nehemiah and Ezra record the Lord fulfilling this promise of restoring a remnant from the kingdom of Judah to the land they once occupied before the Babylonian exile.

Zephaniah 2:9 “Consequently, I existing eternally, the Lord ruling over the armies, the God ruling over and in a relationship with Israel declares: Moab's people will be like Sodom's people likewise Ammon's citizens like Gomorrah's people. A place overrun by weeds as well as salt pits, indeed, a desolation forever and ever! The remnant from My people will plunder them. Specifically, the survivors from the nation will inherit their territory.” (Author's translation)

Zephaniah 2:9 asserts that the remnant of God's people will plunder the Moabites and the Ammonites. This remnant is of course from the kingdom of Judah which survives the Babylonian exile. God declares that this remnant will plunder these two nations. The second asserts that these survivors will inherit the territory of these two nations.

Both of these prophetic declarations were fulfilled in history. However, the remnant of Judah which returned from the Babylonian exile did not plunder the Moabites and Ammonites as a result of achieving a military victory over them. Rather, they inherited their land and possessions after returning from Babylon since it was Babylon which conquered these two nations. Medo-Persia conquered Babylon and decreed for the remnant of Judah to return to their land as well to occupy the lands previously held by the Moabites and Ammonites.

Zephaniah 3:13 “The remnant descending from the patriarch, Israel and a part of the nation of Israel will never act in an unjust manner because they will never speak lies. Indeed, a deceitful tongue will never be found in their mouth while they graze like sheep and lie down because absolutely no one will cause them to fear.” (Author's translation)

Zephaniah 3:13 contains five assertions which describe the impeccable character of the remnant of Israel which will exist in the future during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The first assertion states that this remnant will never act in an unjust manner. The second provides a reason for the first by asserting that this remnant will never speak lies. The third advances upon the second and intensifies it by declaring that a deceitful tongue will never be found in the mouth of this remnant. The fourth is a temporal clause which occurs simultaneously with the first three assertions and predicts that this remnant will graze like sheep and lie down in peace. The fifth presents the reason for the fourth and asserts that absolutely no one will cause this remnant to fear.

The first assertion emphatically expresses the idea that the remnant of Israel will never act in an unjust manner with regards to each other and the Gentile race. This means that in the future they will never commit an act which is not moral or ethical. The second assertion emphatically expresses the idea that this remnant of Israel will never in the future speak or communicate lies to each other or with regards to the Gentiles. The third assertion is emphatically expressing the idea that in the future God will never encounter or find in the mouth of the remnant of Israel a deceitful tongue.

Interestingly, the first three assertions which describe this godly remnant living during the millennial reign of Christ also characterize Jesus Christ Himself, their Messiah (cf. Is. 42:1-4; 53:3, 7-9; Zech. 9:9; cf. Matt. 11:28-30; 12:15-21; Phil. 2:1-8). In fact, if we compare the first assertion in Zephaniah 3:13 with the prophet's second description of the Lord in Zephaniah 3:5 which uses the same exact language to describe the Lord and the remnant of Israel in Zephaniah 3:13, we can see that this remnant will reflect the impeccable character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second assertion about the Lord's character in Zephaniah 3:5 that He never acts in an unjust manner is tied to the first assertion that the Lord is righteous within Jerusalem in that the Lord never acts in an unjust manner because of His righteous character.

Zephaniah 3:5 The Lord is righteous within her midst. He never acts in an unjust manner. Morning after morning, He causes His justice to be manifested. For His own glory, He never fails. However, in contrast to Him, the unrighteous person never experiences shame. (Author's translation)

Therefore, a comparison of these two verses reveals that this remnant of Israel in the future will reflect perfectly the impeccable character of Jesus Christ.

The fourth assertion is figurative language describing peace, contentment and security which this godly remnant of Israel will experience during the millennial reign of Her Messiah. The fifth assertion in Zephaniah 3:13 is expressing in emphatic terms the idea that absolutely no nation or group of people in the future will cause this remnant of Israel to experience fear during the millennial reign of Her Messiah King, Jesus Christ. Therefore, Zephaniah 3:13 is describing the impeccable character and blessings which a remnant of Jews will experience during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. What brought this radical change in these Jews who will compose the godly, believing remnant in the nation of Israel in the future and what will cause them to experience these blessings? It was their faith in the Lord which is prophesied in Zephaniah 3:12.

The remnant of Israel described in Zephaniah 3:13 will survive three elimination processes. First, they survive the judgments of the last three and a half years of the seventieth week of Daniel. Secondly, they have survived the judgment of the nation by the Lord Jesus Christ immediately following His Second Advent. Consequently, they are admitted into the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Thirdly, these regenerate Jews no longer possess a sin nature because they will be in their resurrection bodies which manifests itself in their impeccable character.

Commenting on this remnant living during the millennial reign of Christ, Fruchtenbaum writes "Since all Israel throughout the Messianic Kingdom will remain a saved nation, all Israel will remain the Remnant of Israel throughout that period. Everything said in the preceding section about Israel and the kingdom will be true of the Remnant of Israel. However, certain verses do emphasize the remnant motif

in the Messianic Kingdom and so, for the sake of completeness, these will be brought out in this section. Concerning the regathering of Israel, Isaiah 11:11 and 16 picture it as the gathering of the remnant. The same is true in Zechariah 8:6–7. Micah 4:7 emphasizes the salvation of the remnant. This means that the sins of the remnant will be forgiven according to Micah 7:18–20. This will also mean that the remnant will spread the Word of God among the Gentile nations according to Micah 5:7–8. The remnant will also be in possession of the land according to Zephaniah 2:7 and 9. The same point is made by Zechariah 8:12. They will be sinless in the land and live in security according to Zephaniah 3:13.²⁷⁵

This interpretation that the remnant in Zephaniah 3:13 is a reference to the remnant which exist during the millennial reign of Christ is supported by the fact that never in Israel's past or present has there been a remnant in the nation which did no wrong and told no lies and was not deceitful. This was not true among the Babylonian exiles. However, it will be true of Old Testament Jewish believers, tribulational martyrs in resurrection bodies who are perfected in their resurrection bodies. It will also be true of regenerate Jews who survive the tribulation and remained faithful despite being persecuted severely by Antichrist and Satan. Never in Israel's history has there been a remnant possessing impeccable character as described here in Zephaniah 3:13. However, regenerate Jews in resurrection bodies who no longer possess a sin nature will no longer sin and will thus manifest impeccable character which reflects the character of the Trinity. Furthermore, at no time in Israel's history has a remnant has never been at peace and not surrounded by enemies as Zephaniah 3:13 asserts. This interpretation of the remnant of Israel in Zephaniah 3:13 is also supported by the fact that Zephaniah 3:13 is connected to Zephaniah 3:11-12, which are describing the same Jews mentioned here in Zephaniah 3:13 and are describing the remnant living during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

Zephaniah 3:11 “During that distinct and unique period in the future, you will no longer experience shame because of each and every one of your actions by means of which of you rebelled against Me because I will cause the removal of your proud boasters from your midst. Consequently, you will absolutely never again cause yourself to enter the state of being arrogant anymore on My holy mountain.” (Author's translation)

Zephaniah 3:11 asserts that the Jews will no longer experience shame because of their sinful deeds which manifested their rebellion against God because He will remove the arrogant boasters from Jerusalem. Consequently, never again will there be an arrogant person on the temple mount, i.e. God's holy mountain. This has never taken place in history and certainly did not take place in the sixth century B.C. when a remnant from the southern kingdom of Judah returned from the Babylonian exile. This is indicated by the fact that many of these exiles were unfaithful to God as manifested by the fact that they married pagan foreign wives (Ezra 9). However, this will take place during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ according to the prophecies related to this future glorious period.

Zephaniah 3:12 “However, I will surely cause a humble and meek group of people to remain within your midst because they took refuge in the Lord's name.” (Author's translation)

Zephaniah 3:12 predicts that God will leave a humble and lowly people in the city of Jerusalem because they have taken refuge in His name. This adversative is speaking of a remnant of Jews expressing the idea that the God of Israel will cause them to remain in the city of Jerusalem in the sense that they will be spared His judgment because of their humble and lowly character. This remnant of

²⁷⁵ Fruchtenbaum, A. G. (1994). *Israelology: the missing link in systematic theology* (Rev. ed., p. 818). Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries.

Jews whom God will leave in the city of Jerusalem because of their humble and meek character refers to regenerate Jews living in Jerusalem during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Specifically, it speaks of regenerate Jews living in their resurrection bodies and are thus Old Testament Jewish believers and Jewish believers martyred during the tribulation or they are regenerate Jews who survived the judgments of the tribulation but are not yet in their resurrection bodies.

Remnant in the New Testament

There are only three major passages in the New Testament which refer to the doctrine of the remnant of Israel, namely Romans 9-11 and Revelation 7 and 14. Matthew 3:7-10 and Luke 3:7-9 allude to this doctrine.

The following Greek terms are used in relation to the doctrine of the remnant of Israel in the New Testament: (1) noun *leimma* (λεῖμμα), “residue, remnant” since the word pertains to the small part that is left after most is removed. (2) verb *kataleipō* (καταλείπω), “to depart, leave behind” since it expresses in broad terms the idea of leaving or leaving behind, in the sense of departure, abandonment, or setting aside for a special purpose. (3) verb *hupoleipō* (ὑπολείπω), “leave, leave remaining” since this word expresses the idea of leaving something behind, but without the negative connotations of neglect or abandonment associated with *kataleipō*.

Paul also teaches in Romans 11:5 that regenerate Jews living during the church age compose the remnant of Israel.

In Romans 11:1, Paul posing a rhetorical question that is the result of an inference that could be implied from his teaching in Romans chapters nine and ten, namely that God has rejected Israel. He emphatically rejects this idea and then presents himself as living proof that this is not the case.

Romans 11:1 Therefore, I ask, God the Father has not rejected His people, has He? Absolutely not! Because I myself also am an Israelite, a biological descendant of Abraham, descended from the tribe of Benjamin. (Author’s translation)

Then, in Romans 11:2a, he emphatically declares that God has by no means rejected the nation of Israel whom He foreknew. In Romans 11:2b, Paul poses a question in order to introduce the subject of God setting aside a remnant for Himself in Israel in the days of Elijah.

Romans 11:2 God the Father has by no means rejected His people whom He knew in advance. Or, have you totally forgotten what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he repeatedly pleaded with God the Father against Israel? (Author’s translation)

Next, in Romans 11:3, he cites 1 Kings 19:10 to demonstrate that God has not rejected Israel. In this passage, Elijah pleaded with the Father against Israel when he was the lone surviving prophet in Israel who was alone in the desert because he was fleeing Jezebel who sought to murder him.

Romans 11:3 Lord, they have murdered Your prophets. They have destroyed Your altars. I myself alone am left. Also, they are making it a top priority to diligently, earnestly and tenaciously seek my life, sparing no expense to do so because it is of great value to them! (Author’s translation)

In Romans 11:4, Paul presents the Father's response to Elijah's complaint against Israel by citing 1 Kings 19:18, which records God telling him that He had set aside a remnant composed of seven thousand men in Israel that had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Romans 11:4 However, in direct contrast, what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for the benefit of Myself seven thousand men, who are indeed of such character and of a particular class of individuals that have never bowed a knee to Baal." (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 11:5, the apostle teaches that in the same way that God set aside a remnant for Himself in Elijah's day so He had done so in Paul's day in the mid first century according to His sovereign grace.

Romans 11:5 Therefore, in the same way also, there is in existence at this particular moment in history, a remnant in accordance with election by means of grace. (Author's translation)

Summarization of Church's Relationship to Israel

Therefore, we have established that though there is discontinuity with regards to the relationship between Israel and the church, there is also continuity. This is indicated by several factors. First of all, Paul taught in Romans 2:28-29 and 3:21-31 that a true Jew is one who is not only a biological descendant of Jacob whose name was changed by God to "Israel," but also they have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Paul teaches in Romans 9:1-5 that the nation of Israel was given the covenants which is a reference to the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. In Romans 11:17, Paul also teaches that Gentile believers, who he describes as a "wild olive tree," are engrafted into regenerate Israel who he describes as an "olive tree." Consequently, regenerate Gentiles benefit from the promises of the covenant. The Abrahamic covenant is the "rich root" in Romans 11:17. The apostle to the Gentiles also taught in Galatians 3:26-28, Ephesians 2:11-22 and Colossians 3:11 that the church is composed of both regenerate Jew and Gentiles. Paul also teaches in Romans 11:5 that regenerate Jews living during the church age compose the remnant of Israel. Thus, the church and Israel are connected by this remnant of regenerate Jews living during the church age and by the fact that regenerate Gentiles have been engrafted into regenerate Israel. However, they are distinguished from each other because of race. In fact, in support of this the Lord Jesus taught His apostles in Matthew 19:28 that they would be judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This implies that they have authority over Israel. So we know that the apostles' teaching was the foundation of the church and here the Lord is saying that they would have authority over Israel implying that though they are a part of the church, they are also a part of the nation of Israel.

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: In the age when all things are renewed, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (NET)

So all of this makes clear that "replacement theology" or "supersessionism" is in serious error.

Walter Kaiser writes, “Replacement theology...declared that the Church, Abraham’s spiritual seed, had replaced national Israel in that it has transcended and fulfilled the terms of the covenant given to Israel, which covenant Israel had lost because of disobedience.”²⁷⁶

Bruce K. Waltke writes that the New Testament teaches the “hard fact that national Israel and its law have been permanently replaced by the church and the New Covenant.”²⁷⁷

Replacement theology or as some call it “supersessionism” is based on two major premises: (1) the nation of Israel has somehow completed or forfeited its status as the people of God and will never again possess a unique role or function apart from the church; and (2) the church is now the true Israel that has permanently replaced or superseded national Israel as the people of God.

Michael J. Vlach writes, “Supersessionism, then, in the context of Israel and the church, is the view that the New Testament church is the new and/or true Israel that has forever superseded the nation Israel as the people of God. The result is that the church has become the sole inheritor of God’s covenant blessings originally promised to national Israel in the OT. This rules out a future restoration of the nation Israel with a unique identity, role, and purpose that is distinct in any way from the Christian church.”²⁷⁸

Vlach lists several variations of supersessionism, i.e. replacement theology: (1) punitive or retributive: This emphasizes that God has rejected Israel for her disobedience and punishment by God as the reason for its displacement as the people of God. (2) economic: This view teaches that Israel is replaced by the church because her role in the history of redemption expired with the coming of Jesus and the establishment of the church. (3) structural: This view is a hermeneutical approach and refers to the narrative logic of the standard model whereby it renders the Hebrew Scriptures largely indecisive for shaping Christian convictions about how God’s works as Consummator and as Redeemer engage humankind in universal and enduring ways and thus ignores or removes the Hebrew Scriptures of the OT from having a voice.²⁷⁹

Therefore, replacement theology or supersessionism contends that the nation of Israel has absolutely no future whatsoever in the plan of God. Now, those who adhere to this view believe there will be a future “salvation” of Israel, but this salvation does not mean a “restoration” of Israel.

The difference between a salvation of Israel and a restoration of that nation is that salvation means simply that many Jews will believe in Christ and be saved while on the other hand restoration involves Israel being replanted in Palestine and given a role and mission to the nations. A restoration of Israel means that the nation will have a role and a place of prominence that is not shared with any other group including the church.

Dispensationalists accept both concepts and believe Israel as a nation will be saved and they also believe Israel will be restored to a place of prominence among the nations.

²⁷⁶ Michael J. Vlach; *The Master’s Seminary Journal*, volume 20, number 1, page 59

²⁷⁷ Michael J. Vlach; *The Master’s Seminary Journal*, volume 20, number 1, page 59

²⁷⁸ *The Master’s Seminary Journal*, volume 20, number 1, page 60

²⁷⁹ *The Master’s Seminary Journal*, volume 20, number 1, pages 59-64

Now, some supersessionists do not believe in either a salvation or restoration of Israel while some believe in a salvation of Israel but do not believe in a restoration of that nation. No supersessionists believe in a restoration of Israel and is the major factor that distinguishes them from dispensationalists.

Chapter Seventeen: The Church's Relationship to the Mosaic Law

One of the great controversies that have plagued the church for centuries, in fact from its very inception is that of the Mosaic Law. This study will deal with the Mosaic Law in relation to the church and will answer the question, “is the church required to keep the commands and prohibitions of the Mosaic Law” and thus “is the life of the church governed by the Mosaic Law?”

The “Law of Moses” or “Mosaic Law” was given to the nation of Israel according to Romans 9:1-5. The apostle Paul also taught in Romans 9:4-5 that the Law was given to the nation of Israel and thus was not given to the church.

Paul teaches in Romans 9:1-5 that the nation of Israel was given the covenants which is a reference to the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. In Romans 9:1, Paul implicitly appeals to Christ and the Holy Spirit as witnesses as to the veracity of his statements in Romans 9:2-3. Paul feels the need to do this since in his day he was accused by many in Israel as being a traitor to the nation.

Romans 9:1 I am speaking the truth in accordance with the code of Christ. I am by no means lying, while my conscience does confirm to me in accordance with the code of the Holy Spirit. (Author's translation)

Then in Romans 9:2, Paul expresses his great sorrow and unceasing grief over the nation of Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

Romans 9:2 That, as far my feelings are concerned, there is always great sorrow as well as unceasing anguish in my heart. (Author's translation)

Paul in Romans 9:3 communicates to his readers his great love for the nation of Israel by expressing his desire to be separated from Christ for their sake.

