

CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

BOOK 1

DOCTRINE *for* DISCIPLES

A FOUNDATION TO BUILD UPON



PIETY

Deeper discernment
of the Word



FAITH

Knowing the
Word



LOVE

Doing the
Word



HOPE

God's path
for you



GLORIFICATION

The path
you choose



BY

WILLIAM E. VINSON, JR., PhD



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CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

Book 1

DOCTRINE FOR DISCIPLES: A Foundation to Build Upon

by:

William E. Vinson, Jr.

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Preface

THE CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

The *Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series* is a unique approach to education. The author has over thirty years of experience in classroom teaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Internet teaching. The teachings covered Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Church History, Hermeneutics, Christian Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Evangelism, and Biblical Backgrounds. In other words, the teacher was a generalist in the world of specialization.

During recent years of teaching, God sent two people into the classrooms that have made this series possible. One student brought in some audio recording gear into the seminary classrooms and recorded everything said by teacher and students. The other person, Helen Agnew, transcribed the tapes into weekly sessions. Finally, Helen put all the weeks together for a course into a book, which became the nucleus for a formal book. Next came the editing phases in which the improper English and sentence construction was corrected. Also, the organization and thought flow was improved in order to facilitate a reader's comprehension.

Each class session became a chapter that went through several iterations of the editing process. Also, Helen provided computer drawings of the theological charts and models used by the teacher. These models were inserted into the book at the appropriate places.

INFORMAL WRITING STYLE

You should be aware that the chosen style of communication in this series of books is much more informal than the typical. I have worked to retain the folksy way of expression that I use in the classroom and pulpits. These books are going to be easy reading because

they will be what you hear in everyday conversation.

Dear saint, you are in for a treat. There will be points of time in which your mind will be so absorbed into thinking new and analytical thoughts of our Most Wonderful Lord, that you will be unable to resist sharing them with a loved one. In my editing passes of the various drafts, I found myself reliving the classrooms and all the high emotion and drama. My pulse rate would quicken and convictions and tears would return.

CLASS PROCESS

Each book is a semester-long class. The subject matter is explored very thoroughly because all the students are participating in the questioning and answering. You will have the next best thing to being in the classroom. In fact, there will be times in your reading in which you will be in the classroom through imagination.

BENEFITS

Discipleship has been declared by many to be the greatest need in Southern Baptist life today. In my many years of teaching, I have had churches to bus in many of their members to take my classes at Southwestern Seminary. The reason that was given, was that it was a very good source for discipleship training. This discipleship training is a step up from Sunday school and other training because *it involves seminary training at the lay level*. Armed with this new discipleship training, the new lay ministers are fulfilling their calls and impacting the Kingdom of God in a very positive way. Pastors are benefiting by having some new lay ministers to help them minister. Churches and society are benefiting by

receiving positive help that is theologically sound and practical.

For you, the busy Christian of today, this series is a rare opportunity to actually participate in a seminary classroom to learn from the teacher and your peers in high impact and focused studies that are not available in any other books. The teacher's experience of teaching as a generalist will provide *interconnected insights and truths* that are not available in specialization. The *student interactions* in these books will create a *relevancy* that is unheard of outside the classroom. The quality of the *class dynamics* will lift you, the reader, up into unparalleled densely packed teachings that will greatly improve the *efficiency of your learning*. You owe it to

yourself to jump into this series because you can get an education that is the next best thing to actually going to seminary.

In addition to the student interactions recorded in each chapter, the major points that I made which would be the source of the tests given to the classroom students are stated in the text, and the *test questions* are stated at the end of each chapter (class session). The *answers* to those tests are given at the end of the book for you to check yourself. If you seriously want to know that you have accomplished the goals of each chapter and to be able to teach a course like this, answer those questions to the point that you can do so without going back into the chapter itself— i.e. memorize those points and charts.

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INTRODUCTION

Book One in the *Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series* is ***Doctrine for Disciples: A Foundation to Build Upon***. The need for this book comes right out of my observations of the lack of education and training in the typical Christian minister. Much of my own personal Christian growth, which was also typical, made the need for a book like this readily apparent. My academic and ministry teachings over my lifetime are hereby condensed in this book for you to absorb as much as possible and in as short a time as possible.

MY QUESTION

When I got turned around by God and became involved in street preaching ministries in Atlanta, Georgia, I became extremely hungry for the Word of God. I went to every seminar, Sunday School Class, every revival, every Training Union etc. etc. I could not get enough. I began to teach Sunday school and learned ten-fold more than what students learn. However, after about 3 years of all the learning, I found that we were cycling back through the same old materials. I thought: “Is this all there is? Surely there must be more to Christianity than this.”

MY ANSWER

In route to my answer to my soul-searching question, I tried to add on more ministry. I felt more fulfilled, yes, but my knowledge was limited to gaining skills, not theological knowledge. Further in my quest, I answered an invitation to full-time Gospel ministry. I interpreted that ministry to be as a Southern Baptist Missionary.

MY PLAN

Everyone said that to become a

missionary, I must go to seminary. So, I moved my family to Fort Worth, Texas and enrolled at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to prepare for missions.

GOD’S PLAN

God had other ideas for me. I ended up staying in Fort Worth as a professor and a department director. I earned the Master of Divinity and then the Ph.D. in Theology with minors in Church History and Philosophy of Religion. I directed the department of Undergraduate and Lay Theological Studies and taught classes at night.

In my student and teaching days at the seminary, it was considered an unwritten rule that all students should wait until their last semester to take Systematic Theology. For years student after student claimed that Systematic Theology should have been taken first because they would have learned much more in their other courses if they had just had a good reference framework in theology to contextualize the other courses.

The students whom I taught via the Internet before their on-campus studies just seemed to me to do better in everything after they arrived on campus. So, I changed my philosophy and broke ranks with traditional academia by allowing the undergraduate students to take Systematic Theology early in their academic pursuits.

GOD’S BOOK FOR YOU

This book is first in the series because it will give you a good solid foundation that will stand you in good stead. It will provide a wonderful theological frame of reference for your past and future studies.

This is the kind of book that I would have given my right arm for back when I had begun to ask: “Is this all there is in Christianity?”

You are in for a real treat. I have purposely eliminated the fluff and junk that seems to pad every course. This book/course is a stripped down, high impact version of what you would normally get in the classroom. You will get to experience real class dynamics that will surface in the pages. The text was actually developed from a transcript of the actual words spoken in the classroom. The format of this book is unique. A tape recording was made of an actual class. Next a transcript was made from the tape. Then that transcript was edited and re-edited many times to distil out a more condensed and satisfying text.

I learned how to use theological models from my beloved mentor, Dr. John Kiwiet. Once you catch on to these models, you will become conversant on the doctrines. When you are teaching, you can form the model in your mind’s eye and then you have the foundation for expressing the doctrine in its full scope. You will be forever changed by the use of models for teaching and learning. Your teaching skills will skyrocket. If you learned nothing but how to use theological models, you will be greatly rewarded.

CONTENTS OF DOCTRINE FOR DISCIPLES: A FOUNDATION TO BUILD UPON

So, what doctrines will you learn? I will take you through the standard doctrines that are found in any Systematic Theology. Plus, I will introduce you to the Triangle of Piety. You will not find this teaching anywhere else. I am so thankful that I got this chance to make it a permanent teaching. Until now, it existed only in Dr. Kiwiet’s mind and my own. He taught for a half century, and then he passed the baton on to me. I have been teaching since 1980, and now I pass the baton on to you.

Every chapter, which represents a week’s classes, will bring wonderful discussions and learning that will never be found in a “formal” book. Serendipity abounds, and you are the beneficiary.

The bibliography is a list of selected books that I recommend for all of you to add to your personal libraries.

Your journey into God’s path for you will be enhanced by your study of this book. It will have a great effect on your life. So, a warning is in order. If you study this book, your life could change dramatically. For sure, you will not be the same again.

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Chapter 1

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Class, let me warn you in advance, the first sessions will be mostly lecture. I need to set the stage and establish the orientation of this course. Therefore, there will not be time for much dialog.

Before we get very deep in the study of doctrine, we must establish a context. It is extremely important for you to get the “Lay of the Land,” so to speak, in Theology. We must know from where we have come, where we are now, and where we are heading.

We will define systematic theology and set it over against a series of different kinds of theology. Next we will explain the differences within liberalism and fundamentalism. Then we will look at the timeline of theology since the Reformation. In the timeline, which starts with liberalism and fundamentalism, we will trace the movement of theology to the present time.

DEFINE SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

It is a contemporary study of God and the rest of reality to make a coherent, valid, and consistent statement about Christian doctrines. It seeks to develop individual meanings, interrelated meanings, and meanings in relation to the whole system. A variety of sources may be used, but they are all secondary to Scripture.

Since the Bible is our prime source, we are going to deal with canonization. What are the factors of canonization?

1. Apostolicity: The Scriptures either are written by the Apostles or are consistent with their doctrines.
2. They are faithful to Christ.
3. They are well received (catholicity). Catholicity means universal; catholicity is

a descriptive word, an adjective that says that it is universal. For a Scripture to be well-received means that the whole church accepts it as God’s Scripture. Catholicity comes from two Greek words, *kata holé*, according to the whole. Do not confuse catholicity with the proper noun, Catholic, which refers to the Roman Catholic Church. Where Catholic is a name, catholic is an adjective.

4. They induce worship: When you are reading the *Pseudepigrapha*, the false writings, there is nothing there that grabs you. When you are reading Scripture, the Holy Spirit reaches out and grabs you. That is the inducing to worship that God has with His Word. God’s Word does not come back void. It has the Holy Spirit’s action in it. You read it, and wham! Conviction sets in. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.¹

KINDS OF THEOLOGY

1. Systematic theology (see definition above).
2. Biblical Theology has only one source, the Bible. In systematic theology, you can use various sources. For biblical theology, you pull out all of the doctrinal statements from all over the Bible to construct your doctrine. Or, you can do a theology of John by selecting all of John’s statements dealing with a doctrine. You can do a theology of Paul or a theology of Acts or theology of the New Testament or theology of the Old Testament. You can group it any way that you want to, but you have only one source.

¹ Romans 1:16.

3. Historical Theology is the study of a doctrine as it has developed through time. The study of historical theology is an exciting study. Our heritage comes out of this historical theology. The Reformation is a point in time (ca. 1517), a milestone in historical theology when the doctrine of salvation changed. Prior to the Reformation, the church dispensed salvation. The priest through the medium of a sacrament conferred salvation. The Reformation came along and brought the declaration that only God can forgive sins. So evangelism was defined to be what it is—the good news. You do not have to go to a priest, another sinner. You can get your salvation directly from God. Forgiveness comes right to you. All you have to do is repent and ask for it. Confess your sins, and ask.²
4. Practical Theology is a study of how to apply theology. Theological application is the sole purpose of practical theology. Development of ministries based on theology is practical theology.
5. Liberation Theology is the liberation of one group at the expense of another.

For illustrative purposes I am going to use the materialistic kind of liberation theology rather than the gender or racial kinds, but they all work similarly. They work like this: In liberation theology you take from the “have’s” and give to the “have not’s.” In an economic liberation theology, material is the all-valuable issue of life. It is basically a materialism disguised as theology.

Liberation theology is class struggle in search of egalitarianism. God’s win-win economy is jettisoned in favor of the zero-sum materialism. This latter economy must have a loser for every winner. For example: if you have a person who has \$5 and another person who has \$7, zero-sum materialism

means for them to be equal each must have \$6 so that the sum is still the same. Two things which occur are first that a dollar will be taken from the “have” and given to the “have-not,” and second that a zero sum occurred. When you subtract the sum of the first set, \$5 and \$7, from the sum of the second set, \$6 and \$6, you get zero. So that is zero-sum materialism. Now the Christian win-win doctrine is that when you have \$5 and \$7 you can work together so that you have \$7 and \$7, or you can have \$7 and \$8, but there is a win-win. You have more than the sum of the parts. Christian economy is based on the multiplication principle in Genesis, “Be fruitful and multiply.”³

6. In Secular Theology, the government becomes god. You give up all of your fellowship of Jesus, and you become a good citizen. Political correctness becomes the standard for behavior.
7. In Humanistic Theology man is god. In this case what you believe and what you think is paramount to you. You do not really care what everybody else thinks; you become your own god.
8. Existential Theology is based on the subjectivity of Existentialism. This theology has no absolutes. What is truth? Whatever you want it to be. Whatever butters your bread is truth because there is no objective truth. Truth is subjective. It is subject to you, yourself. We have a lot of this going on today.

These are just eight of the many kinds of theologies, but I wanted to give you a context for your understanding of “Systematic Theology.” With this kind of list you can begin to see where the church is in this world and what it is dealing with.

² 1 John 1:9.

³ Genesis 1:22

PROTESTANT DISTINCTIVES

I am a Southern Baptist. Why do I claim to be a Protestant? because my theology agrees with that of the Reformation. What are the Protestant distinctives?

Distinctives	Meaning
1. <i>Sola Christos</i>	Only by Christ. Christ alone is Savior.
2. <i>Sola Fidei</i>	Only by faith.
3. <i>Sola Scriptura</i>	Only the Scripture
4. Priesthood of the believer	Priesthood of all the saints, not only of ordained persons.

What came out of the Reformation are four distinctives. Faith alone: your salvation is not by works. It is by faith. What is asked of you? What does God ask you to do? He asks you to believe Him (*Sola Fidei*). He sent His only begotten Son that through Him, through what He (*Sola Christos*) did on the cross, salvation is purchased for you, and He is offering that to you. How do you know that? You can know that through the Scripture, (*Sola Scriptura*).

We have those three “only’s” that came out of the Reformation, and you can look at it like this: First is the Lord’s part, what He did. Faith is your part, number two. Number three is how you can know this. In juxtaposition with these three “only’s,” are three false distinctives of the Roman Catholic Church. Over against the Protestant distinctives are the Roman Catholic Church’s reactionary efforts. The Roman Catholic Church seeks to win the battle in the following areas: Against faith is works, against Christ is the Church, against Scripture is tradition.

In the middle ages the Church dispensed salvation, but we know that Jesus is the one who dispenses salvation. During the same period, tradition from papal decrees and church councils became the primary sources

of truth. The Reformation replaced tradition with the Scripture as the primary source of truth. A thousand to fifteen hundred years of tradition had come down, down, down, down, and one man, Martin Luther, stood up against the whole world, went against all of tradition, and because He did that, you are saved. If there had been no Reformation, we would still be looking to a priest to give us our salvation. We owe a lot to our forebears, those guys who paid with their lives to bring us the greatest gift known to man, but it cost them dearly. Many of them died a martyr’s death in order to hold fast to and propagate their confessions.

Concerning the priesthood, a priest was a particular person who had been ordained by the pope to be the priest. In Roman Catholic doctrine, ordination gives the priest the power to dispense saving grace. You have the priesthood of a particular man ordained by the Pope as over against the priesthood of everybody that has been saved. The Reformation, however, resulted in the recognition that all believers are priests.

Perhaps examining his orientation and functions can enhance your understanding of what a priest is. The orientation of a priest is a person who faces the Lord in behalf of the people, and so instead of dispensing salvation, he takes the needs of a person to the Lord. That is what we do in our intercessory prayers. We sacrifice to take the needs of our brothers and sisters to the Lord in their behalf. All Christians are priests. Jesus is the prime example of a priest. He became the sacrifice, offered Himself as the sacrifice to God, and pled for forgiveness for all believers.

COMPARISON OF LIBERALISM WITH FUNDAMENTALISM

Please note that Protestantism is not static. It has taken many turns (some to the right and some to the left) since the Reformation. The

first two turns were liberalism and fundamentalism.

Description of Liberalism

1. Liberals jettisoned anything supernatural. No supernaturalism means that all nature is a closed continuum. No miracles are possible.
2. Emphasis is on the immanence of God for liberals. Immanence means God is close. Transcendence is that God is far off. When you are dealing with transcendence, works become de-emphasized because He is not watching you closely. He is way off. You can put your salvation in your pocket and do whatever you want to do because you are under grace. That is transcendence. Immanence is when God is really close, and you have the question that is right on your mind: What would Jesus do? That is practicing the immanence, or the presence of God. Your works, your fellowship, become very important.