Romans 9:3 In fact, I could almost wish that I myself could be accursed, totally and completely separated from Christ as a substitute for my brothers, specifically, my fellow countrymen with respect to racial descent. (Author's translation)

Next, in Romans 9:4-5, he lists eight privileges that were given to the nation of Israel by God that helps the reader understand the depth of his sorrow and grief.

Romans 9:4 Who indeed by virtue of their unique, privileged character are, as an eternal spiritual truth, Israelites. To them belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service and the promises. 5 To them belong the fathers and from them, the Christ with respect to human racial descent, the one who is, as an eternal spiritual truth, God over each and every living and non-living thing, worthy of praise and glorification throughout eternity. Amen! (Author's translation)

The eight privileges listed by Paul in Romans 9:4-5 are as follows: (1) “To whom belongs the adoptions as sons” (2) “The glory” (3) “The covenants” (4) “The giving of the Law” (5) “The temple service” (6) “The promises” (7) “The fathers” (8) “From whom is the Christ according to the flesh”.

The term “Israelites” serves to identify who are Paul’s fellow countrymen with respect to racial descent and as a heading for the list of eight privileges that identify Paul and his fellow countrymen.

Like Romans 3:1-2, these two verses list the spiritual privileges of the Jews. In Romans 3:1, the apostle Paul asks two direct questions of his audience. The first direct question pertains to Paul’s teaching in Romans 2:17-24 regarding the Jew’s false security in his racial heritage and anticipates the objection of the Judaizers. It asks the question: “If the Jews are just as worthy of eternal condemnation as the Gentiles since their racial heritage cannot save them, then what advantage is there to being a Jew?”

The second direct question pertains to Paul’s teaching in Romans 2:25-29 regarding the Jew’s false security in circumcision and anticipates another objection of the Judaizers who were champions of circumcision (Acts 15; Philippians 3:2). It asks the question: “If the Jews are just as worthy of eternal condemnation as the Gentiles since circumcision cannot save them, then what advantage is there to being circumcised?”

In Romans 3:2, Paul answers his own question in order to anticipate the objections of the Judaizers by writing that the primary advantage of being a Jew was that God had entrusted the Old Testament Scriptures to the care of the Jews. This verse answers both direct questions that appear in Romans 3:1 and not just one since the concept of being a Jew and circumcised are inextricably tied to one another because circumcision was the sign of not only God’s covenant with the descendants of Abraham but also the mark of his being a new racial species.

The Old Testament contains not only the Mosaic Law and Messianic prophecies but also it records the promises and covenants that God has made with the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from which, originated the nation of Israel. In the book of Genesis alone, God reveals to the nation of Israel through Moses the origins of the universe, the solar system, the atmosphere, life, man, sin, the total depravity of man, marriage, evil, language, government, culture, the nations, religion, the chosen people (Israel).

In the Old Testament, the prophets predict the First and Second Advents of Christ, His crucifixion, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father as well as His Messianic Reign in Jerusalem with Israel as head of the nations.

Now in Romans 9:4-5, Paul lists more spiritual privileges of the nation of Israel that are directly tied to the Old Testament Scriptures which were mentioned as the first and foremost privilege of the Jews. The reason why they are related is that from these Scriptures is God’s revelation to the nation of Israel of the spiritual privileges bestowed upon her, which are listed in Romans 9:4-5.

In Romans 9:4, “**adoption**” refers to the Old Testament teaching concerning the nation of Israel that they were “God’s son” in a “national” sense meaning that God had set apart Israel from all the nations of the earth for blessing and service (Exodus 4:22-23; Deuteronomy 14:1-2; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1).

“**The glory**” refers to the visible manifestation of God’s presence that appeared to the nation of Israel throughout her history. The glory was also manifested ultimately in the Person and Finished Work of Jesus Christ in hypostatic union during the First Advent (Matt. 17:2-5; John 1:14; 1 Cor. 11:7; 2 Cor. 4:4, 6; Heb. 2:9; Rev. 19:1, 7).

The “**covenants**” is a reference to the four unconditional covenants God established with the nation of Israel: (1) Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18; 26:4; 28:14; 35:11; Ex. 6:2-8). (2) Palestinian (Gn. 13:15; Ex. 6:4, 8; Num. 34:1-12; Dt. 30:1-9; Jer. 32:36-44; Ezek. 36:21-38). (3) Davidic (2 Sam. 7:8-17; Psalms. 89:20-37) (4) New (Jer. 31:31-34; cf. Heb. 8:8-12; 10:15-17).

There are seven great features that are distinct in each of these four unconditional covenants to Israel: (1) Israel will be a nation forever. (2) Israel will possess a significant portion of land forever. (3) Israel will have a King rule over her forever. (4) Israel will have a throne from which Christ will ruler, forever. (5) Israel will have a kingdom forever.

The entire expectation of Old Testament Israel is involved with its earthly kingdom, the glory of Israel and the promised Messiah seated in Jerusalem as ruler of the nations. Since the Lord Jesus Christ literally fulfilled prophecy during His First Advent, then it follows that He will certainly literally fulfill the prophecies related to the millennium at His Second Advent.

“**The giving of the Law**” refers of course to the Mosaic Law.

In Romans 9:4, the translation “**temple service**” is incorrect since the word “temple” does not convey the idea of the noun *latreia*, which simply means, “service.” The translators added it since worship in the temple service connected to the worship of God was of major importance to the nation of Israel as expressed in the Mishnah, “By three things is the world sustained: by the Law, by the [Temple] service, and by deeds of loving-kindness” (m. ‘Abot 1:2). However, it is more likely that when he uses the noun *latreia* in Romans 9:4, Paul is referring to the service in the tabernacle since it preceded the building of the temple by Solomon, which was designed by David.

“**The promises**” refers to the promises contained in the five covenants that God established with the nation of Israel. These promises include Messianic promises.

“**The fathers**” refers to the patriarchs or progenitors of the nation of Israel, namely, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose name was changed later by the Lord to Israel. This is an important privilege because the promises contained in the covenants were given to these men.

The eighth and final privilege is that the Savior of the world would be Jewish.

We can conclude from our study that the Christian is not required to observe the Mosaic Law because Romans 9:1-5 teaches that the Law was given to Israel. Therefore, if the Mosaic Law was given exclusively to the nation of Israel, then, it was never given to the church. This is why in Colossians 2:16, Paul warned the Christians in Colossae to not let anyone make them feel guilty because they didn’t observe the dietary regulations of the Law or the seven great feasts of Israel or a new moon or the Sabbath.

Next, we will note the indivisible and conditional nature of the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law consisted of 365 negative commands and 248 positive for a total of 613 commands. These commands can be divided into three parts or sections: (1) The moral code (2) The ceremonial code (3) Civil or political code. Therefore, we can see that the Law governed every possible area of the life of Israel.

It is common to divide the Mosaic Law into three parts as we noted earlier, but though this is helpful for analysis and the study of the Mosaic Law and the way it functions, such a division is never stated as such in Scripture but rather it is seen as a unit.

Part 1: The Moral Law or the Ten Commandments. This part of the Law governed the moral life giving guidance to Israel in principles of right and wrong in relation to God and man (Exodus 20:1-17).

Part 2: The Ordinances or the Ceremonial Law. This was the spiritual portion of Law, which guided and provided for Israel in her worship and spiritual relationship and fellowship with God. It included the priesthood, tabernacle and sacrifices (Exodus 25-31: Leviticus).

Part 3: The Judgments, or the Social Law. This part of the Law governed Israel in her secular, social, political, and economic life (Exodus 21:1–23:13).

Though the Law is usually divided into three parts, as described above, it is important to see that it was an indivisible unit. Thus, when Paul stated that we are not under the Law, this included all three parts, including the Ten Commandments.

Some will agree that parts of the Old Testament Law have been done away, but assert the Ten Commandments are supposedly still in force today. But all three parts of the Law were designed to function as a unit to guide Israel in all of its life. The Ten Commandments cannot be separated from the rest. Further, even though most recognize this three-fold division, the Jews so numbered all the commands that they approached the Law as a unit.

The Jews did not view the Law as having a three-fold division but rather they divided the 613 commandments of the Law into twelve families of commandments which were then subdivided into twelve additional families of positive and twelve additional families of negative commands. Further, that it is a unit is evident by the fact that the recognition of any of its features, i.e., as a meritorious system of righteousness with God, obligates the person to fulfill the entire Law, as we are taught by both Paul and James (cf. Galatians 3:10, 12; 5:3; James 2:8-11). Further evidence that the Law is a unit is the penalty of death for disobedience is attached to all three parts of the Law.

Noticing the penalties attached to certain commands further emphasizes the unified character of the Law. When the command to keep the Sabbath (one of the “commandments”) was violated by a man who gathered sticks on that day, the penalty was death by stoning (Num. 15:32-36). When the people of Israel violated the command concerning the Sabbatical Year for the land (one of the “judgments”), God sent them into captivity where many died (Jer. 25:11). When Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord (one of the “ordinances”), they immediately died (Lev. 10:1-7). Clearly these commands from various parts of the Law were equally binding and the punishment equally severe. Therefore, the Law was an indivisible unit.

The Mosaic Law was a conditional covenant made specifically for Israel alone to govern her life in the Promised Land. From the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen.12) we see Israel was a chosen nation, an instrument of God to become a channel of blessing to all nations. The Lord was her Theocratic King who was to rule and guide the nation in her destiny that she might not become polluted or contaminated by other Gentile heathen nations and could thus fulfill her purpose. For this reason the Mosaic Law was

instituted to direct Israel as a nation in all spheres of her life: (1) Morally (2) Socially (3) Politically (4) Economically (5) Religiously.

The indwelling presence of the old Adamic sin nature, made it impossible for anyone to obey completely the Mosaic Law. However, in the spirit of the Law it did set forth moral principles which were applicable and would bring blessing to all people anywhere and at any time when applied and used as a standard of right and wrong.

There were certain economic provisions in the Law to govern and protect the economic life of Israel in their promised land. For example there was the right of property ownership, free enterprise, protection of the poor which guarded against the evils of great concentrations of wealth in the hands of a few with the consequent impoverishment of others. But the poor were provided for in such a way as to avoid the loss of free enterprise and the individual's initiative by high taxation as well as to avoid making leeches out of men who refused to work. However, the strict application of these laws to our world is impossible since the original conditions in which God directly intervened cannot be reproduced, at least not until the millennium. Yet, politicians and economists could study and learn much from these laws and principles.

The foundation and basis of the Mosaic Law is the covenant God made with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In several places in Exodus and Deuteronomy, there are references to the Abrahamic Covenant which established the fact that the giving of the Law at Sinai was based on the covenant with Abraham and God's continuing plan for the nation of Israel as a priesthood nation (cf. Ex. 19:4-6; Deut. 4:4-8 with Ex. 2:24-25; Deut. 4:36-38; 29:31; 1 Chron. 16:15-19).

God had given many promises to bless the descendants of Abraham and the heathen Gentile nations through them and these divine promises were reiterated and expanded to Abraham and to Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 12:1f; 15; 17:1ff; 26:24f; 28:13f). The Abrahamic covenant is an unconditional covenant meaning that its ultimate fulfillment is dependent on God's sovereign and faithfulness to His promises to Abraham regardless of Israel's continued disobedience (cf. Ezek. 20:1-44).

The Mosaic Covenant, however, was a conditional covenant. Though its ultimate fulfillment is dependent on God, for any generation to experience the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, there had to be faithfulness to God. Thus, enters the Law, a conditional covenant given to Moses for the nation of Israel after their redemption out of the land of Egypt. It was through obedience to the Mosaic Covenant (the Law) that Israel would be able to experience the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant in the Promised Land. For obedience there would be blessings; for disobedience, cursing (cf. Deut. 28-30).

The Mosaic Law is holy, good, and spiritual (Rom. 7:12, 14) but it was only temporary as the book of Hebrews so clearly teaches. As such, the Mosaic Law was designed to maintain a proper relationship between God and His people Israel (blessing versus cursing), but only until the coming of Messiah and the establishment of a New Covenant.

In the study of the Bible, there are three specific purposes that surface in the proper use of the Mosaic Law. First of all, in a general sense, the Mosaic Law was given to provide a standard of righteousness (Deuteronomy 4:8; Psalm 19:7-9) and in the process, it revealed the righteousness, holiness, and goodness of God (Deut. 4:8; Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7; Rom. 7:12-14). The Law given at

Mount Sinai to Israel was to reveal a holy God and to demonstrate the reality of an infinite gulf that separated man from Him.

Secondly, the Law was given to identify sin and reveal man's sin and bankrupt condition as guilty before God (Rom. 3:19f; 7:7-8; 5:20; Gal. 3:19).

As J. Hampton Keathley Jr. states, "Like the blood-alcohol test is designed to prove men are drunk, so the Law is designed to prove men are sinners, under the wrath of God."

In the book of Romans, Paul taught extensively on the purpose of the Law. He taught that the law in the form of the entire Old Testament canon was given, not as the way of deliverance, but actually condemned the human race (3:19).

Romans 3:19 Now, we know for certain that whatever the Law says, it speaks for the benefit of those under the jurisdiction of the Law in order that each and every mouth may be silenced and in addition all the unsaved inhabitants of the cosmic system may be demonstrated as guilty in the judgment of God. (Author's Translation)

The law makes the sinner aware of sin in their life (3:20).

Romans 3:20 Because each and every member of sinful humanity will never be justified in His judgment by means of actions produced by obedience to the Law for through the Law there does come about an awareness of the sin nature. (Author's Translation)

The introduction of the Law increased the transgression of Adam in the sense that the Law exposed man's sinful nature to disobey the revealed will of God and in fact stimulated man's sinful nature to disobey the revealed will of God.

Romans 5:20 Now, the Law was an addendum in order that the transgression might increase but where personal sin increased, grace infinitely abounded. (Author's Translation)

The apostle Paul teaches in Romans 4:15 that the purpose of the Law was to bring about wrath but where there is no law, there is no violation.

Romans 4:15 For, the Law, as an eternal spiritual truth, produces righteous indignation but where there is, at any time, the total absence of the Law, neither, is there, as an eternal spiritual truth, violation. (Author's Translation)

No one will ever be justified by obedience to the law because of the presence of the sin nature (3:20).

Romans 3:20 Because each and every member of sinful humanity will never be justified in His judgment by means of actions produced by obedience to the Law for through the Law there does come about an awareness of the sin nature. (Author's Translation)

God's holy Law reveals to man just who and what he is, namely, sinful and separated from God by an infinite gulf that he is unable to bridge in his own human strength.

Lastly, the Law was given to shut man up to faith, i.e., to exclude the works of the Law (or any system of works) as a system of merit for either salvation or sanctification and thereby lead him to Christ as the only means of righteousness (Galatians 3:19-20, 20-24; 1 Timothy 1:8-9; Romans 3:21-24).

In Romans 3:21-26, Paul teaches that a person is justified as a gift of God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ and by not keeping the Law. Romans 3:21a teaches that the righteousness of God as revealed by the Person and Work of Jesus Christ is manifested through the communication of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Romans 3:21b teaches that the righteousness of God as revealed by the Person and Work of Jesus Christ and the gospel, which offers the gift of God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ were attested to by the Old Testament Scriptures.

Romans 3:21 But now, independently of seeking to be justified by obedience to the Law, the righteousness originating from God is being manifested at the present time while simultaneously being attested to by the Law and the Prophets. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:22 teaches that the righteousness of God can be received by anyone whether Jew or Gentile, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:22 Namely, the righteousness originating from God through faith in Jesus who is the Christ for the benefit of each and every person who does believe for there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no distinction. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:23 teaches that the reason why anyone, whether Jew or Gentile can receive the gift of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ and be declared justified by God is that both groups have sinned. Thus, they are always failing to measure up to the glory of God, who is Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:23 For each and every person has sinned consequently, they are always failing to measure up to the glory originating from God. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:24a teaches that justification is based upon God's grace. Romans 3:24b teaches that justification is made possible by means of the work of redemption that was accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ's death on the cross.

Romans 3:24 with the result that they might, as an eternal spiritual truth, be undeservedly justified based upon His grace by means of the redemption, which is by means of the death of Christ who is Jesus. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:25a teaches that God the Father offered publicly at the cross of Calvary His Son Jesus Christ to sinful mankind as a propitiatory gift. Romans 3:25b teaches that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross demonstrated the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:25 Whom God the Father offered publicly as a propitiatory gift through faith by means of His blood in order to demonstrate His righteousness because of the deliberate and temporary suspension of judgment of the sins, which have taken place in the past on the basis of the tolerance originating from the character and nature of God the Father. (Author's translation)

Romans 3:26 teaches the communication of the gospel during the church age demonstrates the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:26 Correspondingly, in relation to the demonstration of His righteousness during this present distinct period of history, that He Himself is, as an eternal spiritual truth, inherently righteous, even while justifying anyone by means of faith in Jesus. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:27, Paul teaches that the law or the principle of faith in Jesus Christ in order to be justified before God excludes human merit and pride.

Romans 3:27 Under what conditions then, is there at any time pride and boasting? It has, as an eternal spiritual truth, been excluded! By what kind of principle? By means of actions produced by obedience to the Law? Absolutely not! But rather by means of the principle, which is faith. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 3:28, he teaches that justification is by means of faith in Jesus Christ, independently of actions produced by obedience to the Law.

Romans 3:28 Because we are always of the firm conviction that a person is, as an eternal spiritual truth, justified by means of faith independently of actions produced by obedience to the Law. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:29, Paul teaches that God is not the God of the Jews only but also the God of the Gentiles as well.

Romans 3:29 Or, is God, as an eternal spiritual truth, in authority over the Jews only? Is He, as an eternal spiritual truth, unequivocally not in authority over the Gentiles also? Absolutely! Also, over the Gentiles. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:30, Paul writes that there is one and the same God for both Jew and Gentile and who therefore has only one means of justifying both groups, namely, faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:30 If, in fact-and let us assume that it's true for the sake of argument, there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, one and the same God, who will certainly, as an eternal spiritual truth, justify the circumcision by means of faith as a source and the uncircumcision by means of faith. (Author's translation)

In Romans 3:31, Paul teaches that faith in Jesus Christ upholds the Law rather than rendering it useless.

Romans 3:31 Are we then attempting to render useless at the present time the Law by means of faith? Absolutely not! On the contrary, we do uphold the Law. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul taught the Colossian church that Jesus Christ is the substantive reality of the Mosaic Law.

Colossians 2:16 Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-17 things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (NASB95)

“**Things**” is pointing back to the nouns *brōsis*, “**food**,” *posis*, “**drink**,” *heortē*, “**feast**,” *neomēnia*, “**new moon**,” and *sabbaton*, “**Sabbath**,” which all appear in Colossians 2:16.

“**A *mere* shadow**” is used prophetically of the relation of type to antitype.

“**Of what is to come**” indicates that the dietary regulations, seven great feasts, the new moon and the Sabbath which are prescribed in the Mosaic Law for Israel to observe are all a shadow of “the things to come.” Paul is speaking of these things from the perspective that the Son of God had yet to enter the human race. Therefore, this phrase is referring to the First and Second Advents of Jesus Christ from the perspective that they are still yet future.

“**But the substance belongs to Christ**” stands in contrast to the previous assertion.

“**The substance**” is the noun *sōma* (σῶμα), which means “the reality” or “the substantive reality” since it pertains to the antitype in contrast to the type and pertains to an entity which corresponds to a type which foreshadows it.

Colossians 2:16 Therefore, continue making it your habit of not letting anyone condemn any of you as guilty because of food or because of drink or because of a particular feast or new moon or a Sabbath. 17 These are, as an eternal spiritual truth a shadow, namely, the things which will inevitably come but the substantive reality is, as an eternal spiritual truth specifically the Christ. (Author’s Translation)

The apostle makes two assertions in Colossians 2:17. The first is that the dietary regulations, the seven feasts, the new moon and the Sabbath which he mentions in Colossians 2:16 are as an eternal spiritual a shadow. He then defines what he means by “a shadow” by asserting that they are the things which will inevitably come, which is referring to the First and Second Advents of Jesus Christ from the perspective that they are still yet future.

In this first assertion, Paul is speaking from the perspective of living during the dispensation of the Mosaic Law prior to the First and Second Advents of Jesus Christ or in other words, he is speaking of these things when the Son of God had yet to enter the human race.

The second assertion in Colossians 2:17 stands in contrast with the first and states that the substantive reality of these various aspects of the Mosaic Law is as an eternal spiritual truth specifically the Christ.

The Christ is the substantive reality of the dietary regulations, seven great feasts, the new moon and the Sabbath which are prescribed in the Mosaic Law for Israel to observe. This means that Jesus Christ is the antitype and the dietary regulations, seven great feasts, the new moon and the Sabbath which are prescribed in the Mosaic Law for Israel to observe typify Him and specifically who He is and what He did during His First Advent and what He will do during His Second Advent.

As we noted, “**shadow**” is used prophetically of the relation of type to antitype and pertains to a faint archetype which foreshadows a later reality.

Zuck writes “A type has a predictive or foreshadowing element to it. It looks ahead and anticipates and points to the antitype. A type is a shadow (Col. 2:17) that points ahead to another reality. A type is a form of prophecy. Prophecy is prediction by means of words, whereas typology is prediction by correspondence between two realities, the type and the antitype. Again there are many similarities and resemblances in the Scriptures, but not every correspondence or resemblance is a type. To be an official type, the correspondence or resemblance must have a predictive element, a foreshadowing and anticipation of the antitype. The type, in other words, has a forward focus...Marsh stated this view as follows: ‘Just so much of the Old Testament is to be accounted typical as the New Testament affirms to be so, and no more.’²⁸⁰ In summary, a type must have at least these five elements: a notable resemblance or correspondence between the type and the antitype, historical reality in both the type and the antitype, a prefiguring or predictive foreshadowing of the antitype by the type, a heightening in which the antitype is greater than the type, and divine design²⁸¹.”²⁸²

So here in Colossians 2:17, the antitype is Jesus Christ and the type is the dietary regulations, seven great feasts, the new moon and the Sabbath which are prescribed in the Mosaic Law for Israel to observe. Jesus Christ is greater of course than all these things since He is the Son of God and gave them to Israel to observe. Jesus Christ is a historical person and all these things related to the Mosaic Law are also historical realities since Israel observed these things for centuries. All of these things related to the Law prefigure or are a predictive foreshadowing of Jesus Christ and were all designed to point to Jesus Christ who was the fulfillment of these things.

Some interpreters contend that the noun *sōma* here in Colossians 2:17 refers to the body of Christ or in other words the church. Some argue it refers to the physical human body of Jesus but the context indicates that Paul is contrasting the person, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ with the various aspects of the Mosaic Law.

In Colossians 2:8-23, Paul is teaching the Colossians that the Judaizers’ attempt to get them to live their lives according to the Mosaic Law is opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ which he exhorts them to continue to live by. The Mosaic Law does not apply to them but rather the gospel of Jesus Christ since it was His death and resurrection which provided them eternal life and their identification with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection served as the basis for their Christian walk.

A contrast between Jesus Christ’s human body and the Law or a contrast between the church and the Law does not fit the context. Paul is concerned that the Colossians reject the Judaizers’ misapplication and misuse of the Law and continue to adhere to his gospel and specifically His teaching about Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection and their union and identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. Furthermore, up to this point in Colossians, Paul has been emphasizing with the Colossians the superiority of Christ and sufficiency of Christ in their lives (cf. Col. 1:15-20; 2:9-15).

²⁸⁰ Herbert Marsh, *Lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible* (London: J.G. & Rivington, 1838), 373.

²⁸¹ Campbell, D. K. (1991). Foreword. In C. Buebeck Sr. (Ed.), *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (pp. 174–175). Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook.

²⁸² Campbell, D. K. (1991). Foreword. In C. Buebeck Sr. (Ed.), *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (pp. 173–174). Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook.

How is Jesus Christ the fulfillment of dietary regulations, seven great feasts, the new moon and the Sabbath which are prescribed in the Mosaic Law for Israel to observe? First of all, with regards to the seven great feasts, Jesus Christ is the literal fulfillment of Passover because of His death on the cross (1 Cor. 5:7). He is also the literal fulfillment of the feast of Unleavened Bread because of His impeccable life and person (1 Cor. 5:7-8) and He is the fulfillment of the feast of First-Fruits because of His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-23). He fulfilled the feast of Pentecost in that He sent the Spirit to indwell the church on the day of Pentecost (Joel 2:28; cf. Acts 2:1-47). Jesus Christ will fulfill the feast of Trumpets in that He will administer the seven trumpet judgments during the tribulation portion of Daniel's seventieth week. He will be the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement at His Second Advent (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:26-27; Heb. 9:19-28). Lastly, the Lord Jesus Christ will fulfill the feast of Tabernacles with His millennial reign. In regards to the Sabbath, Jesus Christ is the Christian's spiritual rest (Heb. 4:3, 9, 11). With regards to the new moon, Jesus Christ was its fulfillment since the new moon designated the beginning of a new month of the Jewish calendar and Israel was told to offer sacrifices on this day to worship the Lord and these sacrifices were fulfilled by Him and pointed to His cross. The dietary regulations of the Mosaic Law were fulfilled by Jesus Christ in the sense that these dietary regulations were designed to set the citizens of the nation of Israel apart from their pagan Gentile neighbors. In other words, they were designed to sanctify them in relation to their Gentile neighbors. The Jew who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior is sanctified as a result of being identified with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection through the baptism of the Spirit. Lastly, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Mosaic Law since He obeyed the Mosaic Law perfectly during His First Advent (Matt. 5:17; Rom. 8:3-4).

So for these reasons, the faithful Christians in Colossae, were to reject the Judaizers attempt to get them to govern their lives by the various commands and prohibitions in the Mosaic Law. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Mosaic Law and the substantive reality of the ceremonial aspect of the Law and the moral aspect of the Law.

In Romans 7:1-6, Paul taught the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome that Jewish Christians are not under the authority of the Mosaic Law because they are identified with Christ in His death on the cross and thus Gentile Christians are not under the authority of the Mosaic Law as well. Consequently, they are not required to observe the Sabbath or circumcision or the dietary regulations whose observance was prescribed under the Mosaic Law.

In Romans 7:1, in which Paul poses a rhetorical question to the Jewish Christians in Rome and asks if they are ignorant of the fact that the Mosaic Law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives.

Romans 7:1 Or, are some of you in a state of ignorance concerning this fact spiritual brothers (specifically, I am now addressing those who are very familiar with the Law through instruction), namely, that the Law does, as an eternal spiritual truth, have jurisdiction over a person during the entire extent of time they do live? (Author's translation)

That Paul is addressing the Jewish Christians in Rome specifically in this passage is indicated in his parenthetical statement **"I am now addressing those who are very familiar with the Law through instruction."** Thus, when he uses the term "Law" he is referring specifically, to the Mosaic Law, i.e. the Jewish law and not to an axiom of political justice both Jewish and Roman.

Now, even though Paul's comments in verses 1-6 are specifically directed towards the Jewish Christians in Rome, these comments would also be of benefit for the Gentile Christians as well in that it

would protect them from the Judaizers' legalistic teaching, which the Galatian church fell victim to (See Galatians 5).

Then, in Romans 7:2, Paul presents the principle found in the Mosaic Law that a woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives but if he dies, she is discharged from her marriage contract with her husband.

Romans 7:2 For example, the married woman is always bound by contract to the husband while he does live. However, if the husband dies, then she is, as an eternal spiritual truth, discharged from the contract with respect to her husband. (Author's translation)

Paul teaches in Romans 7:3 that if a Jewish woman's husband dies, then she is not an adulteress if she remarries.

Romans 7:3 Therefore, based upon what has been previously stated, if while her husband does live she enters into marriage with another man, then she will, as a certainty, cause herself to be known publicly as an adulteress. However, if her husband dies then she is, as an eternal spiritual truth free from the contract with the result that she is, as an eternal spiritual truth not an adulteress if she enters into marriage with another man. (Author's translation)

In Romans 7:4, Paul teaches that in the same way that a Jewish wife is discharged from the marriage contract with her deceased husband and free to marry another so the Christian has been discharged from the Law and was married to Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 7:4 Therefore, my spiritual brothers, all of you without exception have also been put to death by means of Christ's body with the result that all of you have been entered into marriage with another, the one who was raised from the dead ones in order that we might produce fruit for the benefit of God the Father. (Author's translation)

In Romans 7:4a, he teaches that the Jewish Christians in Rome were dead with respect to the Mosaic Law through the body of Christ or in other words their identification with Christ in His physical death.

At the moment of conversion, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. The baptism of the Spirit results in positional sanctification and the potential to experience sanctification in time and the guarantee of perfective sanctification at the resurrection of the church.

By positionally, I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ since at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ, identifying him with Christ's crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1).

"Positional sanctification" is the believer's "entrance" into the plan of God for the church age resulting in eternal security as well as two categories of positional truth (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter

1:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:26-27; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Romans 6:3, 8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).

“Retroactive” positional truth is the church age believer’s identification with Christ in His death and burial (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:12). In other words, when Christ, died God considers the believer to have died with Him.

“Current” positional truth is the church age believer’s identification with Christ in His resurrection, ascension and session (See Ephesians 2:4-6; Colossians 3:1-4). In other words, when Christ was raised and seated at the right hand of the Father, the Father considers the believer to have been raised and seated with Christ as well.

“Positional sanctification”: (1) What God has done for the church age believer. (2) His viewpoint of the church age believer. (3) Sets up the potential to experience sanctification in time. (4) Provides the believer with the guarantee of receiving a resurrection body.

“Experiential sanctification” is the function of the church age believer’s spiritual life in time through obedience to the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God (John 17:17; Romans 6:19, 22; 2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7; 1 Timothy 2:15). It is the post-justification experience of the believer who is in fellowship with God by confessing any known sin to the Father when necessary followed by obedience to the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the Word of God.

Experiential sanctification is only a *potential* since it is contingent upon the church age believer responding to what God has done for them at the moment of conversion, therefore, only believers who are obedient to the Word of God will experience sanctification in time.

“Perfective sanctification” is the perfection of the church age believer’s spiritual life at the rapture, i.e. resurrection of the church, which is the completion of the plan of God for the church age believer (1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Galatians 6:8; 1 Peter 5:10; John 6:40). It is the *guarantee* of a resurrection body and will be experienced by every believer regardless of their response in time to what God has done for them at salvation.

All three stages of sanctification refer to the process of conforming the believer into the image of Jesus Christ, which is the Father’s plan from eternity past (Romans 8:28-30).

Next, in Romans 7:4b, the apostle Paul teaches that the Jewish Christians in Rome and all Christians for that matter have been married to Christ in order to bear fruit for God the Father.

Then, in Romans 7:5, Paul taught the Roman believers that prior to their conversion to Christianity, when they were in bondage to the sin nature, the sinful passions of their sin natures produced personal sin as a result of their permitting these desires to be operative in their human bodies.

Romans 7:5 For you see, when we were once in a perpetual state of being in bondage to our flesh, the sinful desires, which were aroused by means of the Law were perpetually allowed to be operative in the members of our body resulting in the production of fruit related to spiritual death. (Author’s translation)

This passage describes the Roman Christians prior to their conversion to Christianity whereas Romans 7:6 describes their present status of having been freed from the Law, having died to it and now having the capacity to serve in newness of the Spirit.

Next, in Romans 7:6, Paul teaches the Jewish Christians in Rome that they have been discharged from their legal and moral obligations to the Mosaic Law as a result of being identified with Christ in His physical death. Consequently, he teaches that they are forever in a state of being slaves for the benefit of the Father. This he teaches was by means of the extraordinary work of the Holy Spirit the moment they trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior and never by means of the useless observance of the letter of the Law.

Romans 7:6 But now in our present state, we have been discharged from the Law as a result of having died with respect to that which we were once in a perpetual state of being bound. Consequently, we are, as an eternal spiritual truth, forever slaves for the benefit of God the Father by means of the extraordinary work of the Spirit and never by means of the useless observance of the letter, which is the Law. (Author's translation)

We can conclude from our study that the Christian is not required to observe the Mosaic Law since Romans 7:1-6 teaches that the Christian has died to the Mosaic Law. Therefore, if the Christian has died to the Law because of their identification with Christ in His death, then they are not required to observe the Law. This is why in Colossians 2:16, Paul warned the Christians in Colossae to not let anyone make them feel guilty because they didn't observe the dietary regulations of the Law or the seven great feasts of Israel or a new moon or the Sabbath.

The life of the nation of Israel was to be governed by the Mosaic Law whereas the gospel of Jesus Christ as presented by Jesus and the apostles in the Greek New Testament is to govern the life of the church.

The good news for the Christian is that they have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Jesus Christ at the Father's right hand and this identification delivers them not only from sin and Satan but also it means that they have died to the Mosaic Law as well.

Chapter Eighteen: The Church's Relationship to the Sabbath

The term “Sabbath” and the observance of the Sabbath are not explicitly mentioned in the Bible until the book of Exodus. However, it is obviously being alluded to in Genesis 2:2-3, which teaches that God rested or ceased from His creative and restorative activity on the seventh day.

The observance of the Sabbath is found in the Ten Commandments. The book of Exodus records the Lord ordering the Israelites to observe the Sabbath (Exodus 16:21-26; 20:8-11).

Now, Exodus 20:8-11 makes clear that the observance of the Sabbath is connected to the fact that God Himself rested on the seventh day after six days of work (Genesis 2:2-3). The Sabbath is thus an invitation to rejoice in God's creation and to acknowledge that He is sovereign. Deuteronomy 5:15 gives another reason for observing the Sabbath and connects the Sabbath with Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Therefore, every Sabbath the Israelites were to bring into remembrance that the Lord delivered them from Egyptian bondage by means of His omnipotence. Exodus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:14-15 and Exodus 23:12 teach that the Sabbath was for the benefit of both man and animal in Israel. Lastly, Exodus 31:13, 17, Ezekiel 20:12 and 20 teach that it was a sign of the covenant between the Lord and Israel. Thus, those in Israel who failed to keep the Sabbath were put to death (Exodus 31:14; Numbers 15:32-36; Jeremiah 17:19-27).

The keeping of the Sabbath would affirm one's loyalty to the Lord and would guarantee His presence and deliverance. The observance of the Sabbath was designed to be a benefit for people in that it would contribute to making them spiritually stronger and draw them closer to God. The Sabbath day would bring about a change in one's weekly routine, which would be a day of refreshment. It was a day to focus upon His will.

Exodus 20:11 teaches the Israelites that the basis for the Sabbath day observance is God creating the time, matter, space continuum as well as mankind and restoring the heavens and the earth which was judged by God due to Satan's rebellion against God. The fact that God is said to have “ceased” from His activity does not mean that He was tired but simply that He was satisfied with His work, which He had brought to completion by the seventh day. It means that there was nothing He could add to what He already accomplished during the six days, thus, it was perfect in every detail.

In Exodus 31:13, the Lord commands Moses to tell the Israelites that they must keep His Sabbaths, which refers not only to observing the seventh day as a period of rest to worship the Lord but also involves observing the laws concerning the sabbath rest for the land which is mentioned in Exodus 23:10-13. It is also used in connection with the gathering of manna which is mentioned in Exodus 16:21-26.