If you emphasize immanence over against transcendence you become a social-gospel kind of Christian. If you emphasize transcendence at the expense of immanence you become a do-anything (licentious) kind of Christian. What we must have is both. Because God is transcendent, you cannot reach high enough to reach heaven, nor can you escape the presence of God because of His immanence. He is with you, watching you, talking to you, and dealing with you (immanence). Prayer and faith are what bridges the gap (transcendence).

3. Christianity for a liberal is an ethic without a belief. Ethic is do. Belief is know. These are two different categories. In Liberalism you do not have to have a codified belief. Just get out there and do what is acceptably good (your subjective belief).

4. Liberal doctrine emphasizes the subjective atonement. An objective atonement is when it is a thing you possess. You can file it away, and if you need it, you can pull it out and show it.

Subjective atonement, on the other hand, is just the opposite. You do not have something in your pocket. You observe what the Lord did for you, and that induces you to act in a similar way because of gratitude. You go to church and act like all the rest of the church people, and that is your Christianity. You look at the models before you. You look at the pastor, the deacons, and the teachers, and you see what they are doing, and you do that too because you are grateful for what the Lord has done for you. In subjectivism, you do not have "it." You have not received "Him." You have observed His act of atonement, and that induces "you" to express your life in a new way.

5. Liberal attitudes are loving and inclusive. This is big-tent theology. Beliefs are not the issue. It is attitude. In Liberalism it is not what you believe that is important. It is what you do. It is a do-based theology. Thus, beliefs tend to separate us, but loving attitudes that are not tied to anything objective will unite us.
6. Where Fundamentalism is escapist: "Let the world go to hell, I am out of here anyway, there is no skin off my nose," liberal doctrine is utopian. The Liberal group is trying to improve the world because they are trapped in the world. Utopianism has the end-things inside of time, whereas true eschatology has the end-things outside of time. Therefore utopianism works diligently to improve the world because that improvement will usher in the final improvement (utopia) within time. In true eschatology you work hard inside of time because it is a stewardship principle given to us by God. But for the Fundamentalist group, God

will also give the conditions of the eschaton outside of time to us.

Description of Fundamentalism

1. Belligerent and Exclusive. At one time I was a Fundamentalist. I was a street preacher in Atlanta, and I figured that I knew everything about everything. This belligerent, elitist, and exclusive approach to theology is something you would put into this category of Fundamentalism.
2. No Social Concern. When I was on the streets, I met a guy from an American Baptist denomination who requested that I help him to fight against abortion. At that time I was just preaching, and I figured that preaching, handing out tracts, and getting people saved were the answer to the world's problems. I had no social concern.

I pondered the request and talked to another friend of mine who was also a street preacher, and I told him what the guy wanted. I turned down the request after talking to my friend because he said, "You are called to preach the Gospel, not fight abortion." That sounded right to me, so I said, "Okay, I am just going to preach the Gospel."

I have regret in my heart today that I did not add on that one little task. I was only asked one time to minister in the social arena, and I could not take it upon myself to just add that one ministry function to my repertoire. I had no social concern. I regret that neglect because I was a Word-only preacher. My attitude was: If you reject, then "go to hell." I have grown a lot since then. Please do not think I am still like that.

3. Emphasizes the Transcendence of God. Transcendence means that God is unreachable. He is very distant and not involved in the affairs of mankind. He sent His Son, He gave us the Scripture, and now it is up to us. This emphasis on

transcendence gives us the opportunity to be isolationists, elitists, a people not involved.

4. Emphasizes the Objective Atonement. Emphasizing the objective atonement means you can have it, put it in your pocket, and go on with your life. This is the "new birth" emphasis that answers the question: Are you saved?

Salvation covers a huge span of time. It begins with your new birth and goes throughout your pilgrimage all the way into glorification. We will deal extensively with salvation in a future chapter.

The guy that approached me about the abortion issue described himself as "being" saved (as in process) when I asked him the "Big Question"⁴: "If you were to die today, would you go to heaven?" I concluded that this guy was not saved because he did not give me that kind of answer that deals with just the new birth. He happened to be far more studied in theology than I.

I did not understand. All I knew was punctiliar salvation; you either had it or you did not. The light switch is either on or it is off. You have your objective atonement, put it in your pocket, and go about your life. You may pull it out and look at it, but its primary purpose is as a possession. It need not change your life; you must only possess it. Objective atonement is basically the reduction of the atonement down to nothing more than the new birth, just an event. You have it, or you do not have it. The objective atonement is certainly a truth, but for the Fundamentalist it is the only truth.

5. There is an Escapist Mentality. Fundamentalists do not worry about the tribulation because Christians will be raptured out of here before it occurs. The Fundamentalist does not worry about the world

⁴ A tract, *The Big Question*, see appendices A and B.

going to pot; he does not worry about the moral bankruptcy of all of America and all the destruction from people slipping away from objective truth into subjectivism. He thinks that he is to be raptured out of here without having to suffer any tribulation.

Fundamentalism was so named because there were five fundamental doctrines that were adopted. B. B. Warfield and the Princeton University group of the early 1800's were the ones who came up with five fundamentals that were essential doctrines for Christianity.

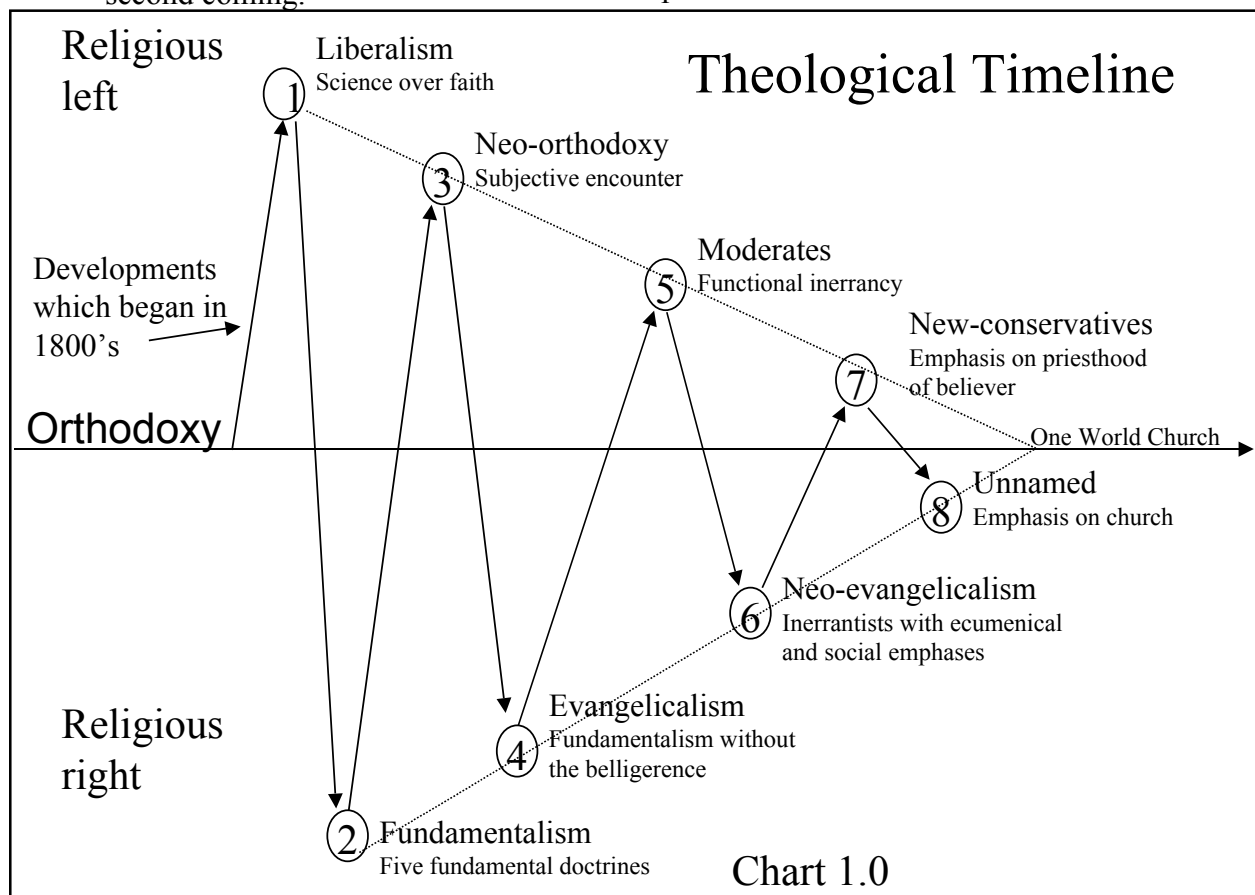
6. The Five Fundamentals (doctrines) of Fundamentalism:
 - a. The virgin birth.
 - b. Substitutionary atonement
 - c. The bodily resurrection.
 - d. The physical return of Christ at the second coming.

- e. The inerrancy of the Scriptures.

If these five fundamentals were the only thing required today to label a Christian as a Fundamentalist, then I would be a Fundamentalist. But, as we have seen, there are five other criteria that make for Fundamentalism.

THE TIMELINE OF THEOLOGY SINCE THE REFORMATION

Please see Chart 1.0 that shows a theological timeline from the Reformation. The Reformation produced a dramatic change where the people began to move out of the structure of the church. When you have institutionalism controlling the people, the Holy Spirit is displaced by the church structure. That is what we had in the Middle Ages that were also called the Dark Ages. Why? The light of the Spirit was not allowed to be present because the medieval church structure



was the controller. The people were told what to believe and what to do. You did it, you believed, and you kept your salvation. If you disobeyed, you were excommunicated, and you lost your salvation. You were then begging the rest of your life, paying money, and doing everything possible to get back into the good graces of the church so that you could go to heaven. This was a structured, institutional, and relational salvation.

Out of that dark situation came the Reformation. The Reformers said that the church is not the Savior, and the church is not God who forgives sin. God forgives sins, and you go to Jesus who is God the Son. Jesus comes into your heart and makes you a new creature. The Holy Spirit who is also God will give you the light to understand, the power to walk, and the encouragement and the inducement to keep on going.

Salvation for Protestantism is an inner change where that of medieval Christianity is an outer change. Protestantism is a different style. It is a freedom, a free-church kind of movement. Protestantism has an inner change in which the Holy Spirit comes to reside inside of the person to make him a new creature, and his behavior changes because of that inner personality change that the Spirit provides. Whereas in medieval Christianity, there is an external conformist kind of change in which the behavior is prescribed and imposed, and the person then adopts the new behavior. Out of this reform came the need for systemization or the development of a systematic theology.

A cold, rigid, objective orthodoxy came at this point. Where the people are still so attuned to being structured and driven by organization and hierarchy, and you bring a systematic theology into that environment, then the Holy Spirit is pushed out once again, and you have what is called a rigid, cold orthodoxy. That rigid, cold orthodoxy is one in which the church then picks back up a

structure or system of beliefs or some kind of creed which becomes the governor of your thought process, your governing behavior monitor, or whatever. From that cold orthodoxy we came into the modern ages.

You see there was a very brief window of Reformation in which the Holy Spirit took hold of the new believers and started moving them out for witnessing. People started getting saved. A tidal wave was started all over the world. It is still rolling today. But some of that spirit got all bottled up into orthodoxy.

Orthodoxy (*ortho* means correct; *doxy* means doctrine) is a right belief, but it is a right belief that is structured under a hierarchy or a system that becomes your boss. I can have a good theology, but it cannot be my god. Certainly my Bible is where I need to be. I can stand on and under the Bible. Through it I am equipped to do battle; I know something about what the Lord's mind is. I can follow the Holy Spirit without going off on some weird tangent because I am equipped with the Truth. I have a solid foundation. But Jesus is my Lord, and I follow Him. My theology describes the "how," or the "content" of my fellowship.

Theology is a good thing, but if you allow it to be imposed over you, it becomes a bad thing, a cold kind of orthodoxy that was mentioned previously. Cold orthodoxy is what came out of the Middle Ages. As a reaction to the cold orthodoxy within the Reformation, a type of Christianity called Pietism occurred. In Pietism the emphasis was both on the orthodox faith portion of Christianity along with a warm approach to life.

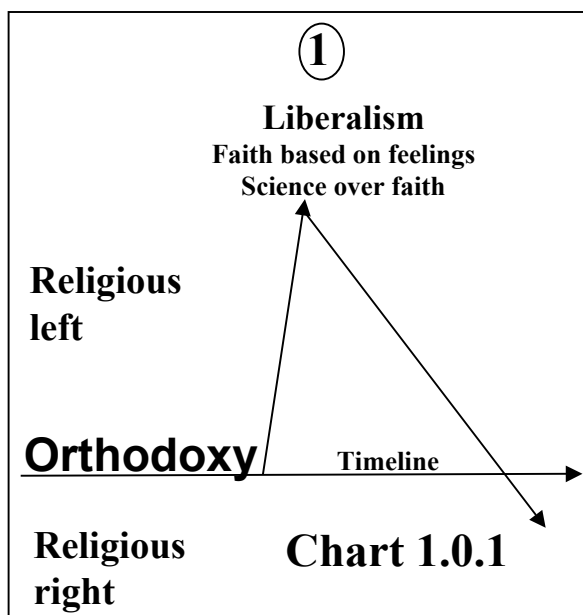
Orthodoxy in the form of Pietism from the late Reformation came along through the centuries to about the 1800's. That is where we pick up in Chart 1.0.1. From orthodoxy is move #1 to Liberalism. Liberalism is going

to be a move away from Reformation Orthodoxy.

Liberalism

The Reformation started in Germany. But then Liberalism came along and started also in Germany with Schleiermacher. It just seems that the Germans are thinkers and the originators of change.

At the top of our Chart 1.0.1, is Liberalism, and it is an 1800's offshoot of orthodoxy, and Schleiermacher is the man who came up with an emphasis on subjective feelings, a feelings-based hermeneutic. In this hermeneutic the words of Scripture do not mean what they say. What Scripture means is what you feel after reading the words. The meaning is not in the words but in the feelings. Once you move into feelings you can move anywhere. You are floating all over the place. You have no anchor. Your feelings can do anything. They can be good today and bad the next day. It can feel right today and wrong tomorrow. The objective content of the words is replaced with subjective feelings evolving from the words. That is a feeling-hermeneutic. That is Liberalism.

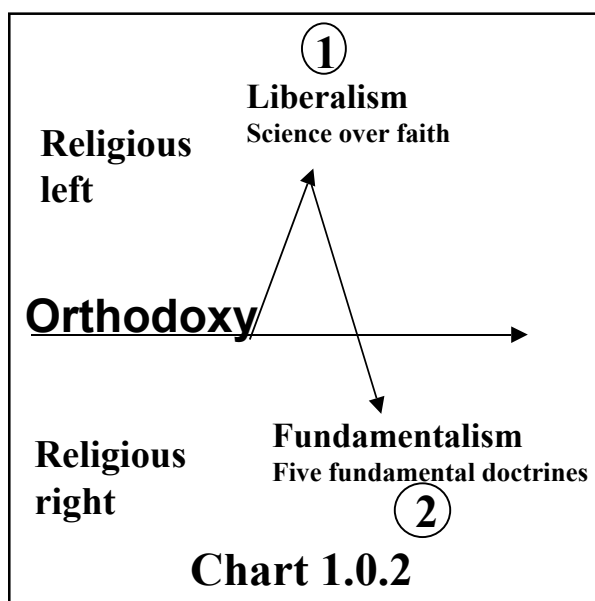


Fundamentalism

In reaction to Liberalism at the bottom of Chart 1.0.2 is Fundamentalism. Fundamentalism came up in history to counter the Liberal movement. This Fundamentalist group said that they were going to stand on the Word of God, but you see, their stance included a belligerence. Why is there belligerence? The Liberals were, and still are, taking a lot of people to hell. The Fundamentalists do not want those people to go to hell. Thus they became a warlike group fighting against the Liberals who are sweet, loving, and inclusive with a big-tent theology. Nobody is excluded; everybody is in. "Just come on in" is the invitation by the Liberals to everyone except those who are tied to objective Scriptures.

We have shown the two extremes, Liberalism and Fundamentalism, so that you can understand them better. The more distinction there is between the two theologies the better you can see them.