The Lord tells Moses in Exodus 31:13 that these Sabbaths were a sign between Him and the Israelites. He repeats this to Moses in Exodus 31:17 and is also reiterated in Ezekiel 20:12 and 20. The repetition emphasizes the importance the Lord attached to the Israelites observing His Sabbaths.

The keeping of the Sabbath would affirm one's loyalty to the Lord and would guarantee His presence and deliverance and would manifest to the heathen nations the covenant relationship the Israelites possessed with the Lord. The Israelites must conscientiously observe the Sabbath as a

testimony of the Lord's finished work in the restoration of the earth and was an essential part of their sanctification as a people.

The observance of the Sabbath as a corporate unit by the Israelites would serve as a powerful testimony to the heathen nations surrounding them that they were a people set apart to serve the Lord exclusively and would demonstrate that Yahweh was present with the Israelites.

The Lord tells Moses in Exodus 31:13 and 16 that the observance of the Sabbath was applicable for all subsequent generations and was perpetual. The purpose of this perpetual observance of the Sabbath was that the Israelites would know that the Lord is the one who sanctifies them. This means that observance of the Sabbath by the Israelites would manifest the fact that the Israelites were chosen from all the nations of the earth to be a people who represent Him to the rest of the nations.

In Exodus 31:14, the Israelites were to keep the Sabbath because “**it is holy for you**” which denotes that the Israelites must keep Saturday as a day set aside exclusively for God, i.e. worshipping Him. This day should be set aside exclusively by the Israelites as a day to bring into remembrance who God is and what He has done for them resulting in worshipping Him, i.e. giving thanks to Him.

Since the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant between the Lord and Israel, those in Israel who failed to keep the Sabbath were put to death (Exodus 31:14; Numbers 15:32-36; Jeremiah 17:19-27).

Numbers 15:32-36 records the Israelites stoning a man found gathering wood on the Sabbath day.

In Romans 7:1-6, Paul taught the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome that Jewish Christians are not under the authority of the Mosaic Law because they are identified with Christ in His death on the cross and thus Gentile Christians are not under the authority of the Mosaic Law as well. Consequently, they are not required to observe the Sabbath or circumcision or the dietary regulations whose observance was prescribed under the Mosaic Law.

The apostle Paul also taught in Romans 9:4-5 that the Law was given to the nation of Israel and thus was not given to the church. The church age believer is not commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ or by His apostles to observe the Sabbath. In fact, as we noted, Paul teaches in Romans 7:1-6 that the church age believer has died to the Law. Thus, they are not required to observe the Sabbath which was prescribed by God for the nation of Israel to observe under the Mosaic Law. Thus, the church age believer is not to permit people who have been Judaized to criticize them because they do not observe the Sabbath like they do.

Colossians 2:16 Therefore, continue making it your habit of not letting anyone condemn any of you as guilty because of food or because of drink or because of a particular feast or new moon or a Sabbath. (Author's Translation)

Paul orders the Colossians continue to make it their habit of not letting anyone of the Judaizers condemn any of them as guilty because of food or drink or because of a particular feast or a new moon or Sabbath.

The Sabbath reference is of course speaking of the seventh day of the Jewish week which served as a ceremonial day of rest in Israel which today in our culture would be Saturday. This day began at

sundown on Friday and ended at sunset on Saturday. Everything that Paul mentioned here in Colossians 2:16 is related to the Mosaic Law. Therefore, in Colossians 2:16 Paul is commanding the Colossians to continue to make it their habit of not letting any of the Judaizers condemn them as guilty before God because they did not observe the various prohibitions and commands prescribed in the Mosaic Law.

We can conclude from our study that the Christian is not required to observe the Sabbath. As we noted, Romans 7:1-6 teaches that the Christian has died to the Mosaic Law and Romans 9:1-5 teaches that the Law was given to Israel. Therefore, if the Mosaic Law was given exclusively to the nation of Israel, then, it was never given to the church.

If the Christian has died to the Law because of their identification with Christ in His death, then they are not required to observe the Law and the Sabbath as prescribed in the Law. This is why in Colossians 2:16, Paul warned the Christians in Colossae to not let anyone make them feel guilty because they didn't observe the dietary regulations of the Law or the seven great feasts of Israel or a new moon or the Sabbath.

You cannot find one passage in the New Testament epistles or gospels where the church age believer is commanded to observe the Sabbath. The life of the nation of Israel was to be governed by the Mosaic Law whereas the gospel of Jesus Christ as presented by Jesus and the apostles in the Greek New Testament is to govern the life of the church. Thus, Sabbath observance is not required for the church age believer since the observance of the Sabbath was prescribed in the Mosaic Law for the citizens of the nation of Israel to observe. The life of the church is not to be governed by the Mosaic Law but rather by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Nineteen: The Church's Relationship to Civil Government

The Scriptures teach that God has delegated authority to certain people to govern the affairs of certain members of the human race and to carry out capital punishment of those individuals who commit capital crimes. These people are servants of God according to Romans 13:1-7. This passage refers to one of four institutions established by God. God has also established four institutions to protect the freedom of individuals. Each is a system of authority designed to protect the freedom of members of the human race, both unbeliever and the believer: (1) Volition: You have authority over your own soul (Genesis 2:16-17). (2) Marriage: Husband has authority over the wife (Genesis 2:22-24). (3) Family: Parents have authority over the children (Genesis 4:1). (4) Government: Government has authority over its citizens (Genesis 9:5-6).

Each institution is a system of authority designed to protect the freedom of members of the human race, both unbeliever and the believer. Authority is the right to rule and make decisions. It is the power or right to enforce obedience and is the right to control, command or determine.

God has instituted authority in order to: (1) Protect free will (volition) (2) Protect the human race from self-destruction (3) Give order to life (4) Maintain peace (5) Allow the Gospel to spread and influence people. (6) To support the believer's witness by their authority orientation in the devil's world.

God has absolute authority, which He expresses through both the written Word and in the living Word. God's authority establishes freedom, freedom requires responsibility, and responsibility protects freedom and restrains authority. There is authority in every aspect of life. There is even authority within the Trinity even though each member is co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal with each other.

God the Father grants authority to the Son and directs the Holy Spirit. God the Father has granted all authority in both heaven and on earth to His Son Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18; John 5:26-27; 1 Corinthians 15:25-28). God the Father also directs the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit receives His authority from both the Father and the Son.

The resurrection, ascension, triumphal procession and session points to the fact that the incarnate Son of God has been promoted by God the Father as Sovereign Ruler over the following: (1) Creation (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:10; 1 Peter 3:22). (2) Church (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14; 19:16). (3) Israel (Matthew 1:1; 20:30; Mark 10:47-48; Luke 1:32; 2 Timothy 2:8; Revelation 3:7; 5:5; 22:16). (4) Angels (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:10; 1 Peter 3:22).

The Scriptures teach that there are several categories of authority: (1) Christ's Authority (Philippians 2:8; John 5:26-27; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:10; Ephesians 1:22) (2) Biblical Authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). (3) Angelic Authority (Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:16). (4) Apostolic Authority (Luke 9:1; 2 Corinthians 10:8). (5) Pastoral Authority (1 Peter 5:1-3; Hebrews 13:17). (6) Spousal Authority (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18). (7) Parental Authority (Deut. 21:18-21; Prov. 1:7-9; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20). (8) Governmental Authority (Rm. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13).

If these four divine institutions (volition, marriage, parents, government) are undermined by the refusal to submit to these systems of authority then all of society will crumble. If your free will is taken away from you, you will have lost your freedom to make your own decisions in life. If the man's authority in the marriage is taken away, marriage will fall apart and both men and women will lose their

protection which marriage provides for them. If the parent's authority over the children is taken away, the children are left unprotected and are in danger. If the authority of the government is not respected and if the government stops, the individuals in that nation are left unprotected and are in great danger of another nation invading and taking away their freedom.

A disrespect of authority will lead to loss of freedom in society and will lead to danger and people will live in fear. Human government has been established by God in order to protect the freedom, the privacy, the property and the lives of individuals in a nation. The murder of an individual is a violation of a person's volition, divine institution number one. Human government has been established by God in order to practice capital punishment as a means of punishing the criminal. The individual is to respect the laws of human government.

Genesis 9:5-6

Genesis 9:5-6 records for us the establishment of the fourth and final divine institution and capital punishment.

Genesis 9:5 “Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.” (NASB95)

The Word of God prohibits murder according to Exodus 20:13 and is one of the sins that God hates according to Proverbs 6:16-19 and according to Genesis 9:6 is to be punished through capital punishment.

“**I will require**” is the verb *darash*, which is a judicial term used with reference to both men and animals and expresses the fact God seeks “restitution” for murder by the execution of the murderer or the animal who has taken a human life.

As a result of the total depravity of mankind, God instituted capital punishment in order to protect both animal and human life and to curb violence and be a deterrent to crime. The reason why this provision is given is found in the phrase “**for in the image of God, He (the Lord) made** (*asah*, “modeled”) (the soul of) **man.**”

The emphasis of this stipulation recorded in Genesis 9:5-6 does “not” refer to vengeance but rather justice and the careful recognition of the sacredness of the divine image in man, though marred by sin.

Murder is a shocking affront to God and a terrible crime against one's fellow man. Before the Flood the lack of capital punishment led to blood vendettas (Genesis 4) and without instinctive fear, the animals corrupted their behavior.

Genesis 9:5-6 records the institution of human government where God delegated authority to mankind as His agents in exacting retribution by capital punishment upon those who take a human life indicating as well that this is not a personal matter but a social obligation. Before the Flood, there was no formal arrangement of human government and thus no formal punishment of crime or of crime prevention, even for the capital crime of murder, as evident in the individual histories of Cain and Lamech (Genesis 4).

The absence of human government and the total depravity of mankind led to a universal state of violence and anarchy, which resulted in the judgment of the Flood. God established capital punishment and thereby human government in order to prevent the conditions of the antediluvian period from developing again.

So, capital punishment is the lawful taking of human life by the civil or military authorities. The death penalty was inflicted by all nations in the ancient world. In Israel, the main method was stoning, amongst other nations, other forms such as hanging, beheading and crucifixion were used. The ultimate authority for the death penalty lies with God alone.

In Old Testament Israel, there were various causes of the death penalty: (1) Sacrilege (Exodus 19:12-13) (2) Serious abuse of one's parents (Exodus 21:15, 17; Deuteronomy 21:18-21; Matthew 15:4) (3) Adultery (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22; John 8:5) (4) Blasphemy (Leviticus 24:16; John 19:7) (5) Idolatry (Leviticus 20:2) (5) Immorality (Leviticus 20:11-16; Deuteronomy 22:21-25) (6) Kidnapping (Exodus 21:16) (7) Murder (Genesis 9:6; Exodus 21:12) (8) Rebellion (Deuteronomy 17:12) (9) Sabbath-breaking (Exodus 31:14-15; Numbers 15:32-36) (10) Witchcraft (Leviticus 20:27; 1 Samuel 28:9) (11) Rape of a betrothed virgin (Deuteronomy 22:23-29) (12) Bestiality (Exodus 22:19) (13) Child sacrifice (Leviticus 20:2-5).

In the Scriptures, there were various means of executing the death penalty: (1) Beheading (Genesis 40:19; Mark 6:27; cf. Matthew 14:9-10) (2) Burning (Daniel 3:6) (3) Crucifixion (Matthew 27:26; cf. Mark 15:15; cf. John 19:16; Matthew 27:38; cf. Mark 15:27; Luke 23:33) (4) Hanging (Genesis 40:22; Deuteronomy 21:22-23; Acts 5:30; Galatians 3:13) (5) Impalement (Ezra 6:11; Esther 2:23; 5:14; 7:9-10; 9:12-13) (6) Stoning (Leviticus 24:23; Deuteronomy 21:18-21) (a) Stoning was the duty of the whole community (Leviticus 20:2; 24:14; Numbers 15:35) (b) Stoning carried out lawfully (Leviticus 24:23; Numbers 15:36; Joshua 7:25) (c) Stoning carried out unlawfully (1 Kings 21:11-13; 2 Chronicles 24:21; Acts 7:54-59). (7) The sword (Exodus 32:27; 1 Samuel 15:33; 22:18-19; 1 Kings 2:29, 46; 2 Chronicles 23:14-15; Daniel 2:5; Acts 12:2; Hebrews 11:37) (8) Wild beasts (Daniel 6:16).

Numbers 35:30-34, Deuteronomy 17:6-7 and 19:15 teach that capital punishment "cannot" take place unless there are two or more witnesses to the crime and that they all agree in their testimony after being individually interviewed. Capital punishment is taught in the Old Testament (Exodus 21:12, 15-17; 22:2, 18-20; Num. 35:6-34; Deut. 19:1-13; 24:7) and in the New Testament (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13). The fact that capital punishment was instituted does "not" mean that there is never to be an exception to the punishment of execution for the crime of murder.

With God, justice may be tempered with mercy, in response to repentance. For example, David was guilty of the capital crimes of murder and adultery in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba respectively and God forgave David when he confessed his sin and thus David instead of dying by stoning or the sword as he deserved, "died in a good old age, full of days, riches and honor" (1 Chron. 29:28). In like manner, a judge or a governor is warranted in taking such mitigating factors as may exist in a given situation into consideration in determining a sentence, legal penalty of capital punishment.

The essential point is that man was delegated authority and responsibility of human government by God and that this responsibility first entails the recognition of the sacredness of human life and that man is created in the image of God and the recognition of capital punishment as the just and legal penalty for murder. It is clear that the authority for capital punishment implies also the authority to establish laws

governing human activities and personal relationships, which if unregulated would lead to murder, robbery, adultery, thus this instruction to Noah is the fundamental basis for all human legal and governmental institutions.

Human government was designed by God to protect the freedom of the individual, both believers and unbelievers as well. It was instituted by God and was designed for the protection of the freedom of individuals. Capital punishment was to be employed by nations as a protection for the freedom of its citizens and was designed by God as an instrument of justice. It was designed to be a deterrent in a nation.

If the human race, which is enslaved to the sin nature, does not have restraints put on it, it will destroy itself. The government has the responsibility to practice capital punishment in order to protect the freedom its citizens. The force of what Paul writes in Romans 13:1-7 is greatly increased as a result of understanding that Nero was ruling Rome at the time.

The force of his request in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 is also greatly increased if we realize he requested in this passage that the Ephesian church intercede in prayer to the Father on behalf of kings and all those in authority and Nero was the Emperor.

Nero reigned as emperor of Rome from 54-68 A.D. He was a tyrant who began a tremendous persecution of Christians in Rome and was notorious for his inhumane and cruel treatment of Christians. Nero was emperor of Rome and was born at Antium, in December of 37 A.D. and died in 68 A.D., right after he gave the order to execute the apostle Paul. He was the son of Agrippina the Younger and Gnaeus Domitius Ahenbarbus.

His childhood was turbulent. His family was banished by the emperor Caius Caligula around 39 A.D. and his father died when he was 3. Caligula confiscated the entire family fortune, therefore, sending Nero into many years in poverty.

Agrippina raised him with the help of Domitia Lepida his aunt. His tutors were reportedly a dancer and a barber. Agrippina was returned to Rome upon ascension of Claudius to the throne in 41 A.D., and her estate returned to her.

In 49 A.D., following the execution of Empress Messallina, Claudius married Agrippina and the young Nero's position was dramatically changed. Agrippina arranged for Nero to now have excellent tutors. He was now tutored by the famous Seneca the Elder.

Nero was betrothed to the daughter of Claudius, Octavia, and was officially adopted by the emperor in 50 A.D. This put him in the position as probable heir to the throne over Claudius' son Britannicus who was younger and had the distinct disadvantage of having executed Messallina his mother. Henceforth the young Lucius Domitius was known as Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus.

Agrippina murdered Claudius in October 54 after having assured herself the title of Augusta and her son Nero the throne. Nero, with the help of the Praefect of the Praetorian Guard, Burrus, was accepted by the Guard and became Emperor of Rome 54 A.D. His mother dominated the initial reign of Nero.

Fortunately for Nero he had the wise council of Burrus and Seneca to fall back on which offset his mother's influence. Agrippina was removed from the palace in 55 A.D. as Burrus and Seneca's influence upon Nero had increased greatly.

Both, Burrus and Seneca administered the Empire successfully under Nero. But Nero's self-indulgent personality began to take over and he became disenchanted with his councilors finding their influences inhibiting to his immoral lifestyle. He murdered his mother in 59 A.D. and Burrus died in 62 A.D. reportedly from a throat tumor, although the praefect believed he was poisoned by the Emperor.

Faenius Rufus and the ruthless and ambitious Tigellinus succeeded Burrus indulging Nero's excesses. Seneca had since retired as a result of losing his ally Burrus. It is a testament to Burrus and Seneca that Roman government functioned on the level it did during Nero's reign.

The departure of these two men marked the beginning of one of the most turbulent times in the history of the Empire. Nero ordered the great general Corbulo from Greece in 67 A.D., and had him commit suicide. This was after Corbulo regained Armenia and stabilized the East.

Nero's megalomania found expression in despotism, immorality and artistic obsessions. He traveled to Greece and was involved in poetry, singing, games, painting, parties and feasts.

Nero under the influence of Tigellinus did not tolerate dissent or disagreement in the government and had many arrested, executed and exiled during the latter part of his reign. The Senate grew weary of him and became distrustful of him.

The fire of 64 A.D. brought the first great persecution of Christians in Rome causing many Romans to sympathize with the unfair treatment endured by the Christians. Nero had always greatly desired to rebuild Rome and he used the fire to do so by reconstructing it in the Greek style. He began building a prodigious palace called the Golden House which had it been completed would have covered a third of Rome.