God is the Lord of history. He raised the Fundamentalists to stand against the tide of evolution and all subjectivism. However, they got laughed out of town because Liberalism and its evolution and antagonism to

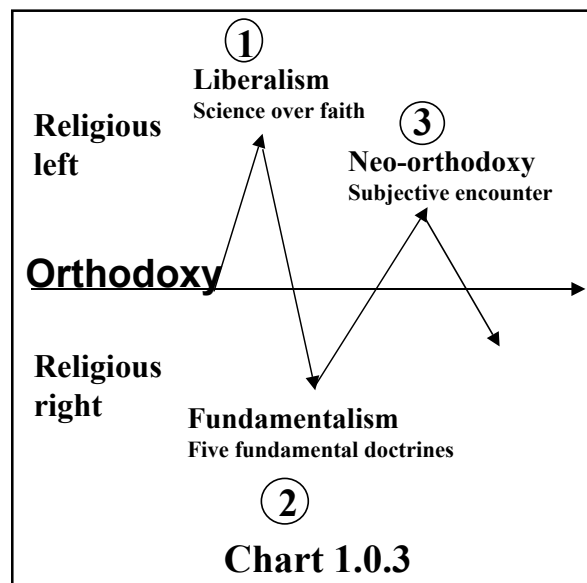


miracles won the day. We are still living with those results in our secular universities and culture. It, in many ways, has even invaded the modern church.

Neo-Orthodoxy

Number 3, another group that will not be as far left as the Liberals is Neo-Orthodoxy (see Chart 1.0.3). This is another German theology, and it means the new Orthodoxy. The Neo-Orthodox people were saying, “There is something wrong with both the liberals and their rejection of the miraculous and also these Fundamentalists with their warlike spirit. What we need is a new orthodoxy, a new right belief.” *Neo* means new, *Ortho* means right, and *doxy* means doctrine, a new right doctrine.

This new orthodoxy comes on the scene during World War II with Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. The distinctive of Neo-Orthodoxy is found especially in its doctrine of revelation. In Neo-Orthodoxy, revelation is person to person. It is subject-subject revelation, not subject-object. Thus, Scripture in it is not revelation. Scripture is the arena of revelation. When you are reading the Scripture, a lightning-bolt experience occurs; it is God Himself that comes down to encoun-

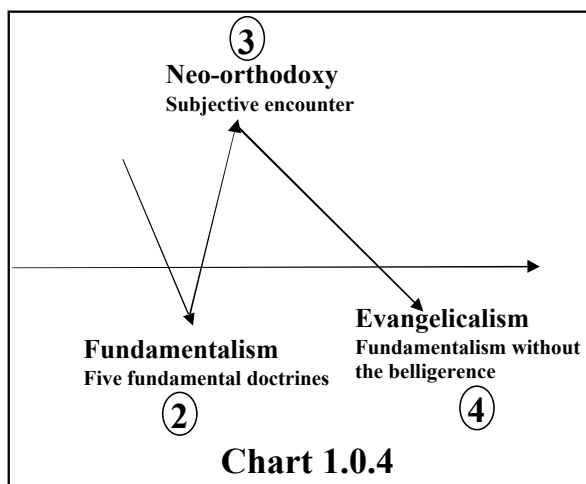


ter and bring you to a climax of decision. You are not interested in what the exact words say. You are interested in meeting God person-to-person, subject-to-subject. That is Neo-Orthodoxy. It really does not matter, then, in Neo-Orthodoxy that the Scriptures are considered full of errors. God always meets you through them where you are. The objective content of revelation is absent. The theology is all subjective. That is Neo-Orthodoxy.

Evangelicalism

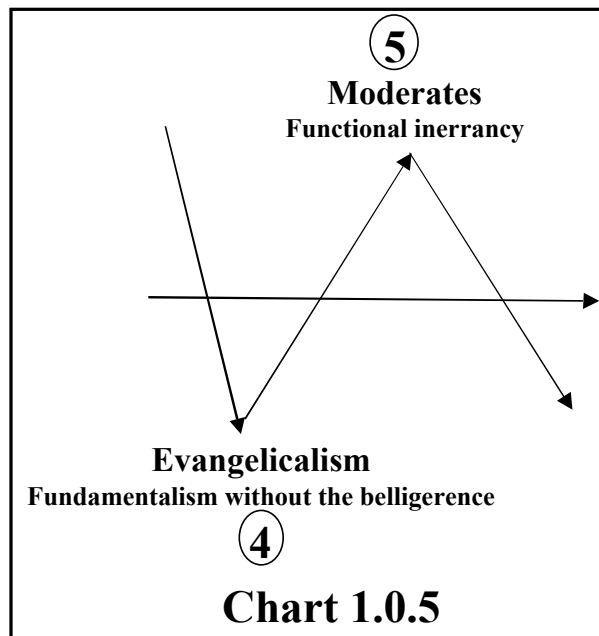
In reaction to Neo-Orthodoxy there is number 4, and that is Evangelicalism (see Chart 1.0.4). Evangelicalism is based on the good news, the Gospel, that Jesus forgives your sin. Neo-Orthodoxy is a decision-based hermeneutic. It brings you to the crisis of decision, and those are decisions of behavior in society.

What you will do based on your encounter—that is the question asked in Neo-Orthodoxy. The question asked in Evangelicalism is, “Will you believe and therefore receive Me (Jesus)? Will you receive the forgiveness and the new start that I am willing to give you?” All of the fundamentals in Fundamentalism are also in Evangelicalism. Evangelicalism is Fundamentalism stripped of its belligerence.



Moderates

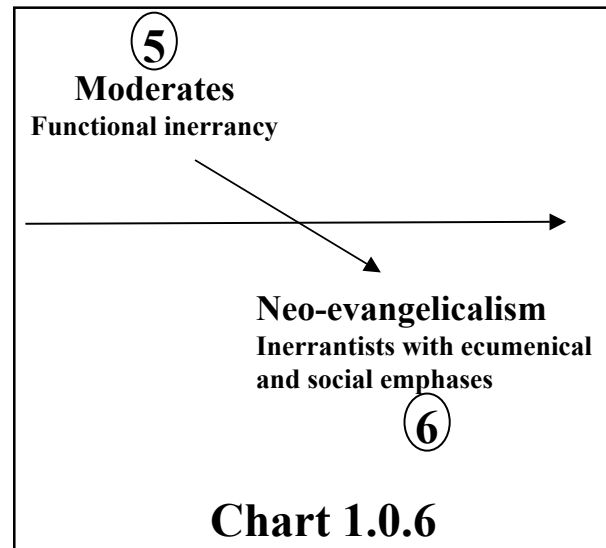
The reaction to Evangelicalism is on the left, and it is #5, called the Moderates (see Chart 1.0.5). The Moderates replace objective inerrancy with a functional inerrancy in the Bible. That means that the Bible functions inerrantly in your life. It does not matter according to moderates that there may be errors in the Bible. It still functions inerrantly in your life. God uses that book with all its flaws to bring about His perfect will in your life.



Neo-Evangelicalism

Another move comes off the Moderate movement. It is #6, Neo-Evangelicalism (see Chart 1.0.6). Neo-Evangelicalism is Evangelicalism with the societal emphasis added. You remember how we had the no social concern in Fundamentalism? Well, there is no social concern in Evangelicalism either, but they dropped the belligerence. Neo-Evangelicalism adds on social concern. This basically is the Billy Graham kind of Christianity. Billy Graham, however, not only has the social concern, but he has much emphasis on ecumenicalism. He has ecumenical

gatherings and European meetings of the world alliances for the purpose of implementing social concerns. For me this category is a little bit uncomfortable. I want to be somewhere near #6 but without the ecumenicalism. That is where I feel the most comfort. Do not take this for where you ought to be. I told you I would tell you what I believe. But I started my pilgrimage with Fundamentalism. That was when I did not know anything. Sometimes, the more you think you know, the less you know. Then I got a little bit of education, and I'm finding out that there is a lot more to theology than I had ever dreamed. I have a lot more social concern than I did before.



Student (Pete): Does the book, *In His Steps*⁵ come out of the Neo-Orthodoxy mindset, and has there been a revival of that Neo-Orthodoxy today?

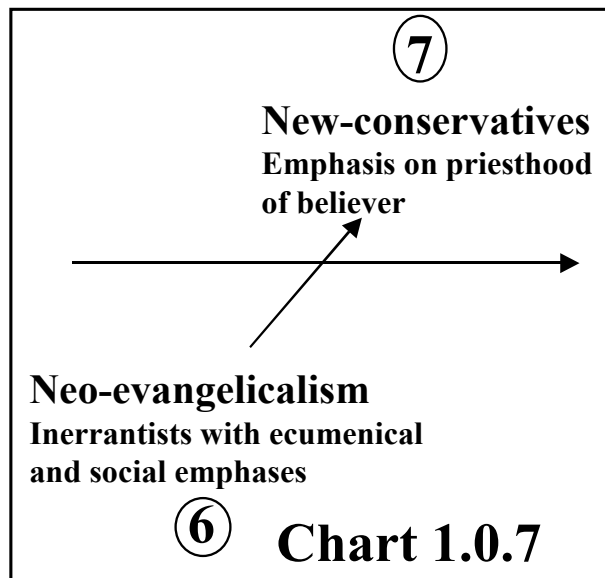
Vinson (V): Neo-Orthodoxy is prevalent today, and it abounds everywhere. It is even in Southern Baptist life. *In His Steps* is an emphasis on immanence and subjective atonement, but it is not necessarily Neo-Orthodoxy. The thing that makes Neo-Orthodoxy what it is, is the doctrine of revelation. For Neo-

⁵ A book in the tradition of Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*.

Orthodoxy revelation is an encounter, not an objective Word revelation, but a subjective encounter revelation.

New Conservatives

Now I want to look at #7. Number 7 is the New Conservatives (see Chart 1.0.7). Here is the emphasis on the priesthood of the believer. This emphasis is basically the biggest situation because each one of you is a priest in your own right, and you have your own way of following Jesus, your own belief system, and your own systematic theology. However, you need to know one thing: there is only one right theology, and Jesus Christ had it. The rest of us have a screwed up theology because we are not perfect. We are trying to get to His theology. That is my life goal to get there. I am not there, but I am not alone. All of you are with me.



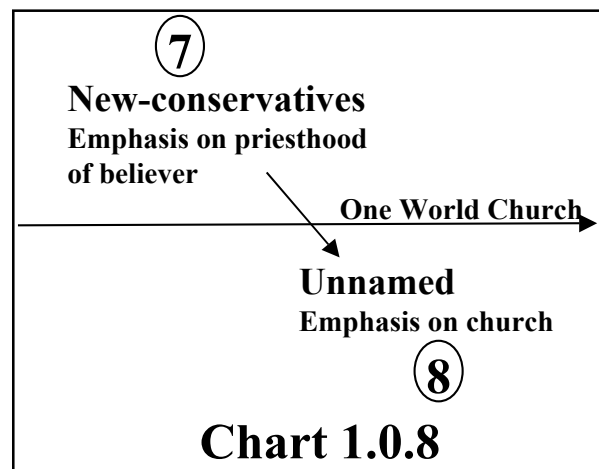
This priesthood emphasis is a mainstay of the New Conservatives, and they are calling themselves conservative. Of course, they are more conservative than the others on the left of the line. However, the emphasis on the priesthood of the believer allows each person to interpret Scripture as he likes because of his priestly “authority.”

Unnamed

The next point on the timeline, #8, emphasizes the local church, and I do not have a name for it. On the chart I have called it Unnamed (see Chart 1.0.8). In my teachings on the book of Revelation we deal with eschatology, and I have shown you a timeline starting with the Reformation. We are now out to #8 today, and we are going somewhere—to the world church. I am going to postulate that the two sides of theology are going to merge sometime in the future into a world church, a one-world religion.

I can see how the emphasis on the church that is structure-based and the emphasis on the priesthood of the believer that is freedom-based can both be put together in a world church. The world church would have freedom within the construct of a structure.

Basically the Roman Catholics are now giving us a model of how dissent within the confines of structure is going to work because you have dissent within Roman Catholicism today, but it stays within an invisible line. Your dissenters may pull away from the Pope, but they do not cross that line. They may pull all the way to the edge, and the Pope may let them do that, but they will not cross the line because to cross the line means they could be excommunicated. So they stay within the lines, and you have dissent that goes in a



variety of ways all through an entire system, everything in the circle. You have dissenters going in every direction over every doctrine, but they do not cross the line. That is how the world church is going to work. You just stay within the line. You can act and believe and question and struggle and tug and do anything as long as you stay in the circle.

Steve: When we get to that point it sounds to me like we had better become #2's again.

V: Yes, we are going to need some #2's, some of those warlike folks to stand in there and raise the banner once again. Now they are good at war, but they are not good at the Christian pilgrimage. What we need to do is be good in all areas because the salvation of all the masses depends on a right kind of Christianity built upon a right theology. The people of the world are going to go to hell unless you take the baton and run a good race. What is their hope? They have no hope if you do not bring it to them.

Pete: Will that give way to the dawning of a new Reformation?

V: It is time! It is time! It is time for us to get it right before it is too late. We are going to be looking at the various doctrines, and we are going to be looking at what demands those doctrines bring upon us. If you know the truth and do not do it, to you it is sin.⁶ We are going to be examining those truths, and once you know them, you are hooked.

Pete: The one-world religion is going to be the church of the Antichrist.

V: That is right, and it is going to give you a certain amount of freedom so that the church member can tug and tug and tug, but he will not cross the line. Why? because he will lose his right to buy and sell. He can tug

and fight against Antichrist, but he will not cross the line. We are seeing the eighth model today, folks. In this model, the emphasis is on the church. You get the structure and the freedom within the structure. The result is Institutionalism, a precursor to a future, worldwide church that is compatible with everyone. The big-tent Christian may be uncomfortable with some of the tenets of Antichrist, but if he is hungry, he is likely to disregard his discomfort.

I have already seen some "moderates" sign the Baptist Faith and Message in order to keep their jobs even when they did not believe it. In this course of study, try to shore up your faith and put it on solid ground. It needs to be objective and unbending on certain fundamentals.

WHY STUDY THEOLOGY?

1. In order to speak about salvation.
2. Organize your beliefs into a whole.
3. Enhance your witnessing.
4. Purify beliefs

Every one of you is deceived. You have error in your belief system. The nature of deceit is that you do not know what it is. If you knew something was error, and you believed it, that would be insanity. But when you do not know that it is error and you believe it, that is deception. Every one of us is deceived, and we are going to try to root out those deceptions. We are trying to purify our beliefs and get that theology that Jesus had. Not only the salvation of ourselves and others, but also our eternal rewards depend on our success in this endeavor.

When you examine Chart #1.0.7 you will see how much closer we keep moving from Liberalism to this New Conservatism. There is a coming together. I am most comfortable on the right or conservative side of the line between #4 and #6, and I am very objective oriented on salvation, but I have realized that

⁶ James 4:17.

there is a subjective dimension that has to be taught to the church. Basically my appeal is now to an objective salvation base with a social movement outworking. It is to get you up and out of your seat into the field rescuing the perishing all around, but not at the forsaking of your belief because we are going to stand on those beliefs. We must have a sure foundation to do our ministry. That is what I am trying to do here with this book.

Will you accept the challenge of theology? If you will, please bow your head and pray . . .

“Lord Jesus, I accept the challenge. Please teach me Your theology. I want to be fully equipped with a sure foundation so that I may follow You into Your ministry. I love You, Jesus, and give myself to You. Please use me for Your Glory. In Your precious Name I pray. Amen.”

Questions for Chapter 1

1. Define Systematic Theology (word for word).
2. What are the factors of canonization?
3. What are the Protestant distinctives?
4. Compare Liberalism with Fundamentalism.
5. Why study theology?

Chapter 2

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the heart and soul of our Theology. He is the only way to salvation. “Who do men say that I am?”¹ How you answer this question about Jesus determines your relationship with the Father.

Down through the ages there have been many attempts to answer this question. Some have said that Jesus was only a man. Yes, they say that He was a great man, but still only a man. Others have said that He was God and only appeared to be a man. And still yet others have declared that He was both God and man.