Nero was reportedly at his villa at Antium 35 miles from Rome at the time of the fire, but many held him responsible for the fire in order to indulge his aesthetic tastes in the city's subsequent reconstruction. According to the Annals of the Roman historian Tacitus and to the Nero of the Roman biographer Suetonius, Nero in response tried to shift responsibility for the fire on the Christians, who were popularly thought to engage in many wicked practices. Nero's shifting of the blame of the fire to the Christians is self-incriminating.

The Pisonian Conspiracy was formed in 65 A.D. to bring down Nero; it involved numerous noblemen, senators and others with the ringleader being Gaius Calpurnius Piso. The influence of Tigellinus grew as he weeded out the conspirators and had them executed. The lists of the executed grew everyday including Seneca, Lucan and Thrasea Paetus.

Nero made an ill-advised trip to Greece as the administration of the Empire fell apart. He failed to see the danger that he was presently in and did nothing to change his lifestyle or advisors who were giving him unwise council.

In March 68 A.D, Vindex, the governor of Gallia Lugdunensis rebelled against Nero but was crushed by the Rhine legions. This did not stop rebellions in other provinces from springing up throughout the empire. They demanded the removal of Nero and when Tigellinus became ill, Nero lost his will and did not act in quelling the increasing rebellions.

Nero committed suicide with the help of his secretary, Epaphroditus, on June 9, 68 A.D. The historian Suetonius writes that, dying, Nero uttered the words, “What an artist dies with me.” It was during the middle of the reign of this tyrant Nero that the apostle Paul wrote this epistle to the Romans.

Nero was a tyrant who began a tremendous persecution of Christians in Rome. He was notorious for his inhumane and cruel treatment of Christians. Yet, Paul issues the command in Romans 13:1 to obey the Roman civil authorities since he knew that God and not Nero was ultimately in control and that Caesar was under Jesus Christ’s authority and power.

Romans 13:1-7

Romans 13:1 Each and every person must continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority except by God. Specifically, those which at any time do exist are, as an eternal spiritual truth, ordained by God. (Author’s translation)

The apostle Paul in Romans 13:1 issues a command for his Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome. Then, he presents the reason as to why the Roman believers should continue doing this, namely because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority that exists on the earth except by God. Lastly, he defines specifically this reason by teaching that those governmental authorities, which do at any time in history exist on the earth have been ordained from eternity past by God the Father under the divine decree.

Romans 13:2 Therefore, the one who, at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against this authority is in a state of opposition against this institution originating with God the Father. In fact, those who are in a state of opposition will, as a certainty, undergo judgment for the detriment of themselves. (Author’s translation)

In Romans 13:2, Paul presents an inference from his instruction in verse 1 by teaching that the Christian who at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against any governmental authority is in a state of opposition against this institution, which originates from God the Father. He advances upon this statement teaching also that those Christians who are in a state of opposition against any governmental authority will, as a certainty, undergo judgment at the hands of these authorities for the detriment of themselves.

Romans 13:3 Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same. (Author’s translation)

Then, Paul in Romans 13:3 resumes the discussion from verse 1 as to why the Romans believers are to obey the command in verse 1 to continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities. Therefore, the statement presents an additional reason why they should obey his command in verse 1. This would indicate that the Roman believers also must continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities because governmental rulers are a cause of fear for those whose conduct is evil.

Then, he poses a rhetorical question that follows as a logical consequence of this previous statement. Thus, Paul is to his readers saying that since governmental rulers are a cause of fear for law breakers consequently or as a logical consequence to this if you do not want to live in fear of the authorities, then obey the laws of the land. The command that presents the logical consequence of the rhetorical question requires that Paul's Christian readers in Rome must continue practicing that which is good, i.e. obedience to the laws of the Roman government.

Lastly, this command is followed by a result clause indicating that if Paul's readers continue making it their habit of practicing that which is good in character, i.e. obedience to the governing authorities, the result will be that they will receive praise from the governing authorities. The implication of this result is that Paul wants his readers to be outstanding citizens since only those who were outstanding citizens received commendation from the Roman government.

Romans 13:4 For you see, it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character. However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant, an avenger for the purpose of exercising God's righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 13:4, Paul makes two assertions that explain or elaborate on his previous statements in verse 3 with regards to the positive and negative function of governmental authority.

Romans 13:4 can be divided grammatically into five sections. First of all, the passage begins with an explanatory statement that is divided into two sections:

(1) A declarative statement: **"It is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character."**

This assertion elaborates on the positive function of governmental authority, which he addresses in the command at the end of verse 3.

Romans 13:3 Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same. (Author's translation)

(2) Adversative clause containing a fifth class condition: **“However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear.”**

This assertion elaborates on the negative function of governmental authority, which Paul mentions in the causal clause at the beginning of verse 3.

Romans 13:3 Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same. (Author’s translation)

Then, on the heels of the adversative clause, which contains a fifth class condition, we have a causal clause that elaborates on this negative function: **“Because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification.”**

This causal clause presents the reason why Paul’s readers should live in a state of fear for practicing evil. They should live in fear for practicing evil because God has delegated authority to the government to inflict capital punishment for those who practice evil such as murder. This causal clause is followed by another one: **“Because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God’s servant.”** It teaches that governmental authority is justified for inflicting capital punishment upon those who commit evil because they serve God by doing so.

Lastly, this second causal clause is followed by an epexegetical clause: **“An avenger for the purpose of exercising God’s righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character.”** This clause is clarifying for the reader exactly the responsibility of the governmental authorities in relation to God the Father’s purpose for them. It teaches that when the governmental authority uses capital punishment against criminals it is expressing God’s righteous indignation.

Therefore, in Romans 13:4, Paul is teaching his readers that governmental rulers are God’s servants, which is demonstrated by these two functions. For the Christian, the positive function of governmental authority is that it encourages conduct that is in obedience to the Father’s will in relation to one’s fellow human being, which can be summarized by the command to love one’s neighbor as oneself. The negative function discourages conduct that it is evil or in other words, it discourages conduct that is in disobedience to the will of God. Governmental authority serves God by fulfilling these two functions.

Romans 13:5 Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative, not only because of this exercise of righteous indignation but also because of your conscience. (Author’s translation)

Romans 13:5 is a summarization and a self-evident inference or conclusion based upon Paul’s teaching in Romans 13:1-4. Therefore, based upon this teaching, to continue voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome is always absolutely imperative for Paul’s Christian readers in Rome.

The statement in verse 6 advances upon his statement in verse 5 and intensifies it.

Romans 13:6 In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of even paying taxes because they are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God's commissioned public servants, continually dedicated to this very thing. (Author's translation)

In Romans 13:6, Paul teaches that the Roman believers pay taxes because of their conscience in the sense that they pay taxes because they know that all authority originates from God and is His servant and that it is the will of the Father that they subject themselves to these authorities. So, he is speaking of the Roman believers' conscientious subjection to the government, which is expressed by their paying taxes to these authorities. Consequently, Paul is teaching them that they pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities because of their knowledge that they, like all human government, was established by God and are His servants to encourage good conduct and discourage evil conduct. They also pay taxes because of their knowledge that it is God's will that they subject themselves to the governmental authorities.

Paul's statement in verse 6 is teaching the Roman believers that their paying taxes to the Roman government is an implicit recognition of the government's authority and power over them that was delegated by God to the Roman government. Then, in this passage, he teaches that the reason why Paul's Christians readers in Rome pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities is that they are God's public servants since the Father has delegated authority to them to govern and protect the human race from the unrestricted function of the sin nature. Therefore, Paul is teaching that the institution of human government is a manifestation of God's sovereign rule over human beings and functions as His servant to carry out His purpose of protecting and sustaining and blessing the human race.

Romans 13:7 I solemnly charge all of you to make it your top priority to fulfill each and every one of your obligations to each and every one of them, without exception: To the one who receives the tribute tax, that which is the tribute tax, to the one who receives the indirect custom tax, that which is the indirect custom tax, to the one who receives reverence, that which is reverential in character, to the one who receives honor, that which is honorable in character. (Author's translation)

In Romans 13:7, Paul solemnly charged the Romans to make it their top priority to fulfill their four-fold obligation to the governmental authorities. This four-fold obligation involves paying the Roman government "direct tribute taxes," "indirect custom taxes," and bestowing "reverence" and "honor" on them because they are public servants of God for their good.

Richard Halverson the former chaplain of the United States Senate wrote, "To be sure, men will abuse and misuse the institution of the State just as man because of sin has abused and misused every other institution in history including the Church of Jesus Christ, but this does not mean that the institution is bad or that it should be forsaken. It simply means that men are sinners and rebels in God's world, and this is the way they behave with good institutions. As a matter of fact, it is because of this very sin that there must be human government to maintain order in history until the final and ultimate rule of Jesus Christ is established. Human government is better than anarchy, and the Christian must recognize the 'divine right' of the State."²⁸³

²⁸³ Halverson, R: Prologue to Prison: Cowman Publishers, 1964

Civil Disobedience

The Bible does teach that there are certain circumstances in which the Christian is justified in disobeying the governmental authorities. This is called “civil disobedience,” which is the performance of an intentional act that is prohibited by the civil authorities or a refusal to perform an act that is required by the civil authority.²⁸⁴

Christians are commanded to obey the Lord their God (Deuteronomy 13:4; Jeremiah 7:23; John 14:15) and they are also called upon to obey the governing authorities (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Titus 3:1). However, civil disobedience becomes an issue for the Christian when these two claims upon the Christian come into conflict meaning when God commands us to do something like proclaim the gospel and teach the Word of God and the civil authorities prohibit this. The solution to this conflict is that Christian is to obey God. This is illustrated in Acts 5:27-32 when the apostles were commanded by the Jewish authorities to not proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and Peter told them “we must obey God rather than men.”

In Daniel 3, Daniel’s three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego refused to worship the image that Nebuchadnezzar set up and they were justified in doing so since God prohibited the Israelites from practicing idolatry (Exodus 20:4). Also, in Daniel 6, the civil authorities prohibited Daniel from praying to the God of Israel and Daniel correctly disobeyed because obeying God is required if the civil authorities contradict God or prohibit the Christian from obeying God.

In Exodus 1, the Hebrew midwives disobeyed Pharaoh of Egypt’s command to murder infant boys who were born to the Israelite women since murder is against the law of God (Genesis 9:5-6). There was a similar situation in contemporary history where German Christians under Hitler’s Nazi regime rightly refused to hand over Jews to be murdered for the same reason why the Hebrew midwives refused to murder Jewish boys since murder is against the law of God.

Exodus 1:8 Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9 He said to his people, “Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. 10 Come, let us deal wisely with them, or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us and depart from the land.” 11 So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor. And they built for Pharaoh storage cities, Pithom and Raamses. 12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel. 13 The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously; 14 and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and at all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on them. 15 Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other was named Puah; 16 and he said, “When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.” 17 But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live. 18 So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and let the boys live?” 19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife can get to them.” 20 So God was

²⁸⁴ The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, Second Edition, page 263

good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty. 21 Because the midwives feared God, He established households for them. 22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, “Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile, and every daughter you are to keep alive.” 15 Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other was named Puah; 16 and he said, “When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.” (NASB95)

Moses records the names of two of the Hebrew midwives in order to honor them as heroes in Israel in the sense that they were obedient to God to the point of risking their lives by disobeying the edict of Pharaoh who could have put them to death for such disobedience.

Shiphrah and Puah were undoubtedly the senior midwives who functioned as leaders or administrators of an indefinite number of midwives in Israel. Notice that in verse 18, Pharaoh summons the Hebrew midwives to enter his presence in order to question them directly face to face as to why the Hebrew boys were allowed to live. This indicates that Pharaoh’s statement in verse 16 was a command that was not given directly to the senior midwives since it doesn’t say he summoned them into his presence. Rather, it was given to them through his court officials since the text only says that he summoned the midwives to stand in his presence after his initial command did not produce the desired results.

Some argue that these Hebrew midwives were in fact Egyptian interpreting (*‘ib·rî*) (עִבְרִי), “Hebrew” as a genitive after the construct rather than an attributive adjective. This would mean that these midwives would be “over” the Hebrew women, which leaves open the possibility that they were not Hebrew midwives which would solve the question of how Pharaoh could ever expect Hebrew midwives to kill their children. So apparently Pharaoh did not believe at any time that these Hebrew midwives would disobey because he figured that they wouldn’t dream of disobeying out of fear for their own lives.

Pharaoh wanted to kill the boys and not the girls because first of all, girls do not fight wars in the ancient world, the men did and remember the motivation for this genocide campaign was the fear of losing a war. Secondly, Pharaoh knew that if enough boys were killed, eventually women would decline in numbers because in the ancient world women were totally dependent upon men for survival.

Exodus 1:17 But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live. (NASB95)

Verse 17 says that the Hebrew midwives disobeyed the king’s edict because they feared God which means that they revered God in the sense that they honored Him because they had the conviction that obedience to Him was more important than obedience to the edict of a king, which in fact broke God’s law to not murder. It means that they valued obedience to God’s command to not commit murder as more important than obeying Pharaoh’s command to commit murder. It also means that they had the conviction that the consequences of disobeying God’s command to not murder would be much more severe than the consequences of disobeying Pharaoh.

The midwives’ disobedience to Pharaoh’s command to commit infanticide is an excellent example of when disobedience to a government authority is justified.

Exodus 1:18 So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing, and let the boys live?” 19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife can get to them.”

They lied out of obedience to God’s prohibition to not murder.

Some argue that there was some truth to the midwives’ statement to Pharaoh because they cannot believe that God would approve of lying. However, He did approve of their civil disobedience out of obedience to His command to not murder innocent blood, thus God approved of their lying to Pharaoh to deceive him so to prevent the murder of innocent children and thus, there is a time when lying is justified! Namely, it is justified to lie when the intent is to protect the life of a person whose life is being threatened by another and it is justified when it is done out of obedience to God’s command.

The Hebrew midwives disobeyed Pharaoh and deceived him because they feared that the consequences for disobeying God would be much more severe than disobeying Pharaoh’s command to murder innocent baby boys.

Why did Pharaoh accept the midwives’ explanation and did not kill them for their disobedience? First of all, the midwives’ explanation indicated that there was a cultural difference between Egyptian women giving birth and Israelite women when they give birth. Their explanation does not indicate a physiological difference between Egyptian women and Hebrew women but rather it points to a cultural difference. Pharaoh would know that Egyptian women took a minimal role in delivering their own children whereas the midwives are saying that the Hebrew women took a greater role. In fact, the widows are saying that before we arrive at the homes of these Hebrew women, they have already delivered the baby before we can kill the child.

When the midwives describe the Hebrew women as more vigorous they mean that they have an easier time of it in childbirth than Egyptian women. Pharaoh and the Egyptians would have no way of verifying this was true because they had no contact with the Israelites since they totally segregated themselves from the Israelites because of racial bigotry.

Exodus 1:20 So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty. 21 Because the midwives feared God, He established households for them.

Verse 20 makes clear that God rewarded the midwives for their justified civil disobedience and verse 21 tells the reader how He rewarded them, namely, by protecting them from Pharaoh’s wrath and their explanation to Pharaoh was successful. Furthermore, God gave these midwives their own families, which implies that they were childless and not married. Consequently, because of the courageous actions of the midwives, the Israelites grew even more numerically and were innumerable, which was according to God’s will and the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to make a great nation out of their descendants.

The Church is Commanded to Pray for the Civil Authorities

In 1 Timothy 2:1, Paul urgently requests that corporate prayer be made by the Ephesians on behalf of all unregenerate humanity.

1 Timothy 2:1 Therefore, based upon my previous statements, I first of all urgently request specific detailed requests, reverential prayers, intercessory prayers, thanksgivings be regularly offered up on behalf of all people. (Author's translation)

The adverb *protos*, “**first**” emphasizes the urgency and priority of prayer for all people to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ based upon Paul's statements in 1 Timothy 1:12-17. The emphasis is not on prayer in general but rather the content of the prayer in the sense that the Ephesians are to pray for all people to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It stresses that of all that Paul will be commanding the Ephesians, the command to pray for all people to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ to receive eternal life is the most important.

Though the other commands and prohibitions in this epistle are directly related to promoting the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ in Ephesus and are critical for the spiritual growth of the church, these are not more important. Rather, the salvation of lost sinners is the most important. Spiritual growth is important but not as important as saving the sinner from eternal condemnation since if the sinner is not saved from eternal condemnation then they can never grow up spiritually. This is why Paul mentions first in 1 Timothy 2:4 that God desires all men to be saved and then he says that the Father desires that they come to an *epignosis*, “experiential” knowledge of the truth, which can only take place if one is first saved.

The adjective *pas*, “**all**” refers to the rest of the commands and prohibitions that appear in 1 Timothy and is a partitive genitive meaning that the word denotes the whole of which the adverb *protos* is a part. This indicates that this urgent request to pray for all people to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to be saved, which is the Father's will, is the most important of all the commands and prohibitions that are mentioned throughout this epistle.

“**Specific detailed requests**” is the noun *deesis* which refers to intercessory prayer and specifically to specific detailed requests offered up to the Father by the Ephesians on behalf of all people to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ for eternal salvation.

“**Reverential prayers**” is the pronoun *proseuche*, which refers to intercessory prayer offered up to the Father on behalf of all people but from the perspective that it is an expression of worshipping God and dependence upon Him.

“**Intercessory prayers**” is the noun *enteuxis*, which refers to intercessory prayer or in other words, prayer on behalf of another, which in our context is for all people to be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to be delivered from eternal condemnation and receive eternal life.