THE SEARCH FOR THE HISTORICAL JESUS

Those who claimed that Jesus was just a man view the Bible as portraying Him as a mythological deity. These people have spent their lives in the old quest to find the real Jesus of history—the Jesus who was just a man.

The Old Quest for the Historical Jesus

The major theologians involved in the Old Quest are Reimarus, Lessing, and Strauss. The quest for the historical Jesus in the old form was one in which they stripped away all of the supernatural parts, and they got a stripped-down version of Jesus without the miracles. The result is a historical Jesus in the same order as you yourself are a historical person.

The Old Quest, then, is for a scientific version of Jesus. It began in the 19th century. You remember the chart from the last chapter where we had around 1800 the beginning of Liberalism. Again, the Germans are the ones who began this liberal Christology.

The No Quest for the Historical Jesus

Bultmann is the major proponent of the No Quest. In this theological method there is no

need for a historical Jesus because the faith is in a *kerygmatic* Christ, the Christ of preaching. It goes something like this: if you project a myth and you believe in that myth, that belief is salvific for you. The *kerygmatic* Christ is this mythological Christ that is projected out by the *kerygma*, or the preaching. You can preach this myth, and if people believe the preaching, the sermon, they get saved even if there is no substance or no real Jesus to this sermon.

The New Quest for the Historical Jesus

Two proponents are Kasemann and Conzelmann who are both Germans. In these two there is a linkage between the historical Christ and the Christ of faith, *i.e.* Easter is not an invention of the church. This may sound pretty good, but it leaves a lot to be desired. It still results in an erroneous Christology because the linkage between Christ and Easter is too loose.

IN SEARCH OF THE BIBLICAL CHRIST

We are going now to find the biblical Christ. You have already met Him, and you speak with Him everyday. This then is not a real quest as we have already found Him. This quest is for information about Jesus. When we are dealing with Jesus, we have to deal with both His deity and His humanity. He is the God-Man, and thus both eternal and temporal.

In John 1:1 we have “in the beginning,” thus the Word was prior to the incarnation. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” This passage down through verse 18 is a clear expression of His deity. John 1:14 declares His temporal humanity when it says: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.”

¹ Matthew 16:13.

An expression of His deity is found in Philippians 2:6: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” And in the 7th verse there is an expression of His humanity: “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” In two verses you have both His deity and His humanity expressed.

Colossians 1:15-17 expresses His deity and part of His function as Creator:

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Also in Hebrews 1:1-3, there is a very clear expression of His deity, power, creation, and providential sustaining of all things that He has created:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of [his] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

WORD

Passages containing “Word” are very important. The expression is that Jesus is the Word. What is the Word of God? Does it have ontology or is it just functional? If it does have ontology, is it identical to God the Father? What is the Word?

Let us expand this idea. If you should speak a word, is that word you, or do you stand over against your word? You express your word, and there it is out there somewhere. You are here, and does that word over there have any bearing on your being?

Henry: It is part of you.

Joe: It may not necessarily be all of you.

Mary: It may even contradict you.

V: Yes to all three of you. Over time you could change, but your spoken word remains the same, so that change would result in a contradiction.

Class, I want to open up your thinking to see the essence of word; does it have ontology?

There used to be sayings, “He is a man of his word.” “He is as good as his word,” “His word is his bond.” There was a tight connection between a man’s word and what the man was. That tight connection is what God’s Word is to Himself. Jesus is the Word; therefore He is God. There is a tight connection, but what is happening in our society is that we have begun to think of our words as something that stand over against us. We can say something, and then do something contradictory.

Our words are intended sometimes to disguise who we are. What they do, however, is reveal who we are. They do not hide who we are. An utterance actually has substance from our beings. When you express words, they are an expression right out of your soul.

Henry: That is why the Word says, “Do not worry about what goes into your mouth, worry about what comes out.”²

V: Yes, they reveal your heart.

Jesus is the Word. What is the Word; what is the connection of the Word to God. Is It just something that God uttered, and then He stands over against an independent It? No, It is Himself there.

Ontology is the essence of something, its substance, and there is substance in the spoken word. It has ontology. That ontology is the same as the expresser. Your spoken lie is an ontological expression of your inner being. Do you hear that? If you are lying, there is

² Matthew 15:11

something wrong with your soul. You are a liar.

Mary: So God's ontology regarding His Word is His Son.

V: Yes, His Incarnate Word is God because His Word has His ontology.

VIRGIN BIRTH

The virgin birth is the linkage between the deity and the humanity. The virgin part of the birth is the supernatural part, and it speaks to the deity of Jesus Christ. Birth, however, speaks to the humanity part. Birth is what we all went through, so in this virgin birth there is both the deity and the humanity, the supernatural and the natural brought together in the God-Man. Jesus Christ is the God-Man through the virgin birth.

BELIEF

Which is most important: believing that? or believing in?

Joe: Well you cannot believe "that" without believing "in."

V: Yes, you can.

Mary: The demons believe "that."

Henry: Believing in is faith?

Sam: Romans 10:9 speaks to both—the "that" and the "in" when it says that you confess with your mouth (the "that") and believe in your heart (the "in").

V: What do you have if you have a "believing in" without a "believing that"?

Henry: Objectivity without subjectivity, right?

V: Just the opposite, subjectivity. This subjectivity without objectivity gives us the No Quest. You have a *kerygmatic* Christ.

What do you have if you have the "believe that" without the "believing in"? That is intellectualism, the New Quest. It is a demonic kind of belief.

We need to have both the objective and subjective dimensions to our faith. We should cast ourselves on what we believe. The object,

the what, of our belief must be true. If we have a false object to our faith, then our faith is in vain. Belief does not create truth. You can believe that the moon is made out of cheese. You can believe it with all your heart, but there is no objectivity (prior reality) to that faith.

Class, we are inundated with subjective faith where we think that we are making new reality, *i.e.* confessing things into being, or two people coming together to believe together to make a new reality. You can believe with all your heart, but you must have some objectivity to your faith. The "that" is very important, but it does not stand alone. The "in" is also important. The two are in tandem, and you must have both, or you are going to fall on your face.

MONOTHEISM'S IMPACT ON CHRISTOLOGY

Now, turn your attention to the dilemma that the Lord's disciples had when they walked with Him, and they heard Him praying to the Father who is in heaven. The Jewish disciples held very strongly to monotheism: "Hear this, O Israel, our God is one God."³

The Lord's disciples held to one God. They are stuck with a dilemma. If He is who He claims to be, a person who can forgive sins, and only God can forgive sins, a person who can walk on the water and raise the dead, then they are faced with the idea that maybe there are two gods, one in heaven and one on earth.

The church wrestled with this dilemma for several centuries. There were a long series of evaluations, church councils, meetings, and struggles among theologians wrestling with these issues. How can only one God be in heaven and on earth at the same time?

Chart 2.1⁴ is a Christological model for you to understand the development of the

³ Deuteronomy 6:4.

⁴ In Chart 2.1, I have hyphenated the word, "homousios," because I want you to be aware that there are two adjacent "o's" in that word. I missed a test question once because I had only one "o."

Doctrine of Christ. On the left side of the chart is the human nature. People in history who emphasize the human nature over deity are called *Ebionites*. When you are reading theology and somebody says this is an *Ebionitic* approach to Christology, you should remember that it is the human nature alone, and the deity has been set aside (Old Quest).

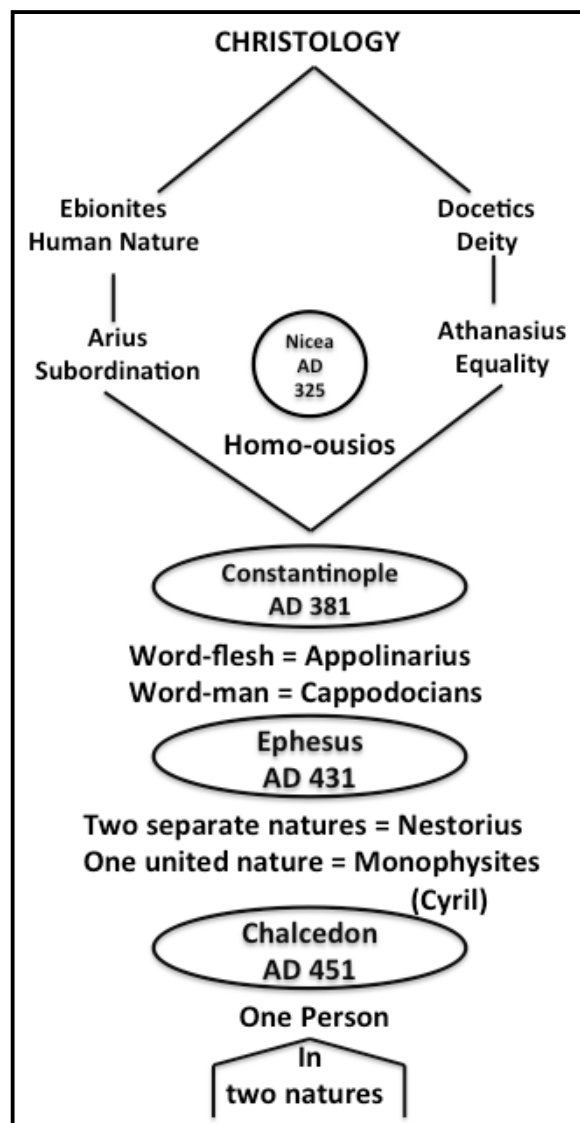


Chart 2.1

On the right side of Chart 2.1, you have the *Docetic* approach, which is an emphasis of the divine nature to the exclusion of the human. The *Docetic* approach is the kind that says He just seemed like He was a man. Those paintings depicting Jesus walking on the sea-shore but not leaving any footprints are *Do-*

cetic representations of Christology. If He is not human and only a ghost, He will not leave footprints in the sand.

These two kinds of Christology began to boil in the Fourth Century. We cannot forsake His humanity, nor can we forsake His deity because in the God-Man ontology, you have represented in the "person" of Christ also His function. His function is to unite man with God. In His being He is God-Man conjoined. His being then is an exact representation of what He does. A proper Christology necessarily has both humanity and deity.

Council Of Nicea

This crucial question of who Jesus is was brought up in AD 325 at the Council of Nicea. This council was the milepost that identified patristic theology as ante-Nicene, Nicene, or post-Nicene depending upon their relationship with this council. Arius and Athanasius were the two churchmen who debated before the entire council in AD 325. This council was of the entire (catholic) church of the whole world. Arius believed that Jesus was more than man but less than God. This position was *Ebionitic*, which denied the deity of Christ. It placed Him on the plane of an angel or some other created being. His slogan was, "There once was a time when Christ was not." He denied the eternity of Christ. He was bringing Christ down below the Father. This *Ebionitic* position is also called subordinationism.

Opposing Arius was a deacon, Athanasius, who fought for the divine side of Jesus. He said that Jesus is God. Athanasius wins the day, for the council goes with Athanasius, and the Nicene Creed, which comes out of this council says that Jesus is *homoousios* with God. *Homoousios* means of the same essence. *Homo* is the same. *Ousios* is essence, the same essence. He was saying that Jesus was of the same essence as God the Father. You cannot tell them apart in their essence. This "*homoousios*" is our inheritance from the very first world council of the church, which was wrestling with who Jesus is.

Council Of Constantinople

However, the whole Christological question was not resolved at Nicea. Only the deity issue was resolved. The human side of Him was addressed in the next council. After the Council at Nicea came the Council of Constantinople in AD381.

Apollinarius said that the Word was in eternity past, but at the birth of Jesus, He comes in the flesh (see Chart 2.2). He was not in the flesh in eternity past. According to John, Christ was the Word.⁵ Word was in eternity past. Apollinarius claimed that at His birth, Jesus' Flesh was joined to the pre-existent Word. After the birth, you have God's Word conjoined together with His Flesh.

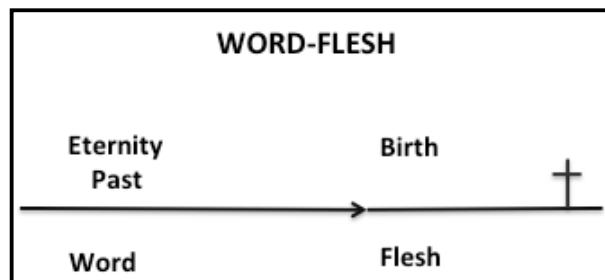


Chart 2.2

Does that sound good? Well, Apollinarius was banned from the church because you see there is a fallacy in the formula. This is called Word-Flesh Christology, and that is a heresy. Apollinarianism is a heresy.

It is not the flesh that makes you human. The Word in fact does make Him God. That is what we talked about a while ago. The Word is the same essence. Your word stands not over against you—it is you. That is who you are. It comes out of your essence.

Yet flesh is not what makes you human. Over against Apollinarius, the Cappadocians proposed a Word-Man Christology (See chart 2.3). So you strike the word “flesh” as His Manhood, and at birth He became a Man, and then you can join together Word and Man, and you have a true Christology. He was all Man,

not just Flesh. And He was all God. This was decided in Constantinople in AD 381.

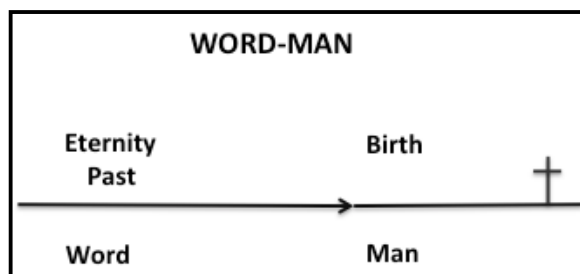


Chart 2.3

Council Of Ephesus

The third debate (Ephesus, AD 431) was between Nestorius and Cyril, a Monophysite. Maryology had begun, and Mary was said to be the Mother of God, which Nestorius rejected. He said that Mary was not the Mother of God, that God preceded Mary, and that she could not have been the Mother of God. There was a splitting of Jesus by the analysis of Nestorius's saying that Mary was the mother of only the man part of Jesus. Cyril, on the other hand, said that if Mary was not the Mother of God, then Jesus is not God. If she in fact bore Jesus, then she bore God and Man, the God-Man. The third World Council branded Nestorius a heretic and banned him because he defied the church's statement that Mary was the Mother of God. Cyril then was basically a proponent of Monophysite Christology.

Let me illustrate monophysitism thusly using a glass test tube that is open in both ends and formed into a “U” shape (see Chart 2.4 on the next page). On the left is poured in the human nature, and on the other side is poured in the deity. Each side is filled, and they hit in the middle, but they slosh around, and it begins to be one nature, not two natures. It is monophysite (mono = one; physite = nature), and Cyril is the proponent. Here you have a mix, combining of two natures, and they are no longer human and no longer divine. It is a mixed bag indistinguishable, and it is all mixed together. It is a third kind of a thing. That is monophysite Christology.

⁵ John 1:1.

In this battle between Nestorius and Cyril, Nestorius said there are two natures, and they cannot be mixed. They are separate natures. The church accused him of splitting Jesus into two people. The main reason he was banned, however, was because he could not say that Mary was the

Mother of God. Mary, the Mother of God, was an emotionally held theological statement by the church. This calling Mary the Mother of God was the incipient maryology that was in the church by that time. Nestorius lost and Cyril won. We had then in the third council the ascendancy of monophysite Christology. It was not going to last because Nestorius was less wrong than Cyril, but in that council Nestorius was banned, and Cyril was the winner.

Council Of Chalcedon

Next came the fourth world council in AD 451 in Chalcedon. In the Council of Chalcedon there were Eutyches representing the monophysite brand of Christology and Leo representing the two-nature Christology that re-addressed Nestorius while holding to the statement that Mary is the Mother of God. Leo was not about to claim any connection with Nestorius because Nestorius had been proclaimed a heretic, but he did take Nestorius's ideas and flesh them out and claim them as his own without connecting with Nestorius and running the risk of getting himself banned. Leo said that Jesus Christ has two inseparable natures that remain distinguishable.

Monophysite Christology made Jesus' natures indistinguishable and inseparable. Leo's Christology made Jesus' natures insepa-

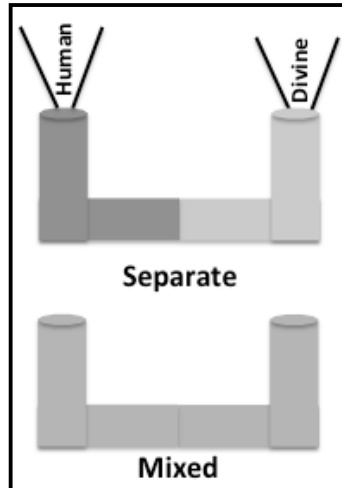


Chart 2.4

able but distinguishable. Eutyches said that there is only one nature after the birth. There is the Word first and added to that was the humanity. Those two natures came together and sloshed around, and the result was one new nature of a third type—the divine nature swallowed up the human nature.

It was Leo's victory that gave rise to the birth of the pope. Leo, the bishop of Rome, became the first pope in AD 451. Instead of a personal appearance, Leo had sent a letter to be read before the council. The debate was raging, and everybody was wondering, "Is Jesus one nature or two natures?" Then in came a great procession with trumpets blowing of representatives from the Bishop of Rome bearing a letter. They came into the hall and said, "Here is the *tome* (letter) from Leo." They opened it with great celebration, and a great spokesman stood in the front and read the *tome* to the entire audience. With one mind and one voice, the audience said, "The great fisherman has spoken! Peter has spoken. So let it be." That was the birth of the pope.

Ironically, Leo's *tome* had good theology: Jesus is one person in two natures. That is the Chalcedonian Christology that we hold to. The church went through four world councils for our Christology: Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and then Chalcedon. That is a long, hard trail to get to what we take for granted.

Along this trail the Holy Spirit was added to the doctrine of God presented at the council in Nicea. Under development was a Trinitarian doctrine, but the thrust of all of this was, Who is Jesus? Thus it took four centuries for the church to come to a definition of Christology, the work of theology.

DEFINE THE FINALITY OF CHRIST

1. Completed history.
2. Died once for all.
3. Salvation was in no other.
4. The fullness of God is not known elsewhere.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN PETER'S CONFESSION IN MATTHEW 16?

1. Knowledge and reflection of Him.
2. Encounter with Him.
3. Spiritually aided conviction and faith.
4. Existential confession.

Notice in this list of four, the first is intellectual, and the remaining three are existential. What do you have if you have the existential without the intellectual?

Ted: No Quest.

V: Yes, this is a subjective faith. There are a lot of people that think that faith in faith is salvific. To believe strongly in your belief is subjective or big-tent theology. The bigger the tent the less of the intellectual part there is. That is where we are heading. There is going to be one religion, and everybody must be able to subscribe to it. To get to one religion, you must remove the intellectual because when the intellectual, the objective part, the theological part, the doctrine, the creed, are all removed, then you can float along with everybody else. But when you hold on to any of that objective part, then lines are drawn, and pretty soon you cannot have fellowship with a Monophysite or Nestorian or an Arian because you hold to specific doctrines. Your Christology must be precise, on the money, and you cannot be in fellowship with someone who says that Jesus is not God.

What do you have if you have the intellectual without the existential?

Sybil: Orthodoxy.

V: It is orthodoxy with no change in life. It is basically the new *Gnosticism* in which knowledge is considered salvific. If there is not a life-changing grip on your soul by what you read in the Bible, then you are a *Gnostic*. You are dealing with the words, you can memorize the words, and use the words, and hammer people with the words, but there is no change in your life. That is not existential at all. Existential is absorbing. It takes control of you. It pulls you into Christianity. I read that the Lord says, "Deny yourself, pick up

your cross, and follow me."⁶ Thus I am denying myself, and grabbing that cross. Where am I going? I am following Jesus. That is the existential part, the commitment part, that part that changes your life. You cannot live without it. That is where I want you to be, but I want it to be based on objective Truth.

The *Docetics* come out of a *Gnostic* belief that material is evil. For the *Gnostic*, knowledge is spiritual and salvific, and material is evil. Dealing with this concept is a passage in 1 John 4:1-3 that says that whoever confesses that Jesus is come in the flesh is of the Spirit. John was dealing with *Gnosticism* that was rampant in the first century church.

Gnosticism was the ground from which *Doceticism* sprang because if material is evil, Jesus could not have been a real man with flesh because that would have made Him evil. *Gnostics* also believe that God would be evil if He created the evil material world. They cannot have God as being evil, so they have a series of gods, each god creating the next one down until there is one evil enough to actually create the world (see Chart 2.5). This is the *Gnostic* philosophy. The descending series of gods is called *Aeons*. This philosophy is based on the idea that spirit is good and matter is evil. What is spirit? Words are spirit so knowledge is salvific.

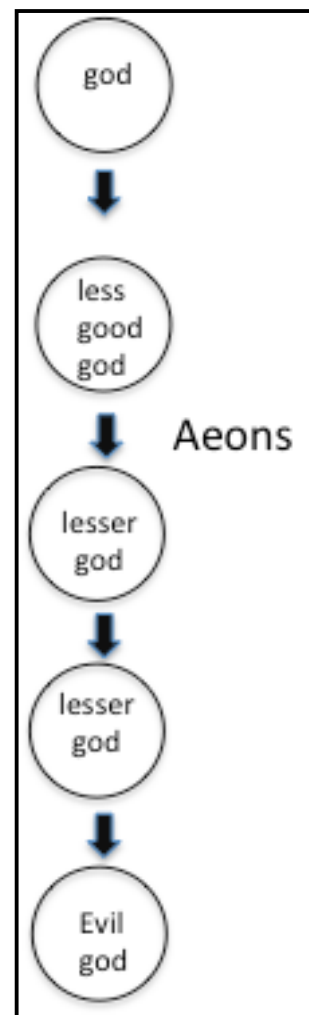


Chart 2.5

⁶ Matthew 16:24.

Paul: Don't *Gnostics* also believe that they can just act any way they want to?

V: Yes, because they are separate from their bodies. Earlier in this lesson, we dealt with "word," and we tried to connect the word with ourselves. You do not stand over against your word. *Gnostics* said however that your word is the real eternal you, and the flesh is only a temporal version of you. You can just live in your body like hell because the spirit is safe and separate. Do we not have the same thing today? We have modern-day *Gnosticism* today when we separate our spirit from our carnal being. Many now believe that our carnal being can live like hell, but the spirit, our real self, is saved, separate, and untarnished.

In modern-day *Gnosticism*, Christians think that knowledge is salvific. They memorize the Bible so that they can readily spout it. But they live in the world like they are headed for hell. They are filled with knowledge and think that God is really going to swoon over them because they know so much. God does not swoon over what you are or what you know. He respects what you "*do*." This modern-day *Gnosticism* says that knowledge is salvific.

Test my conclusion. Ask what is the greatest need in our society; ask a churchman, what will he say? Education. He will not say sanctification, discipleship, none of the "to do" stuff. Modern-day *Gnosticism* is everywhere. Ask a secularist the same question, and again, the answer will be education.

Peter makes a great statement of Christology in Matthew 16:13-17. Peter is the one that has been given this answer by the Holy Spirit, and is made the one who carries this great witness and promotes this kind of Christology that Jesus is both Son of God and Son of Man. Then in verses 21-24 Peter blows it. Peter goes from hero to zero.

Peter did not understand what Christianity is about. Christianity is about sacrifice, self-denying, and doing good for someone else at your own expense. What Peter wanted was for Jesus not to die. He wanted Him enthroned so he could sit beside Him. In his prior statement of Jesus being the Christ, Peter was the hero.

Peter got his bid in first for sitting on the right hand of the new King. Then, when the new King said, "I've got to go die," Peter thought, "If He dies, His throne goes, and my throne is hooked to His, so my throne goes. No, No! Lord, we do not want that. We do not want that part, we want you to stay here. Be it far from you."

It is hard to understand this Christology business. Christology has a sacrificial content. It is not power-based. Anyway here is Peter making this confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." That is a high statement, but he fails his first test because he has no understanding of the purpose of a God-Man Christology.

WHO DO YOU SAY JESUS IS?

Okay, now who do you say that Jesus is? We have to answer that same question. If you can say that Jesus is Lord, you are going to be tested. I am going to be tested. Our confessions are going to be tested. You just cannot say it and get the "attaboy's" just because you said it. God will determine whether or not you have integrity. He will determine it by your words and actions. Are your words true? If they are, then you are true. God is going to test you, every commitment you have ever made. Let me walk you through some of these tests here.

Jesus declared that He was the bread. Whoever ate Him has the life. The disciples wanted that other kind of bread, the kind that comes in loaves, you cut it and eat it and feel good about it. That is what they wanted—temporal bread. Jesus declared that He was the Bread of Life. Why was this such a hard saying? Jesus was moving the focus of life from the material to the spiritual. His disciples understood and began to count the cost of discipleship, and say, "No, we want that other kind of bread in loaves" (John 6:60-69).

What about us? Do we want that spiritual bread? When many of us want real temporal bread, He says that we must eat Him. This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? Shallow Christians leave because He does not have any edible bread. Deep Christians are those who

focus on the spiritual dimension instead of temporal materialism. Judas, on the other hand, focused on the temporal.

The Lord did not beg the shallow disciples to stay, and as a matter of fact He turned to the twelve and said, "Are you going to leave, too?" If there had been somebody else to go to, they would have left, too. Peter turned and said, "We have no place to go. You are the One who has the Words that lead to life."

TEST OF THEOLOGY

The hard things are going to be tested. His hard sayings are right here in the Bible. Will you pass the tests? There will be things in here that will be opposite of what you want. You are going to be faced with, "Do I leave?" Or, are you going to turn back to Him and say, "Where can we go? You are the One who has the Words that lead to life." You are going to have to capitulate, and take those hard things. It does not matter what your pet thing is. When God calls, you throw everything down, and you follow Him.

In the test of theology, will you join the whole crowd when they leave? It is that person who walks with Him, talks with Him, and draws close to Him, who is going to stand the test of doctrine, the hard things that He has said. Who can hear it? If you are a real friend of Jesus, you can hear it, and you can cast aside your own desires. Self-denial is the first requirement of discipleship.⁷ Instead of temporal bread, seek after the Bread of Life.

It is the human part of Christology that is more easily overlooked. Every one of us looks at Jesus primarily as either God or Man, and that affects your Christian pilgrimage. If you look at Jesus as entirely God, then you become very passive in your pilgrimage, and you expect God to do everything. You expect Him to take care of you, pamper you, feed you. You do not do ministry. He does it all. But if you begin to see Jesus as mostly Man, then you are out there working hard at ministry. When you have a balanced Christology of God-Man, then you do your works in the

power of God. Everybody is impacted by his view of Christ, and the view of His Manhood is the most threatened. That is why Jesus continued to refer to Himself as the Son of Man.

TEST OF WORKS

The very first guy in Luke 9:57-62 has no strings attached. He said, "I'll follow You," and God gives warning. Your confession may be, "I will follow You, Lord, I will follow You." But God is going to give you warning right here that it is not a temporal blessing that you are going into. You are going into a life of sacrifice. You may not have a pillow to lay your head on. If you follow Jesus, you could end up like Paul, beaten with rods, stoned, cast into the deep, snake bitten, sleeping alone, despised, arrested and jailed. That may be your life because when you follow Jesus, it is not into temporal benefit. The spiritual pilgrimage costs you in your body because you cannot deny yourself without cost. Self-denial is the first requirement of discipleship. For this first guy, self-denial is the test of works.

We have already looked at the test of doctrine. Now we are looking at the test of works. We have three guys who take the test. The first guy commits with no strings attached. But he is warned. Hopefully that is us. No strings attached, "I'll follow You." But, you hear the warning: "I have no place to lay My head. If you are going to follow Me, guess what that means? You are going to have no place to lay your head." The first guy on the test of works passes with flying colors and gets a warning but no "attaboy" because rewards come only after a lifetime of testing.

The second guy comes along, and he says, "Well I have to go bury my daddy, and then I will follow You." This guy has failed. This is a person who has his own critical, human and family interests that shape his followship. He is concerned about his own family needs, but they do not stop him from ministry. He comes short of a close followship and fellowship with Jesus. Jesus does not condemn him. He says, "Go and preach. Let the dead bury the dead." Jesus wants you to understand something about Him: "My interests are to be your

⁷ Matthew 16:24, Luke 9:23.

interests. You have no interests other than My interests. I am your all in all, and you are interested in Me. I will tell you what to be interested in.” Why could not the second guy follow Jesus? because you cannot follow Jesus with the interests of others invading your fellowship. Can you hear this? These are hard sayings.

The third guy comes along, and he wants to set his own conditions. He says, “I am going to follow you.” This is that lip-service thing. He is volunteering, but before he is willing to leave, he wants to go and say farewell to his people. What he is doing is establishing his own conditions for a fellowship. The Lord straps it on him in a big way. This guy is in terrible jeopardy, and the Lord says that he who sets his hand to the plough and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God. Here you are with your mouth saying, “Yes, Lord, let me have the plough, but before I plough I want to do something.” He is setting a condition for fellowship, and he gets the worst reprimand.

The first guy did not get an “attaboy,” he just gets a warning. The second guy gets a warning but is not allowed to follow. The third guy gets a terrible rebuke from the Lord. You are likely one of those three guys. This is the test of works. What are your works going to be? Are they going to match your confession? You are going to get tested in your doctrine, you are going to get tested in your works, and now let’s go to the next test.

TEST OF *KENOSIS*

The *kenosis* passage is Philippians 2:5-11.

2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above

every name:

2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;

2:11 And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

I want you to see something here about this kind of Christianity. We have looked at this passage earlier for our Christology, and our Christology is Jesus as being both God and Man. But within the essence of Christ is also His function or His work. His person and His work are inseparable. He does who He is. I wish we could do that. We are called hypocrites because we do not do what we are. We do what we are not, or we wear a disguise and begin to do according to a disguise. But He is who He is, and what He does reflects exactly on who He is in the same way as His Words do.

This kind of Christian pilgrimage is portrayed in Philippians 2:5-8. Jesus left His home in heaven, and descended down. This is a downward descent that is based on the *kenosis* (the word *kenosis* means that He emptied Himself). He made Himself of no reputation, then He took on the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; He humbled Himself; He became obedient, and obedient to death on the cross. Please see Chart 2.6 for this kind of pilgrimage.

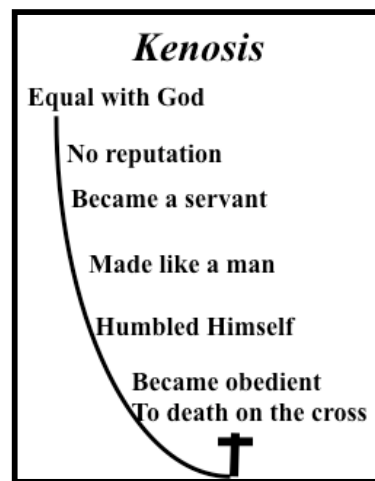


Chart 2.6

Please note that exaltation comes after death (Philippians 2:9-11). After the descent there is the exaltation. Please examine Chart 2.7 (on the next page) for a portrayal of the exaltation.

Now this is the kind of pilgrimage that Jesus had, and God says here, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” This is the kind of approach to Christianity you are to have. This is the test of *kenosis*.

We had the test of doctrine; we had the test of works; now we have the test of *kenosis*. The first requirement of discipleship is self-denial. You see Jesus denied Himself. He did not do one thing that He wanted to do. He submitted His will to the Father on every step that He took. He wants us to deny ourselves —“Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.” This is what we are to do, and after death comes exaltation (see Chart 2.7).