“**Thanksgivings**” is the noun *eucharistia* which refers to the Ephesians thanking the Father for all people since the entire human race was created in the image of God even though that image has been marred by sin.

“**Be regularly offered up on behalf of all people**” indicates that Paul wants the Ephesians to “regularly” or “make it a habit of” offering up intercessory prayer to the Father for all of unregenerate humanity since the Father desires all of unregenerate humanity to be saved.

In 1 Timothy 2:2, Paul specifies on whose behalf he wants the Ephesians to intercede in prayer to the Father. In verse 1, he simply requests corporate intercessory prayer in a general sense meaning that he wants the Ephesians to intercede in prayer for all people but here in verse 2, he is specific in the sense that he identifies specific individuals in Roman society on whose behalf he wants them to intercede in prayer to the Father.

1 Timothy 2:2 on behalf of kings as well as each and every one of those individuals who are in authority in order that we may continue to live a peaceful and tranquil life with absolute godliness as well as dignity. (Author's translation)

“**On behalf of kings**” not only refers to the Roman Emperor Nero but all those who governed the provinces that were under his authority. So Paul is not only calling the Ephesians to intercede in prayer for Nero but also those rulers who governed the various provinces of the Empire under his authority. He wants the Ephesians to pray that these rulers would be exposed to the gospel for their salvation. Also, he wants them to pray for these rulers in order to protect them from the attacks of Satan and the kingdom of darkness.

Therefore, Paul is urgently requesting that the Ephesians intercede in prayer to the Father “on behalf of” the Roman governmental rulers. These rulers are to benefit from the intercessory prayers of the Ephesians.

“**Each and every one of those individuals who are in authority**” refers to those individuals in the Roman government who formed the Emperor’s *consortium*, which would include the Praefect of the Praetorian Guard as well as magistrates and proconsuls in the various cities and provinces in the Empire. Thus, Paul is urgently requesting that the Ephesians intercede in prayer on behalf of all those who exist in a state of holding a position of authority in the Roman government.

The clause “**in order that we may continue to live a peaceful and tranquil life**” presents the purpose for Paul’s request that the Ephesians offer up intercessory prayer for kings and all in authority. This purpose clause refers to the lifestyle of those belonging to the Christian church who are sons of God and in union with Christ. Thus, Paul is requesting intercessory prayer from the Ephesians for all those in authority in order that they may conduct their lives in a tranquil and peaceful manner.

Historically, at the time of writing the Christian community was living in a relatively peaceful and quiet manner in relation to the Roman government and Paul wants this to continue by means of the intercessory prayers of the Ephesians. This purpose clause refers to the activities and affairs and daily functions of everyday human life in the Christian community. It speaks of the tranquil and peaceful coexistence or conditions with respect to the Roman government and the Christian community. It also speaks of the quietness of soul as a result of the peaceful political situation in the Roman Empire or the peaceful coexistence between the Roman government and the Christian community.

The Christian community is to pray for the Roman government in order that they might provide them with freedom to proclaim the gospel throughout the empire unhindered.

In verse 3, the apostle Paul points out to the Ephesians that it is according to the Father’s will that they intercede in prayer for the entire human race.

1 Timothy 2:3 This is, as an eternal spiritual truth noble as well as pleasingly acceptable in the judgment of God the Father, our Savior. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 2:4 teaches that it is according to the Father's will that the Ephesians intercede in prayer for the entire human race because He desires all men to be saved and come to an experiential knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:4 who, as an eternal spiritual truth desires each and every member of the human race to be saved as well as to enter into knowing experientially the truth. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul in verse 5 teaches that there is one God and intermediary between God and the human race, namely the man Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:5 For you see there does exist, as an eternal spiritual truth only one God. Also, there does exist, as an eternal spiritual truth only one intermediary between God the Father and the human race, a human being namely Christ, who is Jesus. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 2:6 teaches that Christ Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for each and every member of the human race revealing the Father's purpose to save the entire human race at the appointed time.

1 Timothy 2:6 who gave Himself as a ransom on behalf of each and every one as a substitute, the testimony at His appointed time. (Author's translation)

In 1 Timothy 2:7, the apostle Paul writes that the Lord appointed him as a herald as well as an apostle for the express purpose of proclaiming Christ's redemptive work on behalf of all mankind. He makes an emphatic declaration of truthfulness that he was also appointed to be a teacher of the Gentiles by means of doctrine, which is truth.

1 Timothy 2:7 For this express purpose I myself was appointed a herald as well as an apostle-I am speaking the truth, I am by no means lying-teaching the Gentiles by means of doctrine, which is truth. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 2:8 makes a statement that is based upon an inference from his teaching in 1 Timothy 2:1-7. In this inferential statement, he expresses his desire that the Ephesians intercede in prayer for all people in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger and disputes.

1 Timothy 2:8 Therefore, I myself always want the men in each and every place to make it a habit of occupying themselves with praying by making it a habit of lifting up holy hands apart from anger as well as dissension. (Author's translation)

Chapter Twenty: The Church's Relationship to Satan's Kingdom

The church age believer has three great enemies according to the Scriptures: (1) Satan, our chief adversary, the devil: (1 Peter 5:8-9; Ephesians 6:12; John 16:11; Colossians 2:15; but note 1 John 2:13-14). (2) The world, a system and arrangement of the affairs of the human and government under the control of the evil one and opposed to God and His purposes for the human race (John 16:33; 1 John 5:4; Ephesians 2:2). (3) Indwelling Adamic sin nature or the flesh and all its corrupting power and life-dominating patterns: (Rom. 7:15; 8:4-8, 13; Gal. 5:16-26).

The intelligence apparatus of a nation plays a vital part in modern warfare. Unless, the church knows who its enemy is, where he is, and what he can do, they will have a difficult time defeating him. The leader of the church's great invisible enemy is of course Satan whose name means, "adversary" because he is the enemy of God. He is compared to "**lion**" in 1 Peter 5:8, and described as a serpent (Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:9), an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-15), and the "**god of this age**" (2 Corinthians 4:4). The Christian is not to be ignorant of his schemes and devices (2 Corinthians 2:11).

The cosmos, composed of the stellar universe (second heaven), the earth and its atmosphere (first heaven) serve as the theater of military operations for the angelic conflict pitting the kingdom of God against the kingdom of Satan which are described in Scripture as light and darkness respectively.

The voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ at the cross 2000 years was a great strategic victory over Satan in the angelic conflict (John 12:31; 16:8-11; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14). Our Lord's strategic victory has paved the way for other tactical victories by church age believers. Church age believers are involved in spiritual warfare with the kingdom of darkness (Ephesians 6:12-16; Philippians 1:27-30). They are described as a "**soldier**" in Scripture (1 Corinthians 9:7; Philippians 2:25; 2 Timothy 3-4).

The church age is the intensive stage of the angelic conflict. God has provided the believer the means to fight in this intensive stage of the angelic conflict. Satan and the kingdom of darkness would easily destroy the believer if the believer were left to their own devices using their own human power. God has provided the believer the power to overcome their spiritual adversary, Satan and the kingdom of darkness through obedience to the Father's will, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the communication of the Word of God (1 John 4:4).

The kingdom of darkness will employ fear and intimidation tactics to get the believer to go AWOL (Absent without Official Leave) from the plan of God (Philippians 1:28; Hebrews 2:15; 1 Peter 5:1-9). Fear is a contradiction to the believer's spiritual life, which is a lifestyle of power, love and discipline (2 Timothy 1:7).

Occupation with Christ is the greatest weapon that a church age believer can employ when entering into offensive action (Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 12:2-3). The believer who is occupied with Christ is appropriating by faith their union with Christ, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture.

The intimidation tactics launched by the kingdom of darkness through unregenerate humanity and unfaithful believers are rendered inoperative when the believer goes on the offensive by utilizing the Word of God and appropriating by faith their union with Christ for defensive purposes. In the same way

that light overcomes darkness in the natural realm, the divine omnipotence of the Spirit and the Word overcomes Satan and his invisible army.

All precedence for glorifying God the Father during the church age is derived from the dispensation of the hypostatic union since the church age is the extension of the dispensation of the hypostatic union. The believer who is obedient to the Father's will as the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union will achieve tactical victory over Satan and the kingdom of darkness in the angelic conflict.

The believer who appropriates by faith their union with Christ will experience victory in spiritual combat. The believer is to fight "from" victory and not "for" victory since Christ has already gained the victory.

The soldier of Christ Jesus who achieves the objective of executing the plan of God appears as a luminary or a light in the cosmic system of Satan exposing his deceitful schemes and defeating him in his own territory (Philippians 2:15).

Location of the Enemy

The base of operations and activities of the kingdom of darkness is located in the earth's atmosphere. The fact that they reside in the earth's atmosphere is implied by the Hebrew text of Genesis 1:6-8 where the second day of restoration is not identified by the Lord as *tov*, "perfect, good." A comparison of Scripture with this passage indicates that the reason why the Lord did not call it *tov* was because the kingdom of darkness, the fallen angels reside in the earth's atmosphere.

Genesis 1:1 In eternity past, God created out of nothing the heavens and the earth. However the earth became an empty desolation, and darkness was upon the surface of the raging ocean depths. 2 Now, the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. 3 And then, God commanded, "let there be light," and so, there was light." 4 And then, God observed that in essence the light was perfect, God then caused a division between the light and the darkness. 5 And then, concerning the light, God designated the name day but concerning the darkness, He designated the name night and so it was evening and so it was morning, the first day. 6 Next, God commanded, "let there be an atmosphere in the middle of the waters, and let it be a cause of division between waters from waters." 7 Consequently, God having restored the atmosphere and thus having caused a division between the waters, which were below the atmosphere and the waters, which were above the atmosphere, thus it came to pass as previously described. 8 And then, concerning the atmosphere, God designated the name "heavens," and so it was evening and so it was morning, the second day. (Author's translation)

In Genesis 1:3-5, Moses under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit records for us the first day of restoration where the Spirit under the direction of the pre-incarnate Christ restored light to planet earth. Upon the restoration of light, the Lord pronounced it *tov*, "good." But He does not say this after the second day of restoration, which is recorded in Genesis 1:6-8. The reason for this omission is that Satan and the fallen angels inhabit the earth's atmosphere.

Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (NASB95)

The base of operations of the fallen angels and their activities take place in the earth's atmosphere. In the 21st century there is a lot of misinformation regarding the nature of angels and their activities. This is to be expected since we do live in the devil's world. He has been from the beginning and continues to deceive the entire world regarding his existence, and the nature of himself and his objectives for becoming like the Most High.

Fallen Angels

The only place where we can find the truth about the angels and concerning Satan himself is the infallible Word of God. The Bible teaches that angels are temporarily superior to mankind (Hebrews 2). In terms of power and ability, the present angelic superiority to mankind is obvious in every passage of scripture in which they are described. This current angelic superiority significantly also extends to the area of longevity. While mankind is enjoying a sequential residence on earth (generation following generation), angelic kind has been experiencing a continuum of existence in heaven, even before the creation of Man.

This longevity, combined with the fact that angels (though creatures like Man) are not subject to the same degree to the restraints and necessities of time and space that encumber mankind, undoubtedly contributes to their superior knowledge and wisdom as well. By its very essence, therefore, the angelic nature is superior to our present earthly human nature in terms of appearance, intellect, power, mobility and authority (2 Peter 2:11).

Angels will ultimately be inferior to mankind. Angels will not always be superior to mankind. Just as our Lord's humanity in a resurrection body is superior to angels in every way (Heb.1:4-2:18), so also we are destined to share that superiority with Him in our resurrection body (1 Corinthians 6:3; Heb.2:5).

Angels are acutely aware of and involved in human affairs. The involvement of angelic beings in human affairs is part and parcel of their role in promoting (or, in the case of the fallen angels, opposing) God's plan for human history.

On a more personal level, however, angels are also apparently extremely interested in observing human behavior in general and in the playing out of God's plan (1 Timothy 3:16; 5:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12). The observation of human behavior is particularly true in the case of the Son of Man, our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASB95)

They were present at His birth (Lk. 2:13-14), temptation (Matt.4:11), resurrection (Lk. 24:4), ascension (Acts 1:10-11), and will be at His return (2 Thes.1:7), evidence which underscores angelic interest in the most crucial phase of God's plan, namely the life and work of the Messiah.

By observation, angels are learning (to their joy in the case of the elect angels, to their sorrow in the case of the fallen angels) about the wisdom, the power, the grace and the mercy of God (cf. Lk.15:10; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 11:10).

Angels should neither be worshiped nor disrespected. In any discussion of angels, it is important to keep in mind both their present superiority and their eventual subordination to us. Angels are not to be disrespected (Lk.10:20; 1 Peter 2:10-12; Jude 8-10; cf. Rom.13:7), but neither angels are to be worshiped (Revelation 19:10; 22:9; cf. 2 Kng.17:16; Jer.19:13; Colossians 2:18). This is especially important in regard to fallen angels.

God counterbalances their evil efforts with the work and ministrations of His holy, elect angels. Therefore, although we are to have a healthy respect for the Adversary and his potential to oppose us (2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8), we are not to be unduly terrified by him and his minions.

While we are to have an awareness and appreciation for the positive function of the elect angels on our behalf, we are not to be inordinately fixated upon them (especially since both their persons and their work are invisible to us). In neither case should we **“go beyond what is written”** in the Bible about angels, whether through excessive fear of Satanic influence or an exorbitant fascination with the ministrations of the holy angels.

The service performed by the elect-angels can be summarized as follows: (1) Worship of God (Isa. 6:3; Revelation 4:8). (2) Messengers of God (Dan. 9:22; Lk. 1:11, 26; 2:9; Revelation 1:1). (3) Soldiers in spiritual combat (Dan. 10:13f; Revelation 12:7).

Angels: (1) Protect (2) Provide (3) Proclaim the Word of God (4) Execute God’s Judgments.

As God’s servants who are dispatched from the throne room of heaven to execute God’s purposes, we may observe that the ministry of the elect-angels falls into several categories.

In Relation to God the elect-angels perform the following services: (1) Attendants around the throne of God, and are waiting to serve Him and do His bidding (Ps. 103:20; Isa. 6:1f; Job 1:6; 2:1; Revelation 5:11; 8:1f). (2) Worshippers in praise of Him (Isa. 6:3; Ps. 148:1-2; Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 5:12). (3) Observers who rejoice over what the Lord does (Job 38:6-7; Luke 2:12-13; 15:10), Soldiers in battle with Satan (Revelation 12:7). (4) Instruments used by the God to execute judgments (Revelation 7:1; 8:2).

In Relation to the Nations, the elect-angels and non-elect angels perform the following services: (1) Michael, the archangel, is the guardian of the nation of Israel (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9). (2) The non-elect angels rule over the Gentile nations (Dan. 4:17; Ephesians 6:11-16) and seek to influence their human leaders (Dan. 10:21; 11:1). (3) In the Tribulation the elect-angels will be the agents God uses to pour out His judgments (see Revelation 8-9 and 16).

In Relation to Christ, the elect-angels perform the following services: (1) They prophesied of the birth of Christ (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26-28). (2) They announced his birth (Luke 2:8-15). (3) An angel warned Joseph to take Mary and the baby Jesus and flee into Egypt (Matt. 2:13-15), and an angel directed the family to return to Israel after Herod died (vv. 19-21).

In relation to His suffering, the elect-angels performed the following services: (1) They ministered to the Lord after His temptation (Matt. 4:11). (2) They administered to the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43), and Jesus said He could have called a legion of angels who stood ready to come to His defense if He so desired (Matt. 26:53).

In relation to His resurrection, the elect-angels performed the following services: (1) An angel rolled away the stone from the tomb (28:1-2). (2) Angels announced His resurrection to the women on the Resurrection morning (vv. 5-6; Luke 24:5-7). (3) Angels were present at His ascension and gave instruction to the disciples (Acts 1:10-11).

In relation to His coming again, the elect-angels perform the following services: (1) The voice of the archangel will be heard at the rapture of the church (1 Thess. 4:16). (2) They will accompany Him in His glorious return to earth (Matt. 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7). (3) They will separate the wheat from the tares at Christ's second coming (Matt. 13:39-40).

In Relation to the unbeliever, the elect-angels will perform the following: (1) Angels not only announce but will inflict judgment (Genesis 19:13; Revelation 14:6-7; Acts 12:23; Revelation 16:1). (2) They will separate the righteous from the unrighteous at the 2nd Advent (Matt. 13:39-40).

In Relation to the Church: Hebrews 1:14 describes ministry of the elect-angels "servant-spirits who are divinely commissioned and repeatedly dispatched for service on behalf of those who are destined to inherit salvation."

In this, however, Scripture points to a number of specific ministries: (1) The elect-angels bring answers to prayer (Acts 12:5-10). (2) They help in bringing people to the Savior (Acts 8:26; 10:3). (3) They may encourage in times of danger (Acts 27:23-24). (4) They care for God's people at the time of death (Luke 16:22).

In Relation to the introduction of a new dispensation, angels are actively involved when God institutes a new epoch in history: (1) They Joined in Praise When the Earth Was Created (Job 38:6-7) (2) They Were Involved in the Giving of the Mosaic Law (Gal. 3:19; Hebrews 2:2) (3) They Were Active at the First Advent of Christ (Matt. 1:20; 4:11) (4) They Were Active During the Early Years of the Church (Acts 8:26; 10:3, 7; 12:11) (5) They Will Be Involved in Events Surrounding the Second Advent of Christ (Matt. 25:31; 1 Thes. 4:1).

Enemy Territory

The believer is living in enemy territory, which is the cosmic system of Satan. Satan runs this world and deceives it.