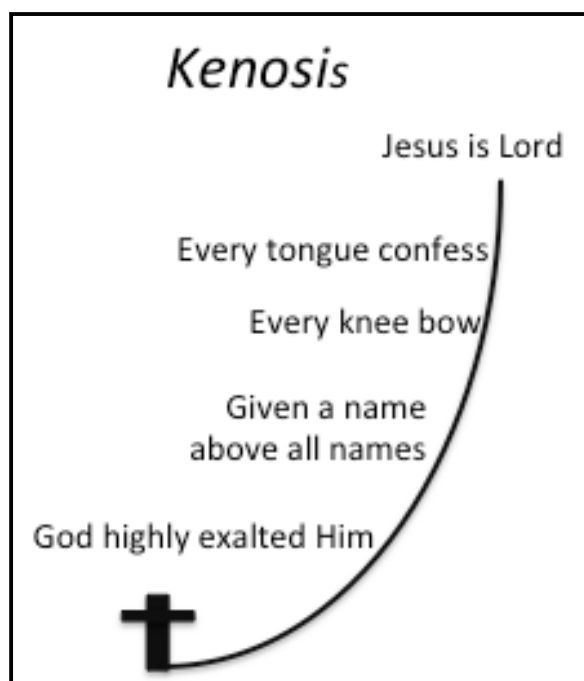


Chart 2.7

Christ despised all of the shame before the cross for the sake of the joy after the cross. How are you going to manage this kind of sacrificial life? *Kenosis* is acceptable by looking to the joy and anticipation to be found on the other side of death, the exaltation.

What do we typically want? We want exaltation now, not this *kenotic* pilgrimage. What we want is a reversal of the *kenosis*. So we take this kind of approach portrayed in Chart 2.8. We want to climb up, we want the people to swoon over us, and we want all the

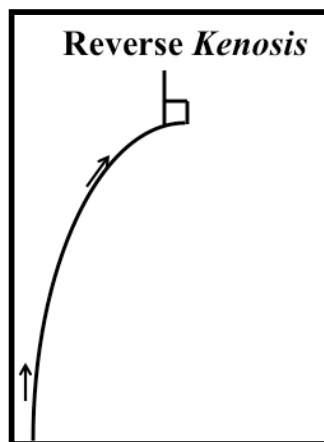


Chart 2.8

applause, temporal comforts, and indulging our flesh. We want to get to the top with a big throne and sit and oversee those below us and have the people come and be dependent upon us in our exalted position. That is the opposite of what Jesus did. He came down. We want to go up. If you come down, you will be exalted. If you climb up, you will be brought down (See Chart 2.9).

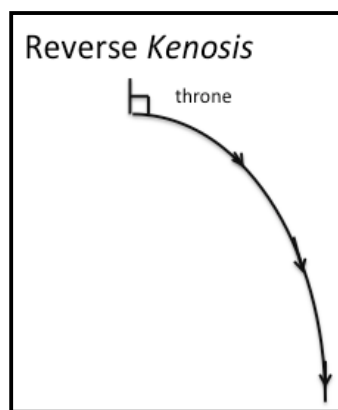


Chart 2.9

What is the result on the other side of death? You reach your pinnacle of life, and then you die, and you have nothing because you received your rewards on earth. The person who loses his life will gain it (Matthew 16:25), and his reward is exaltation because he is faithful in the little things (See Chart 2.10 at end of chapter).

The guy who is climbing is focused on the temporal, going after the lust of the flesh. He had better enjoy it while he has it because he is not going to have much later. He is going to fall to loss of rewards (see Chart 2.11 at end of chapter).

Kenotic Examples

Let's take a look at some *kenotic* examples. First is Timothy (Philippians 2:17-21). Timothy is doing good. Here is Paul in prison writing back to Philippi, and he wants to send somebody to find out the state of the Philippian church. He looks around at all these saints around him, and he cannot send

anybody because they are not “like-minded.” He has one helper, his main guy, Timothy, to help him do the ministry, but he has to send Timothy back to Philippi because nobody is willing to throw away his own concerns and do the work of God at self expense. Paul says: “For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek his own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.”

We saw in the three tests of works where we had one guy who said, Let me go and bury my father, and Jesus said, Let the dead bury the dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God. He did not say, “Come follow me,” because that guy had concerns of his own that interfered with his followship.

Timothy, in contrast, is an example of the *kenosis*. Whatever the mission is, he will go. He does not have to be told that there is no place to lay his head because he has already been going. He has already been passing the test. He has already been seeing the persecution. This is the kind of guy that goes and forgets self-interest. He just goes. That is what you need to be. You need to be the kind of person who is not detained by a concern for your own things. When Jesus says go, or come follow Me, you do it. If you do not, you may be a good guy and allowed to go preach the kingdom of God, but you cannot follow Jesus.

Next is Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:23-30. Epaphroditus is a guy who subjected himself even unto his life. He came near death in order to do the ministry, and he did not turn back. He went, and he did, and he is being sent back now by the Apostle Paul with a commendation. Do you want that kind of commendation?

Now let’s take a look at the Apostle Paul in Philippians 3:7-14. The high calling of Christ is through the *kenotic* model. To get there, you must go downward in the life of sacrifice. This is the Christian pilgrimage in which temporal gain is loss to Christ, *i.e.* dung. Temporal loss (sacrifice) is winning Christ.

We have the three examples of the test of self-denial or *kenosis*. We’ve looked at the test of doctrine, the test of works, and the test

of *kenosis*. You are going to be tested. Do you love the Lord more than bread? Your love is going to be tested. Do you want to follow Jesus? Your answer is going to be tested. Can you even get past the first test of discipleship? Your self-denial is going to be tested. Pass the test, brethren. Pass the test. Look at these examples and imitate these guys that have the commendation.

Do not look at the examples of temporal glory. Climbing up and getting all that you ever imagined is not your calling. You can trade your life for temporal gain. Do not be deceived. Stay with Jesus. Follow His example. He did not have a lot of clothes. He did not have a place to lay His head. He fell asleep in the bottom of an old stinky fishing boat. I do not know whether you have ever tried to sleep in a fishing boat. I have, and it hurts. Those boards gouge into your back. Your bones hurt; your head hurts; everything hurts. He slept in it. He was tired. He was despised and mocked, belittled, crucified. That is your model to follow.

We have three examples of people who are walking the *kenotic* pilgrimage that is downward, looking to the other side of the grave for their glory. Do not be deceived into looking on this side of the grave for your glory. If you get it on this side of the grave, you have it. You had better celebrate big time because that is all you are going to get. It ends at the grave. Instead, choose the glory that begins at the grave.

Now, I am going to pray for you.

“Father, we studied Christology, Who Jesus is, Who do men say that He is, Who I say that He is. We have come against these awesome tests, and, Lord, I want to confess here with my mouth that Jesus is Lord, that I love You dearly. I want to pass this test, Lord. I want to deny myself, pick up my cross, and follow my Lord Jesus who bought me and owns me. I want everybody reading this to pass these tests: tests of doctrine, tests of works, and tests of *kenosis*. Lord, please help me to teach it not only with words but also with my life because I love You dearly. I pray this for the sake of my

readers, but not only for them but for their congregations and the people they teach, people they minister to, their own households, their children, their families and friends. Lord, I pray that this teaching will go out from here, and go in many and varied

places and touch many lives for Your glory and for their welfare. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen."

Class, if you join in this prayer, say "amen" out loud right now.

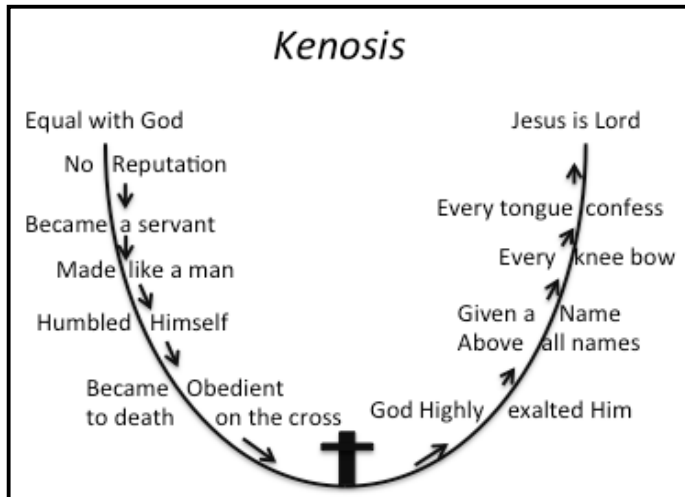


Chart 2.10

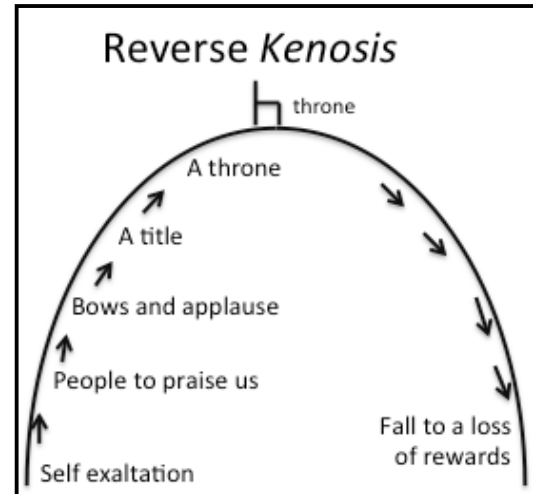


Chart 2.11

Questions for Chapter 2

1. Describe the four world church councils.
2. Define the finality of Christ.
3. What is involved in Peter's confession in Matthew 16?
4. Illustrate the *kenosis* and include the Scripture reference.
5. Illustrate the Opposite of the *kenosis* and include the Scripture reference.
6. How are our confessions going to be tested?

Chapter 3

REVELATION, PART I

The doctrine of revelation is very important for systematic theology because revelation supplies the content for all doctrine. Thus, if one's doctrine of revelation is wrong, there will be a good chance that all other doctrines will be wrong. This can be seen clearly in present-day Southern Baptist life. The liberal movement within the Southern Baptist community has rejected an objective form of revelation and adopted instead a subjective form.

KINDS OF REVELATION

General Revelation

On Chart 3.0 below you need to see that general revelation is on the left side, and special revelation is on the right side. Under each one you have three kinds of revelation.

Nature

Under general revelation there is nature, which is the most general form of revelation, and Romans 1 speaks to that. It states that you can know that there is a God, and you know something of His character by looking

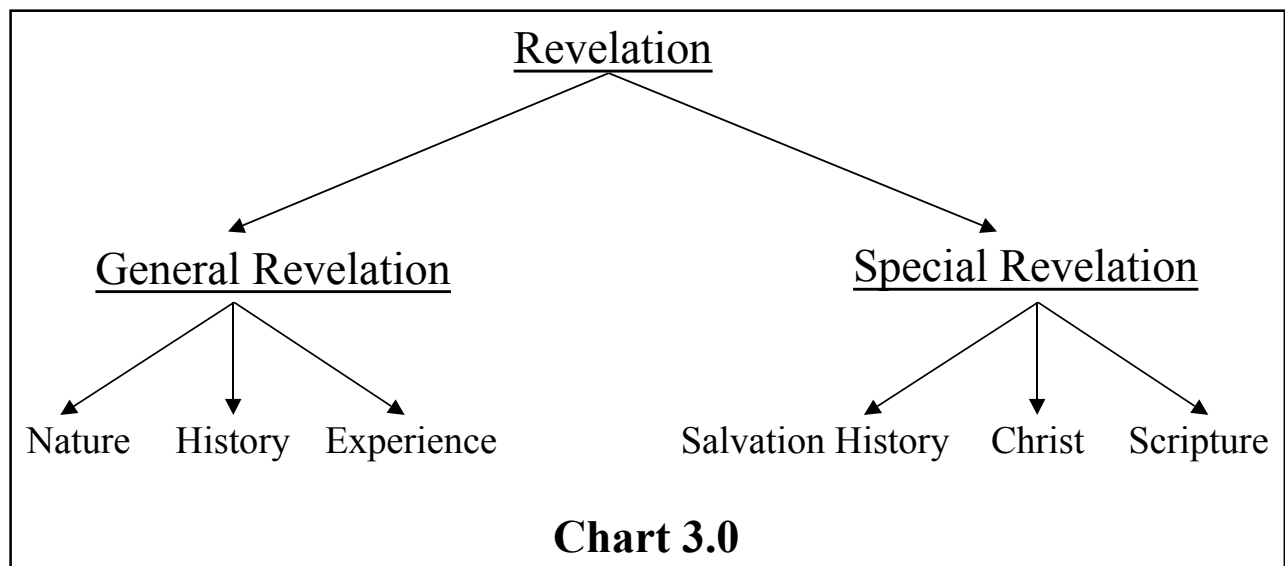
at this magnificent nature that we have. All of creation has His handprints all over it.

History

You can also know something about God by looking at history. History is linear, and that means there are a beginning and an end. Because history is linear, you may know that there is someone who is providing the rules for conduct in history, and that there is going to be a judge since there is an end to history.

There have been many attempts to escape this linear doctrine of history. People have come up with cycles, and they have come up with spirals, anything, even reincarnation, to get away from linear history because linear history implies God.

You can know something about God through nature and through history—how He has created the universe with its laws of nature, and how He deals with sin in history, the rise and fall of nations and empires. God's handprints are all over history.



Experience

Experience is the personal part of man. You have heard that everyone is born with a God-shaped vacuum in his soul. That is a fact of life because God created you. He created you in need of fellowship with Him, and written on your soul is His right and wrong that is congenital with you. When you were born, you brought certain things to this life that are in the initial area of experience. You can, through subsequent experience, know that there must be something greater than yourself, something that created you and gave you this sense of knowledge of spiritual being and right and wrong.

Special Revelation

When we move to special revelation, however, we are moving into a completely different arena. Everyone knows general revelation. Every living person experiences general revelation. It is called general revelation because it is available to everyone. It is *generally* open. But special revelation is God's dealing in a *special* way to reveal Himself to people who are willing to receive that revelation. For example, concerning Scripture, there are a lot of people who will not receive Scripture, but God gave us Scripture for a special revelation to special people. Who are the special people? those who are willing to receive that special revelation.

Salvation History

We will start with salvation history. Salvation history has to do with God's people, *i.e.*, Israel and the Church. You can see God's dealings in history with His own people, *e.g.* the burning bush. Israel is described as the burning bush. No matter how persecuted and oppressed His people are, they are still there. They never burn up and go away. The burning bush just continues to be there. Salvation history is then how God dealt, is dealing, and will deal with Israel and the

Church. You see that the Church has come through the middle ages with all its oppression and persecution. It is still here, and it is still being oppressed and persecuted. Also according to the Book of Revelation, we are going to have some more persecution that will increase in intensity to the point of death. The Church is still going to be here. When the PC crowd kills us, there is going to be another group coming right behind us.

Christ

Christ is God's own person coming here. That is a special revelation. But His people did not receive Him. They are lost because of their lack of reception of special revelation.

Scripture

Scripture is God-given. It is written by God. There it is, His Words. It is open to you. Will you receive it? I will, so it is special revelation to me.

When you see a chart like the one at the beginning of this chapter, the left side is liberal, and the right side is conservative. But you need to know that you must hold to all six of these categories of revelation in order to have a good doctrine of revelation because if a person is way out to the left, and nature is the only one he holds to, he is a naturalist. Basically, communism falls in this category as well, and if nature is all there is, you have a materialistic approach. You cannot know God unless you get into special revelation. In general revelation, all you can know is "about" God.

To the left alone is liberal. But if you hold to all six of them, this then becomes very wholesome and good for you because all are valid. That is what we want to do, hold to all six. We must have a norm, however, and the norm needs to be objective. The objective norm is Scripture. We are going to deal with some propositional revelation and personal revelation, and *Heilsgeschichte* and a whole

bunch of other stuff in this chapter. However, I want you to see that Jesus is your Lord, but He exercises His Lordship over you in a very consistent way. His Lordship is not variable, and it is not up to your subjective opinion, and so you need an objective norm.

That objective norm for all revelation is the Scriptures because they do not change. They serve as an objective anchor. If you cut loose from Scripture and hold to Jesus as your “norm” in revelation, then you are open to subjectivity that may sound like, “Well, the Lord told me to do this.” We see serial killers saying that the Lord told them to do a variety of heinous acts. These abominations are inconsistent with an objective norm. Your subjectivity, your personality, your bias, and all manner of perversions come into play when you receive information mysteriously in a mystical way that has no normative and objective guidance to it. For example, you can be sick and weak of body and have a fever and come up with all kinds of weird stuff. Some of you come up with weird theology without being sick. (Laughter)

We need something to hold us in place. A rope that is good and strong and has an immovable anchor on the end of it will allow us to wiggle around and move around the anchor, but we cannot go drifting off somewhere. This is what I am trying to show you here. We will get deeper into the objective norm of Scripture later in this chapter.

You are going to experience many new ideas in theology, philosophy, and other things that will use nature, history, or experience as norms. Those are liberal, and you will need to hang onto something that is objective, but do not throw those out because even Romans 1 says all manner of good things about nature, and you must hang onto that because God said that it is good. God created nature, and He said, “It is good.” It is for you to see God’s hand prints on it to see

something about His majesty, His sovereignty, and His providential care.

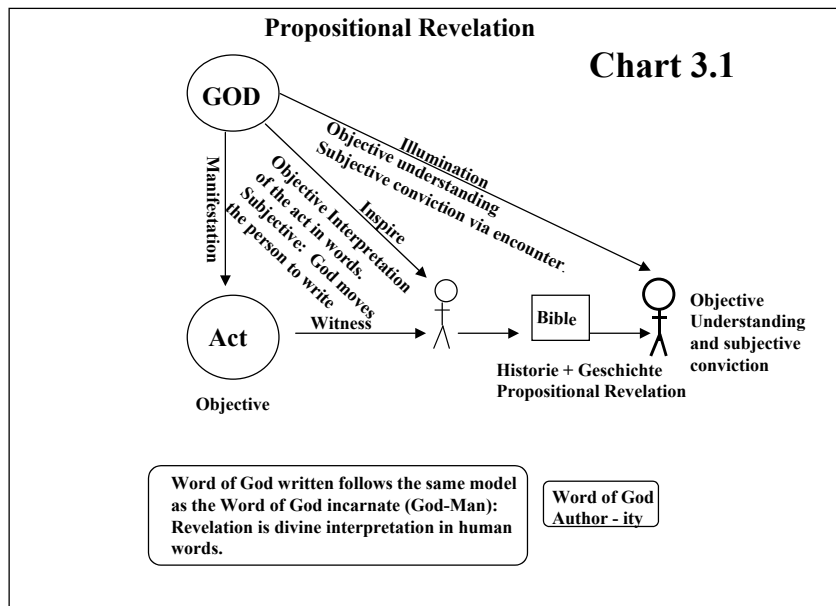
All of general revelation and special revelation working together give you a fully fleshed out doctrine of revelation. But you must have a norm, something that does not change. God does not change, but our perception of Him changes. Human perception has to be kept in check. Your perception, your bias, your personality has to come under some kind of check, and that check is the objective norm of Scripture. We Protestants are people of the Book.

But if you hold to the left side only, that is liberal, and that is bad. If you hold to the right side only, that is conservative, and that is bad, too. Even holding to the Scripture category while leaving out the other five is wrong because you will have lost the personal contact with Christ, which comes with experience. This would be cold orthodoxy revisited in the form of intellectualism. You read the Bible, and you read it intellectually, and you say that this is the truth, and this is all there is, and you can quote it and state it, and take tests on it, but if you have not experienced it, it is intellectual only, and it is not life changing and salvific. We have people like that. You have to have the whole thing, and just to lock in on one thing only is bad.

PROPOSITIONAL REVELATION

Revelation always starts with God (see Chart 3.1 on the next page). God manifests Himself through an act that is witnessed by someone. The person, *e.g.* Moses, sees God do something. He sees God do the plagues and all the miracles in Egypt. God inspires Moses to record what he saw and heard.

There are two dimensions to inspiration: a subjective inspiration and an objective inspiration. Subjective inspiration is when God moves the person as a subject. That person, then, is going to do something in response to that inspiration. Objective inspi-



ration is when God gives the actual words to the person to write down. God moves the “person” to write what he saw, and God gives the “words, or the interpretation” of what that person saw God do. That person then writes down God’s words, and they become Scripture. That is where our Bible comes from: God inspired it. God interprets His own act to the witness. Interpretation is translated into actual words. The Bible becomes history, there is a historical act, and there is a word picture of the act.

The German language has two words for our single word history. *Historie* is the historical fact of the act. *Geschichte* is the interpretive history. Both are contained in our English word, history. Thus in Scripture you have the fact of what God did (*Historie*), and then the interpretation by God of that act (*Geschichte*).

Not only does God give manifestation and inspiration, but He also gives illumination. In order for a person who reads the Bible to understand God’s acts, he has to be elevated because the human mind cannot understand the things of God. It is just too far above us. So God accomplishes this elevation via illumination.

Illumination also has two forms, a subjective form and an objective form. The objective form is the understanding. He helps you understand the words you just got through reading. Then the subjective form is the conviction. He meets you where you are and calls you to repentance. When He says, “Deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24), He meets you in a personal encounter in which you must make a decision. Thus God has two parts in illumination:

an objective part that is understanding, and a subjective part that is the conviction or the call to repentance or to decision, *i.e.* encounter.

A **proposition** is words strung together in order to make a meaningful sentence. Those words came through inspiration. Please recall that inspiration is in two forms, subjective and objective. Of course in subjective inspiration He moves upon the person and says, “Write your observation down.” The objective form is also required because if you just left it to a sinner to write down his own ideas he would include, among others, errors and self-glorification. God gives the interpretation of the act so that when it is written it is the words of God because He gave the actual words. There was a human person, yes, that did the writing, and it was the human person’s personality and vocabulary that is expressed in that writing, but God gave the interpretation. The result is the inerrant Word of God because God Himself selected the words.

There are then two kinds of inspiration, and they are both required: objective and subjective. That means then that Scripture is real history. When Moses said that God

parted the Red Sea, that is exactly what happened. It actually parted. When he said that the people went across on dry land, that is exactly what happened. And when the Egyptians came running in behind them, and He pulled the water back down on them, and they drowned, that is exactly what happened because God gave the inspiration. He moved the person to write, but He also gave him the words to write His own divine interpretation. Scripture is not a matter of individual interpretation. It is a matter of God's interpretation. This is **propositional** revelation.

Inspiration and illumination are both subjective and objective. If you leave one out, you get a broken model. It all begins with God. God inspires the writer and the words. So that means then that the Bible is the Word of God. How can we lift our human minds up to God's level to understand His stuff? We cannot, so God lifts up our minds and gives us understanding. With the understanding, God comes to you personally and says, "Okay, now come and follow me."

The whole of revelation revolves around God. It starts with God and ends with God. Every part of revelation is divine.

"History," our English word, contains but does not distinguish the two elements of God's Word because English does not have the precision that the German words have. Both of these elements are present, the actual event and the description of the event. The actual event is the fact that actually happened, the parting of the Red Sea, but the description, the *Geschichte*, is the description or interpretation of that event, and if you have the Bible as real "history," it has both fact and interpretation all embedded in that one word.

You can split out *Historie*, and leave it to *Geschichte* alone, and then Scripture will be myth because the actual event does not have to be present for you to have *Geschichte*. You can just present *Geschichte* as an expression of imagination. You need to

understand that propositional revelation is a doctrine that claims that the Bible is the Word of God because it came from God, God inspires it, and God illuminates it. It all revolves around God.

The Bible has authority because of who its author is. The author is God. Therefore its authority is vested in God. When asked what is the authority, you should answer thusly: *author-ity*. Split the word so that you can remember that authority is vested in the author. You can just put a little hyphen there, and it will help you from this point on to remember that the authority of the Bible is based on its author. If God is the author, you had better obey Him as He has expressed Himself in His Words. This is **propositional** revelation.

PERSONAL OR ACT REVELATION

This model is somewhat similar to propositional revelation, but there are some very important differences. We have God who is manifesting Himself in history once again. He does an act. There is a witness who observes that act and is inspired to write it. That inspiration is subjective inspiration only. This witness writes down his own interpretation of the act, and that makes it a subjective inspiration. The words are not given by God. Thus he thinks that he has written down an accurate description of what he saw. This means that *Geschichte* is not the English word history if it does not have *Historie* in it. *Geschichte* alone is the witness's own interpretation of what he saw.

In act revelation, where is revelation? The act is revelation. What is the Bible? It is the "record" of revelation, and you will see it written in many theology books that the Bible is a witness. The Bible is reduced to the writer's witness, the record of revelation.

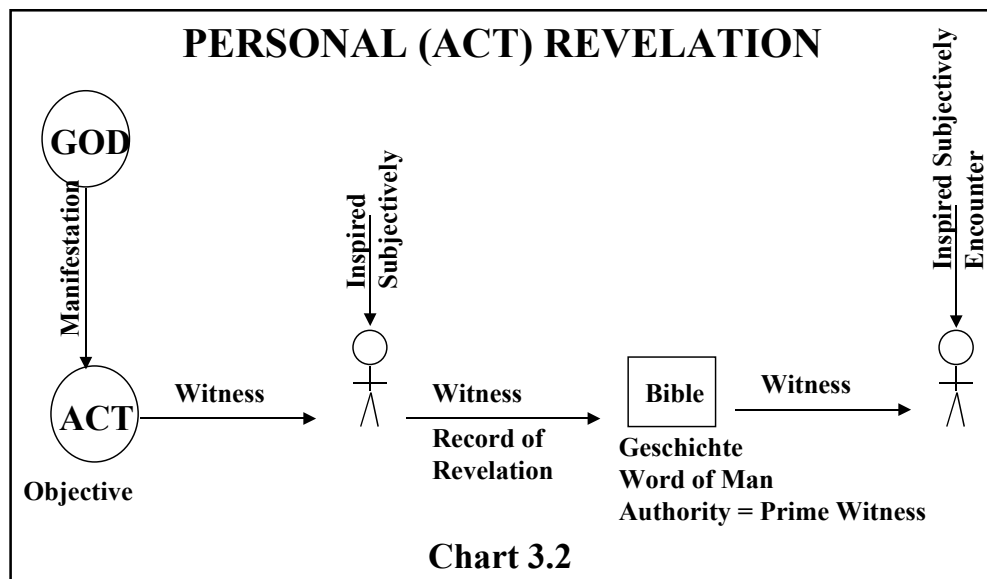
You will see these words, and you need to know what you are reading when you read

them. You can get sucked right in to all this good sounding stuff, and you will not even know you are drifting to the left.

Now to see how Personal Revelation works, look to the present day on the right

forms because it is up to you. Whatever is right in your own eyes is what you believe.

So here we get then a Bible that is no longer history. It is only half of it. It is the interpretive half. And that interpretation



side of Chart 3.2. There you are, you read the witness that was given in the Bible. It is not the Word of God. It is not revelation. It is a witness. So where is revelation for you? It comes in an encounter, a personal encounter. As you are reading the witness, all of a sudden like a lightning bolt from heaven, God encounters you, and calls you to decision. Another name you will see for this kind of theology is Crisis Theology because it is not in the reading and the understanding and the personal accountability that you have through the objective Scriptures, it is the crisis of belief and decision in the subjective encounter. You need to understand now that this is very subjective because when a person has an encounter with the Lord, he can interpret his crisis apart from an objective anchor. The next reader may reverse the interpretation, and both of them are claiming the revelation came from the Lord. You see, it is subjective, and without the objective content, it becomes a free-for-all, and Christianity can take all manner of weird shapes and

came from the witness. You see revelation can be anything then because of the subjectiveness of both the witness and the reader. If your observation of the doctrine of revelation is this understanding, then where is the authority? It is in the encounter that is also subjective.

Therefore, the liberal who desires not to be oppressed by Scripture can move far afield. The liberal has all the freedom. He can have anything he wants to have and call it Christianity. Well, this is where many Christians reside today.

Please understand that this act and its interpretation, which is in the Bible, never change. It is the inerrant Word of God. Now the doctrines constructed from the Bible are based on your doctrine of revelation. Is it propositional revelation or is it personal revelation? Personal revelation is the second model we talked about. Propositional revelation is the first model. But the act did not change in either one. What changed is how both the witness and the reader look upon it.

How do we observe the Bible? If we are under the propositional revelation model, we see it as the inerrant Word of God. If we are in the personal (act) revelation model, we see it as a witness, a record of revelation, but not

the revelation itself, and we are waiting for an encounter to have the real revelation.

Please note that in this second model the witness on the far right of Chart 3.2 is one of us. We have this subjective inspiration or encounter, and we are called to decision. That is called crisis theology. Crisis means that you are at the point of decision, it means to decide. In crisis theology you have nothing to decide while you are reading the Bible. You are praying, “Lord, I need an encounter. I need a revelation.” The Bible is not revelation. It is a witness. You are reading the witness hoping you are going to get revelation out of this thing sooner or later, and after a while, boom! You got it. When you get it, you have to make a decision—what are you going to do? But the real question is: what did you get? You got something subjective that could be generated out of your being. What is your pet thing? Well if your mama did the bad thing, and you love your mama, then that bad thing is not bad any more. You see where we are?

Jerry: That is how much of the whole church operates.

V: Personal revelation is Neo-orthodoxy, and Neo-Orthodoxy is not Orthodoxy. Neo-Orthodoxy is subjective. It goes wherever it is expedient at the time and becomes whatever the culture demands. Political correctness can be doctrinal correctness. The government can declare bad to be good and vice versa, and if you are Neo-Orthodox, you may see nothing wrong with that. If it feels good, do it. Remember that Neo-Orthodoxy has its roots in Existentialism, and in this philosophy, objectivity is taboo.

The Bible, in this model, is not revelation. In the personal act revelation, the Bible is not revelation, it is just a witness, a record of revelation, and so the closest that one can get to revelation is the person of God, and this is called personal revelation because the content of revelation is the person that you encounter.

In the subjective encounter, the content of the crisis or the decision-making can be given or shaped by a lot of factors. One of the factors is your personal involvement in something. If you have personal involvement with homosexuality, you can say: “God does not condemn homosexuality. The revelation is in my encounter with God in which He told me clearly that homosexuality is okay!”

Homer: The encounter could be anything from too much pizza to a chemical imbalance?

V: Yes, it can because it is subjective. There is no objective anchorage.

Now our next step is hermeneutics. We need to know what Scriptures mean. If we look at the Scriptures with a proper theology, we will see them as propositional revelation. If we have this subjective bent in us where we cannot allow our pet ideas and sins to be cast out by the Lord because we want to hold on to them, then we must do something to this Bible in order to make it tolerable. One of the tricks, which we have already examined, is personal revelation, and saying that the Bible is not revelation. However, if you are a good theologian, you will see Scripture as both subjectively and objectively inspired. It is propositional in form, and it has a personal encounter involved in it in the subjective realm, and it has literal understanding of words in the objective realm, and all of that came from God through illumination.

Joe: The danger is that once we adopt personal revelation, and that bent is in all of us, then we can easily compromise the clear Word of God. That is the danger of subjectivity. We can claim that the Scriptures say anything depending on what our pet peeve is.

Bob: Concerning the Catholics then, is the Pope getting his subjective encounter, and then his word becomes the subjective and

objective, content so to speak, for their theology?

V: Right, and this can be a Pope or it can be a strong pastor in a church, who gives guidance to the church. Whatever it is that is inside of him, whatever his subjective desires are, he can begin to claim that he has received them from God, “God wants us to do such and such.” Have you heard that? All a strong pastor has to do is be a good speaker, and the whole church will say, “Well, he is the man of God; he knows what we are supposed to do.”

Betty: That is why the Lord says to test everything.

V: Yes, the Scriptures are the objective norm that holds the meaning within the proper realm like an anchor.

Mary: What is the difference between the propositional and the personal?

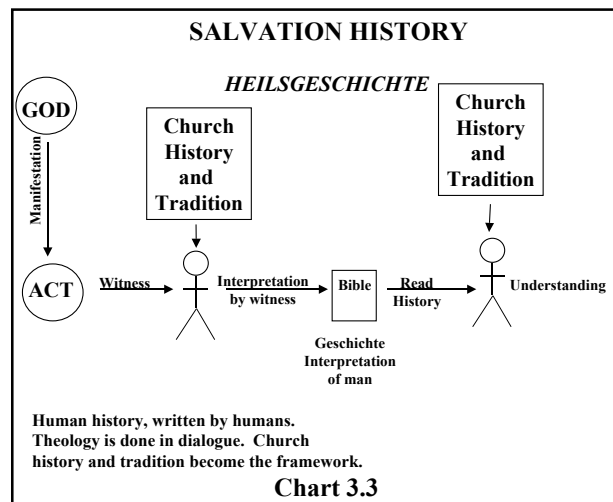
V: The personal has the objective part removed from inspiration. All of it is subjective. Once you move the objective part out, who is the subject? Each one of you is subject. What do subjects do? They decide what it is they are going to do. If you are going to decide on something, there will be external influences and internal influences. If there are no longer external influences as an objective anchor, then you are going to do whatever is right in your own eyes. I want you to know that everyone of you is steeped in this subjectivity because our day is one where objectivity is becoming a no-no. Objectivity is considered mean-spirited for one thing and politically incorrect, and it is eventually going to be labeled a hate crime for you to repeat the words of the Bible and say homosexuality is an abomination.