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (NASB95)

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (NASB95)

In his temptation of Christ, Satan declared, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish" (Luke 4:5). Of course, God is sovereign and omnipotent, but in accord with God's eternal purposes, the Bible does teach us that this present world is Satan's domain and under his authority. Thus, the Lord frequently spoke of Satan as the ruler of this

world (*kosmos*) (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), and Paul likewise asserts the same truth (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2; 6:12; 1 John 5:19).

The nature of Satan's aims in the world are quickly evident in his first appearance in the Garden of Eden when he tempted the Woman to act independently of God that she might become like God knowing good and evil. He appeals to what is pleasant to the senses and desirable to gain wisdom, but always, the goal is a life that seeks to get by "without" God.

Satan's aim is to create a world system that rivals God's kingdom but which leaves Him out. His aim is to promote a counterfeit world order. Basically, the cosmos is evil because it is independent of God. It may contain good aspects as well as overtly evil aspects, but its inherent evil lies in its being independent of God and a rival to Him.

This sharp rivalry surfaces in such verses as James 1:27 where the believer is told to keep himself unstained from the world; in 4:4 where friendship with the world is said to be hostility toward God; and in 1 John 2:16 where John declares that all that is in the world is not from the Father.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (NASB95)

"**World**" is the noun *kosmos* and is the primary word in the Greek New Testament for the world. *Kosmos* means "order, ornament, adornment, an orderly arrangement. Our word "cosmetics" comes from this word.

In the New Testament, it has three main uses: (1) The orderly arrangement of the heavens or the earth and all things in their complex order and composition as created by God, created in perfect order and subject to the laws God established to govern its operation (Matt. 13:35; John 21:25; Acts 17:24). (2) The cosmos (Greek, *kosmos*) may also refer to the world in its arrangement of the inhabitants of the earth in tribes and nations or peoples (Acts 17:26; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 1 John 2:2; 2 Peter 2:5). (3) But most importantly, *kosmos* is used of a vast system and arrangement of human affairs, earthly goods, godless governments, conflicts, riches, pleasures, culture, education, world religions, the cults and the occult dominated and negatively affected by Satan who is god of this satanic cosmos.

This system is promoted by Satan, conformed to his ideals, aims, methods, and character, and stands perpetually in opposition to God the cause of Christ. This world system is used to seduce people away from God and the person of Christ. It is anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Bible, and very anti-humanity though it often appears as humanitarian as part of Satan's masquerade as an angel of light.

The devil's world will never be healed; the devil's system will never be successful in bringing in perfect environment apart from God. Indeed, Satan's *kosmos* appears to have the betterment of humanity as a prime objective, in order to further the devil's plans of enslaving and misleading as many people as possible.

While masquerading as a kingdom of light, Satan's world is entirely a kingdom of darkness, and so the scriptures describe it, making abundantly clear the distinction between God's world to come and the present cosmos of evil. Satan has incorporated into his system of world rulership as many material distractions as possible.

Affluence, the increase and spread of wealth, communication and technology are factors, which, from one point of view, are very beneficial to the devil's control of mankind.

Fear is a major element in Satan's manipulation of humanity, and to the extent that men enjoy and rely on such things for their happiness and security, to that degree the fear of losing them produces a sort of bondage which the devil is quick to exploit (cf. Hebrews 2:14–15 for the principle).

In order to prevent our enslavement to the delights of this world (as well as to its necessities), an area Satan knows only too well how to manipulate against us, we need to have a full and sober appreciation of what the world really is.

The church age believer needs to be very aware of the world's essential vanity and of the pointlessness of its distractions and diversions. We need to be able to keep the pressures and exigencies of life (as well as its pleasures and delights) in proper perspective. God is important. Knowing Him and serving Him is why we are here. Everything else is mere context. The believer is neither asked nor commanded to get through life without taking any joy or pleasure in worldly things and we certainly will not pass through the human experience without worldly pressure and problems (especially as Christians). But it is all these largely extraneous matters, which we must compartmentalize, and *not* God.

The believer dare not put God “in a box,” giving priority to everything the world sees as important (but which from the Christian point of view is ultimately inconsequential), and neglecting the One who made them, who bought them, and whom they claim is their Master. Whenever they allow the “things” of life to grow high, and fail to tend their faith, they endanger their spiritual growth.

Ironically, believers have a tendency to do better spiritually in times of severe testing than in times of prosperity (cf. Deut.8:10-20). Prosperity can be very dangerous and destructive to a believer's spiritual growth. In these last days it is especially important for Christians to avoid a pair of assumptions, which are equally dangerous: (1) Affluence is a sign that God is blessing us, and therefore, if we are wealthy, that we must be doing just fine in our spiritual lives. (2) Result of spiritual growth and a prosperous relationship with God is material wealth (i.e., the “prosperity gospel”). In fact, the opposite effect is certainly not without precedent, that is, the spiritually mature encountering greater testing on this score (e.g., consider Job's trials, or Elijah's privation).

Morbid over-emphasis on material prosperity has always been an occupational hazard of the human race in general, and, the closer we come to the end of history, the more we can expect this issue to grow as a threat to Christian spiritual growth. During this last era of the Church, the Laodicean era, there is destined to be an ever increasing tendency toward equating wealth and affluence with spiritual success (Revelation3:14-22).

Untroubled lives of ease in the midst of abundance are neither the norm nor the objective of the Christian life. The closer the believer walks with God, the more they can expect that walk to be opposed by Satan and his angels.

Another word that sometimes refers to this world system is the Greek *aion*, “age, period of time.” This word seems to serve as a synonym in certain contexts. It is used in some contexts of the age in

which we live as marked by certain spiritual and moral characteristics as affected by Satan whom Paul identifies as “the god of this age.”

A very interesting use occurs in Ephesians 2:2 where Paul combines both *aion* and *kosmos*, “the course (age) of the world (cosmos). This age is often contrasted in Scripture with the age to come because of the very different characteristics and conditions of the two ages (Ephesians 1:21; Matt. 12:32; 13:22; 1 Timothy 6:17; Tit. 2:12-13; Hebrews 6:5).

Trench defines *aion*: “All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, But which constitutes a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale, all this is included in the *aion*, which is, as Bengel has expressed it, ‘the subtle informing spirit of the *kosmos*, or world of men who are living alienated and apart from God.’”

The world, then, instead of remaining a beautiful expression of God’s will and creative power as seen under the conditions of its creation, has become the seat of an angelic conflict and the very rival and antithesis of the plan of God.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (NASB95)

To achieve his aim, Satan must try to make the values of his godless system seem attractive. Thus, he works to make people give top priority to self and to the here and now as most important.

When John wrote that all that is in the world is not of the Father he explained what he meant by “all” by three exegetical statements that follow in 1 John 2:16. All of them emphasize self as number one. Satisfy the lusts of the flesh, Satan counsels. Try to get what the inordinate desires of the eyes make you covet and build a self-sufficient, arrogant attitude that arises from boasting about the possessions one has in life. This selfishness is, of course, the prevailing philosophy of the world, and it comes from Satan who promoted himself from the beginning.

Satan also seeks to focus people’s attention on the present rather than on eternity. That is why John reminds us in verse 17 that the world passes away but the one that does the will of God abides forever. Thus, Satan seeks to achieve his purposes by trying to change our priorities (self first) and our perspective (here and now more important). In reality the truth is that God is first and eternity most important.

The Scripture sets forth a number of important truths regarding the believer’s relation to this satanic cosmos in which they live. Though they are in the cosmic system of Satan, they are not of it (John 17:14-16).

The church is of a different kingdom and, as sojourners and aliens. The church is to be living in light of eternity. Though in the world, the believer is to be both unstained by the world and separated from it and its way of life while also penetrating the world as ambassadors of Christ, as those holding forth the

Word of life (cf. Jam. 1:27; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; with Philippians 2:12-18; Matt. 5:14-16; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21). The church's trust, therefore, is not to be in the uncertain riches of this age nor in the things in which people glory (1 Timothy 6:17-19; John 5:41; 1 Thess. 2:6). The church is not to be friends with this world which amounts to hostility to God and His aims (Jam. 4:4); nor are they to love the world, for loving the world and its things chokes out their ability to love God (1 John 2:15-17; Matt. 6:19-24; Mark 4:18-19). Rather, the church is to find its purpose, peace, significance, and joy, not as the world seeks these things, but through the Savior's life and the eternal purpose He gives them (John 14:25-27; Philippians 2:1-5).

The church can enjoy the things God gives them in the world for He has given them all things freely to enjoy, but the church's security, significance, or basic satisfaction and contentment in life is to come from knowing, loving, trusting, and serving the Lord (1 Timothy 6:17; Philippians 4:11-13; Eccl. 2:24-26). So, while they can use the things in the world, they must not abuse them as one who belongs to Satan's cosmic system who seeks from the world what only the Lord can give (1 Corinthians 7:29-35). Believers can expect animosity from the world bridled with an attempt by the world to conform them to its ideal, ambitions or aims, and way of life (John 15:18-19; 17:14; 1 John 3:13; Rom. 12:1-2); it is God's truth as found in the Bible that protects from the world (John 17:17);

Proper Christian Conduct

So therefore, the believer is in enemy territory and is under siege from the kingdom of darkness. This world system of Satan is against the Lord Jesus Christ and His church, which is His body and future.

The church is not to love the world because their citizenship is heaven. The citizens of the cosmic system of Satan hate the citizens of heaven. Satan and his cosmic system persecuted the Lord Jesus and have and will continue to persecute the church as well (John 15:18-25).

There are many passages in the New Testament, which address the believer's attitude and conduct to this present cosmic system of Satan (Ephesians 4:17-5:2; Philippians 1:27-30; 2:14-17).

Galatians 6:14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (NASB95)

Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (NASB95)

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. (NASB95)

The fact that the church is not to love this world does not mean they are to withdraw from society and live in a monastery but rather God has separated the church from the world in order that she might manifest His Son to a lost and dying world through their words and actions.

God's purpose of conforming the church age believer to the image of Christ is not accomplished by withdrawing to a monastery. They are not to conform their thinking to the world's thinking but rather their thinking is to be conformed to Christ's thinking (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). As He conforms them into the image of His Son, God permits the church to use that which the world has devised, but they are to use it in service for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Believers can and should use the world's means of communication, such as radio, television, movies and the Internet in order to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are in the world as servants of Christ. They are here to manifest His glory and to reveal the knowledge of God. They don't do this by conforming to the world, and not by loving the things that are in the world, but by being conformed to Jesus Christ and by loving Him with singleness of purpose, by being dedicated and devoted to Him. She is not to "sell out" to the world and play by its rules but rather she is to walk in conformity with Christ.

Sooner or later, every Christian discovers that the Christian life is a battleground and not a playground that they are up against an enemy that is much more powerful and smarter than he is.

So the church age believer is involved in spiritual warfare with the kingdom of darkness (Ephesians 6:12-16). He is described as a "**soldier**" in Scripture (1 Corinthians 9:7; Philippians 2:25; 2 Timothy 3-4).

The church age is the intensive stage of the angelic conflict. The believer can glorify God in this angelic conflict by becoming an invisible hero with an invisible impact on human and angelic history.

The believer is being conformed to the image of Christ by conforming his thoughts, words and actions to Christ by means of the Spirit will have an invisible impact in 5 categories: (1) Personal: Your own periphery. (2) National: The Pivot. (3) International: Blessing by association through a mature missionary. (4) Angelic: Witness for the Prosecution in the Rebuttal Phase of Satan's Appeal Trial. (5) Heritage: Children of a mature believer are blessed after the believer dies.

Invisible Heroes are described as the "**salt of the earth**" (Matt. 5:13). They are the "**lights of the world**" (Matt. 5:14). Invisible Heroes are like a "**city on a hill**" (Matt. 5:14).

In relation to the church, the non-elect angels are warring against the church (Ephesians 6:10-19). As we noted, Satan runs this world and deceives it. God has provided the believer the means to fight in this intensive stage of the angelic conflict. Satan and the kingdom of darkness would easily destroy the believer if he were left to his own devices using his own human power. The Lord has given the believer spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:11, 14-17), and spiritual weapons to fight this spiritual warfare (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). The same power that the humanity of Christ used to achieve the strategic victory in the angelic conflict has now been made available to the believer in the Church Age: (1) Word (2) Spirit.

The battleground for this spiritual warfare is in the believer's soul (Rom. 7:23; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Gal. 5:17). God has provided the believer the power to overcome his spiritual adversary, Satan and the kingdom of darkness (1 John 4:4). Never before in history has so much power been made available to believers. This is because we live in the intensified stage of the angelic conflict and the church age believer is the enemy of the kingdom of darkness (John 15:18-19). There is no excuse for any believer to become a permanent casualty in this war.

The believer who goes AWOL (Absent without official leave) and succumbs to fear, worry and does not take advantage of knowing that God will support him through logistical grace in times of adversity will become a spiritual casualty in this spiritual warfare. This is why we receive the following prohibitions and commands in the Scripture:

Philippians 4:6 At this very moment, all of you stop continuing to be anxious about absolutely anything, but rather, concerning anything at all by means of reverential prayer in the presence of the Father and by means of petition accompanied by the giving of thanks, let your specific detailed requests be repeatedly made known in the presence of the Father. 7 And as a result the peace produced by God the Holy Spirit, which is always superior to any and every human conception, will as a dogmatic statement of fact cause your hearts to be protected and as a result your thoughts by means of the doctrine of Christ Jesus. (Author's translation)

1 Peter 5:6 Make it your top priority and permit yourselves to be humbled under the mighty hand of God the Father in order that He may promote you at the proper time by casting all your anxiety upon Him because as for Him He cares about you. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 6:10-19

The apostle Paul employs a military analogy in Ephesians 6 in order to describe the believer's defense and offense when engaging this invisible enemy. That Paul would use such an illustration is reasonable since Paul was chained to a Roman soldier when he wrote Ephesians 6.

Ephesians 6:19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. (NASB95)

In Ephesians 6:10-17, the apostle Paul teaches the Ephesian believers how to deal with their invisible enemy by commanding them to put on the full armor of God and he describes it for them.

Ephesians 6:14-17 lists 5 items that compose “**the full armor of God**”: (1) Ephesians 6:14a: “**Belt of truth.**” (2) Ephesians 6:14b: “**Breastplate, which is (Christ's) righteousness.**” (3) Ephesians 6:15: “**Combat boots, namely, the Gospel.**” (4) Ephesians 6:16: “**Shield, which is your faith.**” (5) Ephesians 6:17a: “**Your helmet, which is your salvation.**”

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. (NASB95)

“**Be strong**” is the verb *endunamoo*, which means, “to be empowered” and refers to the dynamic spiritual power that is available to every believer who is obedient to the Word of God, which is alive and powerful.

“**In the Lord**” contains a figure of speech called the metonymy of the cause where the cause is put for the effect meaning that we have the person of the Lord put here for His doctrine or word.

The prepositional phrase “**in the Lord**” should be translated “by means of the (Word of) Lord” since the context is not emphasizing the “sphere” in which the believer is to be empowered but rather the “means by which” the Ephesian believers were to empower themselves against the enemy.

The application of the Word of the Lord is “the means” by which the believer is to empower themselves in order to achieve victory in spiritual combat with their invisible enemy.

Hebrews 4:12 The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart. (NASB95)

God’s power to overcome Satan and his angels is available to all of us as believers in the form of the Word of God. The specific doctrine in the Word of God that we as Christian soldiers need to take possession of by faith is our union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session.

“**Strength**” is the noun *kratos*, which means, “manifested power” and refers to the inherent omnipotence of God that has been “manifested” through the resurrection and session of the unique theanthropic person of the cosmos, the Lord Jesus Christ who achieved at the cross of Calvary the decisive victory in the angelic conflict.

“**Might**” is the noun *ischus* which refers to “the possession of power to overcome” and is used in the context of a military analogy and denotes “the possession of Christ’s power to overcome” in spiritual combat with Satan and the kingdom of darkness.

In Ephesians 6:10 the noun *ischus* refers to the 100% availability of divine omnipotence that has been made available to every church age believer because of their union with the Lord Jesus Christ that provides them “the power to overcome” their invisible enemy, namely Satan and the kingdom of darkness.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (NASB95)

Putting on the full armor of God refers to appropriating by faith your union with Christ, which is equivalent to putting on the nature of Christ. This is accomplished when we appropriate (meaning take possession of) by faith this union meaning we agree with what the Word of God says about us, namely, that we have been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ at the Father’s right hand, far above all angelic power and authority. We are to appropriate for ourselves by faith in the Word of God, the victory that is ours through our identification and union with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection and session. We fight “from” victory and not “for” victory!

“**Schemes**” is the noun *methodeia* which refers Satan’s “strategies, schemes and tactics” that he employs to make war against believers and destroy them.

The principle stratagem of the devil is lies and deception (Genesis 3). Satan deceives and is the father of lies (Jn. 8:44).

Ephesians 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (NASB95)

“**Rulers**” is the noun *arche* and refers to the highest rank of angels in the Satanic order of battle and hold positions of authority (“thrones”) in the Satanic kingdom and are subordinate to only Satan himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ created these “rulers” (Colossians 1:16) and He has defeated them through His death (Colossians 2:15).

“**Powers**” is the Greek noun *exousia*, which refers to the rank of fallen angels who have been given by Satan “dominions” and are subordinate only to the *arche*, “rulers” and Satan himself.

“**World-forces**” is the noun *kosmokrator*, which means “world-ruler” and expresses the power or authority, which the fallen angels exercise over the cosmic system. These angels are subordinate directly to the *exousia*, “authorities” and carry out their orders and are more than likely behind the miracles and other satanic demonstrations of power (cf. Revelation 13:13).

“**Spiritual forces**” refers to the rank and file angels in Satan’s military. These rank and file angels are also known in Scripture by a variety of names such as: (1) “Demons” (Leviticus 17:7; Matthew 9:34). (2) “Evil spirits” (Lk. 7:21; Acts 19:13). (3) “Unclean spirits” (Matthew 10:1; Mk. 1:27). (4) “Devils” (Jn. 6:70).

“**In the heavenly places**” designates the “location” of the base of operations and activities of these rank and file angels.

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. (NASB95)

The evil day is not a particular point in history or judgment in history, nor is it referring to the Tribulation period. But rather from the divine perspective it is an extended period of time in human history, which began with the Fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden and extends to the 2nd Advent of Christ when Satan will be imprisoned for a thousand years.

Ephesians 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. (NASB95)

Ephesians 6:14 Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. (NASB95)

“**Having girded**” is the verb *perizonnumi*, which means, “to fasten a belt around yourself and buckle it.”

“**Truth**” is the noun *aletheia*, which is used in the objective sense for the Scriptures. Obeying the Word of truth is analogous to the Roman soldier fastening his belt around himself and which belt held the Roman’s soldiers armor together.

“**Having put on the breastplate of righteousness**” refers to appropriating by faith the imputed, positional righteousness you received at the moment of justification.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the believer’s righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Ephesians 6:15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE. (NASB95)

“**Having shod**” is the verb *hupodesamenoi*, which is used in the middle voice and in a figurative sense meaning, “to strap on your combat boots.”

“**Preparation**” is the noun *hetoimasia*, which refers to the fact that the Gospel of peace provides a “firm foundation” for the soul of the Christian soldier.

The noun *eirene*, “**peace**” is a genitive of product meaning peace for the believer is “produced” by the acceptance of the Gospel message to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal salvation.

In Ephesians 6:15, the foundation in the soul that the Gospel of peace provides the Christian soldier is analogous to the combat boots worn by the Roman military in combat.

Ephesians 6:16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. (NASB95)

“**The shield of faith**” refers to a heavy shield approximately 30 inches wide and 48 inches high, large enough for a soldier to crouch behind it. It is this large, protective door-shield that the apostle Paul had in mind when he told the Ephesian believers to take up for themselves the shield of faith, which would enable them to extinguish the fiery missiles of the kingdom of darkness.

When the apostle Paul used this door-shield as a figure of the shield provided by God for the soldier of Christ Jesus, he was emphasizing the fact that the believer has full and complete protection from the enemy.

“**Faith**” is the noun *pistis*, which is used in the active sense meaning “to trust, to have total and absolute confidence in God.”

The shield of faith therefore, is “not” the objective body of truth, the content of the Christian faith meaning Christian doctrine, although that is the object of the believer’s faith after salvation, but rather it refers to the Christian soldier’s faith or total and absolute confidence in God’s faithfulness to His promises.

Ephesians 6:17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (NASB95)

When Paul speaks of salvation here in Ephesians 6:17, he is speaking of salvation in the sense of a three-fold deliverance from the believer’s three great enemies, namely, sin nature, cosmic system of Satan and Satan himself (cf. Ephesians 2:1-3).

Salvation, like sanctification is accomplished in three stages: (1) Positional: The moment you believed in Christ you were delivered “positionally” (meaning God’s work and viewpoint of you as a believer) from real spiritual death and eternal condemnation, the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature through the death, resurrection and session of the Lord Jesus Christ. (2) Experiential: After salvation, you are delivered from the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature “experientially” by

appropriating by faith your union and identification with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection and session. (3) Ultimate: At the resurrection you will be delivered “ultimately” and permanently from the devil, his cosmic system and the sin nature when you receive your resurrection body at the rapture of the church, which is imminent.

If you notice, the armor is for the protection of the front of the individual and not the back and the reason for that is that God makes no provision for the believer in case of retreat! As J. Vernon McGee used to say, “A retreating Christian is certainly open season for the enemy; the enemy can get through to him.”

In Ephesians 6:17, the apostle Paul issues the command to take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

The apostle Paul issued this command because of the eternal spiritual principle that applies even in the temporal realm: Victory or defeat is gained by the application of power and the withdrawal of the inferior force. When we apply the Word of God, which is alive and powerful, then Satan and his armies will withdraw because though powerful, their power is inferior to God’s Word.

“**Take**” is the second person plural aorist (deponent) middle imperative form of the verb *dechomai*, which is *dexasthe*.

In Ephesians 6:17, the verb *dechomai* means, “to take hold of” something that is intangible and in context, that is “**the helmet of salvation**” and “**the sword of the Spirit**.”

The aorist imperative form of the verb *dechomai* in Ephesians 6:17 is a constative aorist imperative meaning that this is a solemn or categorical command, thus Paul is saying to the Ephesian believers, “I solemnly charge all of you” to take hold of the helmet of the salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

“**The sword**” is the noun *machaira*, which refers to a “small sword” such as a dagger and is used in a figurative sense for the Word of God.

The *machaira* was a short double-edged sword, which was developed by the Romans and enabled the Romans to dominate the world for over a thousand years. Before the *machaira*, swords in the ancient world were large and cumbersome. The *machaira* gave the Romans a distinct and decisive advantage in battle. They could make several short quick thrusts in hand-to-hand combat before the enemy could ever wield a stroke.

The analogy that Paul is making here is this: Just as the enemies of Rome could not stand up to the Roman soldier’s short double-edged sword, so the kingdom of darkness cannot stand up to the Christian soldier’s double-edged sword, the Word of God.

The *machaira* of the Roman soldier was the common sword carried by infantrymen and was the principal weapon in hand-to-hand combat and was carried in a sheath or scabbard attached to their belts and was always at hand and ready for use.

The apostle Paul employs the noun *machaira* (Latin *gladius*) or short two-edged cut-and-thrust sword wielded by the heavily armed legionnaire rather than the *romphaia* or large Thracian broadsword since he is speaking in the context of spiritual combat, which is comparable to hand-to-hand combat in the temporal realm that the *machaira* was used for.

The *machaira* revolutionized warfare in the ancient world just as the automatic rifle has. The largest and most impressive of the swords used in antiquity was the *romphaia*, the Thracian broadsword. Invented by the Thracians, the *romphaia* was a broadsword of considerable length-- never shorter than four feet and often up to six feet in length. This broadsword had one sharp cutting edge and was held by a double handle. It took a giant to use this thing, hence, it became the preferred weapon of the Thracians, the Gauls and the Germanic barbarians; all of whom were staunch enemies of Rome.

One man would haul this out onto the battlefield and hand it over to the barbarian soldier, who would then just stand there with this huge sword and attempt to mow men down as they came at him. Because the *romphaia*'s rather unwieldy length and weight caught the barbarian temporarily off-balance after a stroke, precious moments were lost before he could regain his balance and combat effectiveness. It was in these moments that the soldier was vulnerable to the danger of the swift Roman *machaira*.

As these two enemies faced off, the Romans would advance, the barbarians would begin to surge forward with these enormous weapons, and the Roman soldiers would just back up and let the broadsword go by. Then they stepped in with their *machaira*'s, and they carved these barbarians to pieces.

With the advance of the Roman Empire and its awesome military might, the ancients began to wonder, "How will the world ever survive the *machaira*?" Since Roman men averaged 5'8" and weighed usually less than 170 pounds, a six-foot sword simply would not do. So, they invented the *machaira*, which turned out to be the most ingenious implement of warfare in its day.

The blade of this perfectly balanced weapon was usually only eighteen to twenty inches long; however, each one was matched to the man who wielded it. Its length was the distance from the soldier's fingertips to his elbow, for this was considered to be the most natural extension.

The *machaira* had two cutting edges instead of one, both tapered off to a sharp point. It was very flexible and its outstanding advantage was that the Roman soldier was never off-balance while engaging the enemy. It is significant that the Holy Spirit has chosen the Roman *machaira* as the metaphorical counterpart to the soldier of Christ Jesus' most dangerous and effective weapon, namely, "the *machaira* of the Spirit."

The Roman soldier's *machaira* could pierce the human body of his enemy but the Christian soldier's *machaira* pierces the human soul.

The Lord Jesus Christ employed His *machaira* when facing Satan in hand-to-hand combat. Three times the Lord employed Scripture to defeat Satan. The human nature of Jesus Christ in hypostatic union in His confrontation with the devil in Luke 4:1-13 illustrates the principle that victory or defeat is gained by the application of power and the withdrawal of the inferior force.

Ephesians 6:17 And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (NASB95)

“**The Spirit**” is the noun *pneuma* refers of course to God the Holy Spirit who is the divine author of Scripture.

The noun *pneuma* in Ephesians 6:17 is a genitive of “source” meaning that the *machaira*, “sword” of the soldier of Christ Jesus, which is the Word of God “originates from” the Holy Spirit since He is the divine author of Scripture.

The doctrine of inspiration contends that, God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human authors of Scripture, that without destroying their individuality, their literary style, their personal interests, their vocabulary, and God’s complete and connected thought towards man was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture. The original languages of Scripture contain the very words of God, and therefore, bear the “authority” of divine authorship.

2 Peter 1:20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (Author’s translation)

“**The Word**” is the noun *rhema*, which refers to a specific passage of Scripture, which applies to a particular situation.

The believer is to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in his soul, which permits the Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance a specific passage or concept of Scripture, which will apply to the believer’s problem or specific set of circumstances.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

This is further substantiated by the fact that as the Lord Jesus employed Scripture to repulse the temptations presented to Him by Satan in Luke 4 so the soldier of Christ Jesus, the Christian must utilize the Words that are inspired by the Spirit to repulse the temptations presented to Him by Satan.

Also, it is significant that in Matthew’s account of our Lord’s encounter with Satan in Matthew 4, the Lord Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3 and refers to “**every word (*rhema*) that comes from the mouth of God**” (Matthew 4:40).

In Ephesians 6:18, the apostle Paul emphasizes the importance of intercessory prayer.

Ephesians 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints. (NASB95)

Prayer is an invisible weapon that God the Father has provided for the soldier of Christ Jesus, which when utilized in accordance with the will of God as revealed by the Spirit in the Word of God, enables the believer to experience spiritual victory over the kingdom of darkness in spiritual combat (Ephesians 6:18).

“With all prayer and petition” answers the question, “How the Ephesian believers are to pray?”

“Prayer” refers to reverential prayer in the presence of the Father meaning we are to worship the Father in prayer, which is adoring contemplation of God as He has been revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Person of Christ and in the Scriptures.

Worshipping God is the act of paying honor and reverence to God and flows from love and where there is little love, there is little worship. Worship is the loving ascription of praise to God for what He is, both in Himself and in His ways and is the bowing of the soul and spirit in deep humility and reverence before Him.

“Petition” refers to making a petition or prayer for a specific need, whether spiritual or material and which is in accordance with the will of the Father.

“At all times” means that the Ephesian believers were to make it their habit to pray “at each and every opportunity.”

“In the Spirit” denotes that the Ephesian believers were to pray while in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, which is accomplished by being obedient to the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God.

“With this in view” indicates the “goal” or “purpose” or “why” the Ephesian believers were to pray.

“Be on the alert” is the verb *agrupneo*, which means “to keep alert” and thus denotes the concept of watchfulness in prayer for oneself and your fellow Christian soldier.

“With all perseverance and petition” indicates that the manner in which the Ephesian believers were to stay alert in prayer. They were to do so by persevering in making their specific detailed requests to the Father.

“For all the saints” indicates the Ephesian believers were to make it a habit to stay alert in prayer with regards to all believers since all believers are fellow soldiers and who fight for the same Sovereign, the Lord Jesus, and have the same common enemy, namely, Satan.

Conclusion

So, we can see from this study of the church, that it is not the “new” Israel since Paul teaches in Romans 9-11 that God has not abandoned the nation of Israel and has planned a magnificent future for her. However, the church age believer has been engrafted into Abraham who is the father of their faith. Though the church has not been given the unconditional promises of the Abrahamic and New Covenant, they are the beneficiaries of the promises of these covenants in that they received the Spirit and the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. The church and Israel are related because regenerate Gentiles during the church age are engrafted into regenerate Israel and the remnant of Israel today is composed of regenerate Jews. Only race separates the two.

One must remember that the covenants were given to Israel and not the church (cf. Rom. 9:1-5). Gentile believers during the church age are engrafted into the remnant of Jewish believer who are members of the church (Rom. 11). Thus, Gentile believers are benefiting from the promises of the four unconditional covenants God established with Israel. The church is of course composed of both regenerate Jew and Gentiles. Regenerate Jews during the church age compose the remnant of Israel. Thus, the church and Israel are connected by this Jewish remnant during the church age and yet they are distinct from each other because of regenerate Gentiles.

We have seen that the church age dispensation was a mystery dispensation meaning that it was not known to Old Testament saints but was made known through the apostles’ teaching which is found in the New Testament epistles. Each and every church age believer is identified with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session through the baptism of the Spirit. Old Testament saints were not the beneficiaries of the baptism of the Spirit. Each and every church age believer is permanently indwelt by the Trinity. This was never said of Old Testament saints. Church age believers are described as adopted by God Roman style. They are described as citizens of heaven and members of the body of Christ. Again, Old Testament saints did not have these blessings. Each and every church age believer was loved by God from eternity past in that they were elected to the privilege of experiencing an eternal relationship and fellowship with the triune God. They were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Old Testament saints did not have these blessings. The church is the beneficiary of the completed canon of Scripture. However, these unique blessings does not imply that church age believers deserved these blessings more than Old Testament saints since like Old Testament saints, the church is the beneficiary of God’s grace policy meaning that the church age believer does not earn or deserve these blessings since they are merited. God’s sovereign grace determined that the church would be the beneficiary of these blessings and not Old Testament saints. This ultimately glorifies God, which leads us to the purpose of the church, which is to glorify God. This accomplished when the believer grows up to spiritual maturity or in other words when they grow up to be like Christ. In the same way that Jesus Christ glorified the Father by manifesting Him through His words and actions so the church is to glorify the Son by manifesting Him by the power of the Spirit through their words and actions.

The church age began with a miracle, namely the baptism of the Spirit and will end with a miracle, the resurrection or rapture of the church. The church is the body of Christ and the future bride of Christ. If the church age believer is faithful, then they will receive a reward, i.e. the inheritance and serve in Christ’s millennial government and on into eternity future. If they are not, then they will not be rewarded and will not serve in His government. However, they are not disowned by Him for their unfaithfulness but rather lose rewards.

At the moment of their conversion, each and every church age believer has been delivered from eternal condemnation, the sin nature as well as Satan and his cosmic system. At the same time, they have also been set apart to serve God exclusively. They can experience this deliverance and sanctification in time by obeying the Spirit's voice who speaks to them through the communication of the Word of God and prayer. When they receive their resurrection body at the rapture of the church, they will be perfected and will forever experience this deliverance and their sanctification.

Each and every church age believer has been loved by the Trinity, is being loved by the Trinity and forever will be loved by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This love is unconditional as well as sacrificial. This love has been demonstrated by the Father in eternity past in electing and predestining them. It was demonstrated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It also has been manifested through the work of the Holy Spirit from the moment of the believer's conversion through regeneration to the resurrection or rapture of the church. The Son prays in heaven at the right hand of the Father for the church age believer and the Spirit prays for them while indwelling them.

The church needs to know all these things. They need to see that their identity is found in their identification with Jesus Christ and not in the things that are promoted by Satan's cosmic system. If the church age believer does not know who they are in Christ, then they will fail in their mission to evangelize the unsaved. Also, they will fail to grow to spiritual maturity and will not receive rewards which glorify God.

Pastors must educate their congregations as to who they are in Christ as well as making known the wonderful benefits of their so great salvation. The church must be warned by their pastors that because they received many wonderful spiritual benefits, they now have a great responsibility to fulfill God's will for their lives. They must be warned that they will all give an account to Christ at the Bema Seat. God's love for each of them should motivate them to execute the Father's will. However, if pastors fail in teaching their congregations the Word of God and specifically about God's love for them, then the believer will fail in this endeavor.

Each and every church age believer has a responsibility of obeying not only their civil or governmental leaders (Romans 13:1-7) but also their spiritual leaders, i.e. their pastors (Hebrews 13:17). They must not forsake the assembling of themselves (Hebrews 10:23-25). They must be devoted to prayer (Colossians 4:2). They must be obedient to the Word of God (Colossians 3:16). They must love each other like Christ loved and is loving them (John 13:34). The church age believer must walk by faith in the Word of God (2 Corinthians 5:7) since without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

So, like Old Testament saints, church age saints must walk by faith. The church is to cling to God's Word just as faithful Old Testament saints like Abraham did. The latter did not have the completed canon of Scripture but the former does. To whom much is given much is required.

The church has enemies, namely the sin nature as well as Satan and his cosmic system. All of which are constantly attempting to seduce the believer away from obeying God. The believer's union and identification with Christ serves as their spiritual armor. The believer must appropriate by faith their position in Christ to experience their victory over these enemies. The Word of God is the believer's spiritual weapon as well as prayer which they are to employ in order to combat these three enemies.

In closing, the church is a new creation of God which is intimately and inextricably tied to God through Christ and the Holy Spirit. Its purpose is to glorify God by manifesting His power in their human weakness. The church is to manifest God's holy character. Each church age believer is to operate in God's love, manifesting this love with each other. The love that each member of the Trinity has for each other is to be reflected by the church. The church is a magnificent trophy of the grace of God. This grace is also to be reflected by the church in its relationship to the Trinity and each other as well as the unsaved.