HEILSGESCHICHTE

You remember on our first chart the six kinds of revelation, and in special revelation the very first one was salvation history. *Heilsgeschichte* is salvation history. *Heils*

means salvation, and *Geschichte* is history. So salvation history is the very first model of special revelation in the big doctrine of revelation where you have six kinds of revelation, three of special and three of general.

In *Heilsgeschichte*, God produces the act and also the subjective inspiration that moves



the witness to record his understanding of the act. He records that understanding under the constraints or under the framework of history and tradition. If it is the Apostle John, he has walked with the Lord, he has eaten with the Lord, he has experienced the same emotions with the Lord, and so he is writing in the context of his personal relationship with the Lord. That is history and tradition. He writes then the Scriptures, and those Scriptures are *Geschichte* because they are this person's interpretation.

If you are under a *Heilsgeschichte* model, your perception of the Bible is that it is a record of revelation that is set within the framework of history and tradition. How are we supposed to understand that witness of the record of revelation? Well, we do not need our minds lifted up because these are just the words of the Apostle John as the witness. You have enough intellect to understand a letter from the Apostle John, but how do you understand it. You must interpret that letter within the framework of your own history and

tradition. The understanding is what the church has handed down to him.

In the Southern Baptist Convention the liberal theologians want to interpret the Baptist Faith and Message under this model. In this way, each theologian can then interpret the Baptist Faith and Message according to his own history and tradition. The results are varied. One can hold to women pastors if his history and tradition allows such.

In the case of Roman Catholicism, when the papal decree came out that Mary is the Mother of God, guess what? All doctrines and mentionings about Mary will cause the Catholic to think, “Mother of God.” Also in the same way, the Catholic will see that the sacraments are required for salvation because they are the traditional conveyers of grace. The Catholic will think that he must have the sacraments no matter what he reads in the Bible. If the Bible says salvation is by grace through faith, then the Catholic will think, “Yes, and the way you get grace is as a substance within the sacrament.”

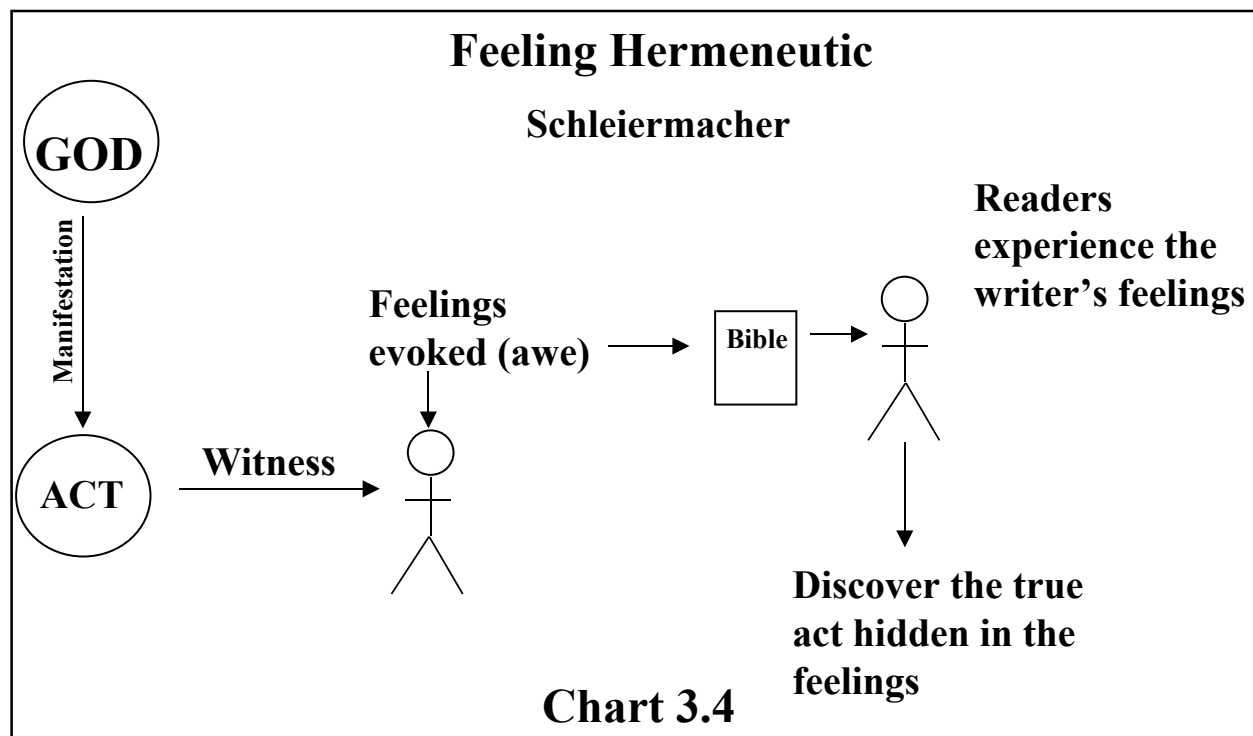
Under this model, one interprets everything based on church and tradition. One’s mind becomes boxed in, and that is how the Bible then comes to the reader. It is a record of a witness, a witness’s record of revelation, and how one understands it is with one’s own mind capability to understand it through the framework of church and tradition.

Church and tradition can be good if they are on the money. When they are on the money, then they become a check and balance for the person who has a propensity to float around because of subjective *Geschichte*. He

sees the Scriptures as *Geschichte*, and that means he can just float around and go all the way to the edge. Where is the edge? It is determined to be where church and tradition says it is. So one becomes limited to whatever is acceptable to the church and tradition. One can move freely within the limits, and the words do not have to mean what they mean. They actually mean what church and tradition has assigned them to mean. *Heilsgeschichte* is model #3.

FEELING HERMENEUTIC

Chart 3.4 (on the next page) is another German model, Feeling Hermeneutic. In this model you have God who actually does something in history like parting the Red Sea or whatever. You have the witness who sees that, and when he sees it, emotions are evoked in him. He is just completely awed by what he has seen, and he begins to write out of those emotions. Those words that are written are emotional words, and so then the Scripture is not an objective thing. Scripture here is an expression of sentiment. The Bible then is an expression of the writer’s emotions. The Bible becomes like poetry that is filled with emotional, sentimental expressions, and not literal, objective facts. We readers then look upon the Bible, and we say, “Oh, the witness is describing his emotions.” And so we must discover what he actually saw by looking at his emotions, not at a description of what he saw. If we can re-experience those emotions that he had maybe we can find the real meaning in those emotions just like we do with poetry. We try to find what the poet meant.



This process is liberal. Where is the anchorage, where is the objective norm? We just float all around and come up with all kinds of feelings. Some people feel good about a passage, but some people do not. The revelation is not in the passage, the revelation is submerged and somewhere hidden behind the words, and you must come out of the feelings with that hidden revelation.

Schleiermacher was the father of liberalism. He was a German theologian in 1830, and he developed a hermeneutic that was based on feelings. Schleiermacher is liberal, but that is not where you are. I will tell you where you are. You are dancing with Neo-Orthodoxy and its personal revelation. You cannot escape it in this present day. You just happened to be born in that window of history where you are stuck, and you are fighting for your lives, and you have many enemies circling you, picking you off one at a time pulling you into this radical, crazy, baloney stuff that is going to send people to hell.

I want you to have an objective norm. That objective norm is the Scripture, and that

Scripture has true inspiration that is both subjective and objective, and it is the words of God. It is the written Word of God, and it is divine, and it is human. Jesus is both God and Man. He is the incarnate Word of God. Scripture is the written Word of God. It is divine because it is inspired, and it is human because it is human vocabulary, human writing, human instrument. Just as Jesus is divine and human, the Bible is also divine and human.

In this Feeling Hermeneutic of Schleiermacher, you go to the feelings first, and out of the feelings come the hidden true acts. When you are reading the Bible and you are in the passage where Paul is talking about his own hardships, you will actually begin to feel the emotions that Paul had at that time. Now if I am in Schleiermacher and the Feeling Hermeneutic, then I look into my feelings to find out what God said, not in the words, but in my feelings. The revelation is the meaning found in those feelings. Where does revelation abide? In these feelings. Are you beginning to see how complex the doctrine of Revelation is?

We are in a desperate situation. Philosophy is a good course that you need to take that deals with Existentialism, and what the world is doing with this discipline of interpretation. Not just the church but the world.

Right now in conservative Southern Baptist churches, you have those who are becoming self sufficient, right in their own eyes, and they do not see the Bible as God's inspired, objective word that is normative to the Christian life. You also have the conservative who sees the Bible as that objective norm to Christian life. Both of those people reside within Southern Baptist life. For a large part, the majority, the sleeping giant, the laity, the people in your congregations, do not know the difference. They do not have a clue.

They will lapse into *Heilsgeschichte*. You become the history and tradition telling them what to believe. That is *Heilsgeschichte*. Once you see the difference, and you see the desperation of our world, our church, the sleeping giant, people going to hell, you become responsible. You have to get those people educated. How are you going to do it? I do not know. It is hard for me to get you educated, and you are the exceptional, inquisitive group. I have the best. What do you have to work with? You have to get out there and get it done somehow.

We pander to our feelings. If we can just get our feelings right, if we can just feel like we are saved, if we can just feel like there is hope, then all is okay because the true thing is embedded in the feelings. If you do not feel like you are saved, then guess what? You are not saved in Schleiermacher's model. That puts a lot of us in trouble, does it not?

Marx said, "Christianity is the opiate of the people," much like a drug-induced euphoria. If it feels good, then it has to be right.

I think that the main problem right now is this existential generation for which truth is

subjective. There are people in the clergy now that say that there is no such thing as an absolute truth.

Joe: I think that [Henry] Blackaby says that the problem with the pastorate today is that we are not living holy lives.

V: And why are we not? Because the Bible commands holiness and describes it, but if you move out to some feeling or the existential encounter or supposed encounter that you might have, anything goes. What is your crisis? Your crisis may even be coming out of your closet.

Basically in that situation in which you have an insecure congregation plus a strong leader to give them the feelings that they want to have, then the church can be led into wrong doctrine.

Steve: Right after I took my current pastorate, I noticed that one of my deacons has a bad problem with alcohol. He was also our worship leader and adult Sunday school teacher. He is one of those strong speakers who served as the preacher before I was called. Since I asked him to resign, I have been under attack. The whole church wants their leader back even with the alcohol. A couple of the older ladies who are among the founders of the church want him to come back. They cannot understand why I cannot just let him come on back. One of them told me Sunday that he was the best Sunday School teacher that she had ever seen.

V: They are in bondage to liberalism that is sweeping the whole world, and it is in the churches. I hate to say this, but unless God intervenes, you are going to leave, and he is going to come back.

THEORIES OF INSPIRATION

List and describe the theories of inspiration.

1. Verbal: God gave the Words themselves. There are two types of verbal inspiration:
 - a. Dictation theory: There is no human input. The human provided only a mechanical part of the writing.
 - b. Accommodation: The human writer brought the vocabulary and the personality into the writings.

The one I hold to is accommodation. When God gave the interpretation of what He did to the writer, He used the writer's own words to express what He Himself wanted to say. You can see a difference between John's writings and Paul's writings because the writers were two different persons. You can see their personality and vocabulary within the writings, the selection of words, and their style.

2. Plenary: Plenary means full; it is full inspiration. The whole is inspired, but not its parts.

This gives us what is called practical or functional inerrancy. You will see this described in theology books like this: "The Scriptures serve to give you complete instruction that is adequate for salvation and life." That adequacy is provided with words that were not given by God. Thus there can be errors in the words, but the whole serves to give adequate guidance for salvation and life.

3. Dynamic.

Dynamic comes from the Greek word *dunamis*, which means power. Dynamic inspiration is where God invested in the Bible His power for salvation. It became a chosen vehicle to give salvation. The power of God was put into this vehicle so that when you receive the vehicle you receive salvation. The power is in the vehicle. He could have chosen another vehicle under this model. The theory of dynamic inspiration means that He could have picked the *Magna Carta* or the Constitution in which to put His power of salvation. It is a man-written instrument. It has the errors in it because men are error prone, but the power of God to salvation is vested in it. That is dynamic inspiration.

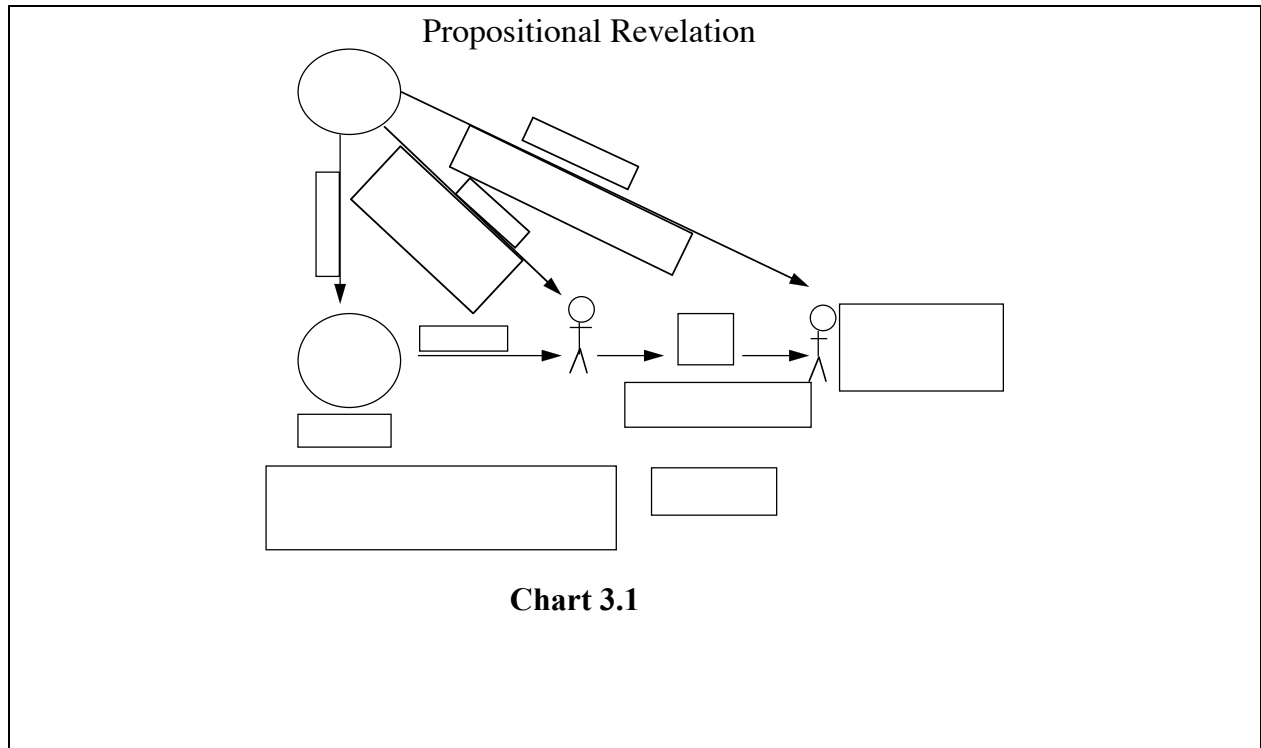
Class, revelation is when God manifests Himself, and He inspires somebody subjectively to record that revelation, and He chooses the words that are the objective revelation. Thus those words become the English word history or the German *Historie* plus *Geschichte*. It is the Word of God, and then when you read it, since it is the Word of God, you cannot understand it with your puny minds, you must be elevated, and God does that, too. He lifts you up, and He gives you objective understanding. Then He meets you in that understanding and says, "Now this is what I want you to do." Whatever it is He calls you to do must conform with that objective understanding. Revelation is all from God, by God, and unto God.

Questions for Chapter 3

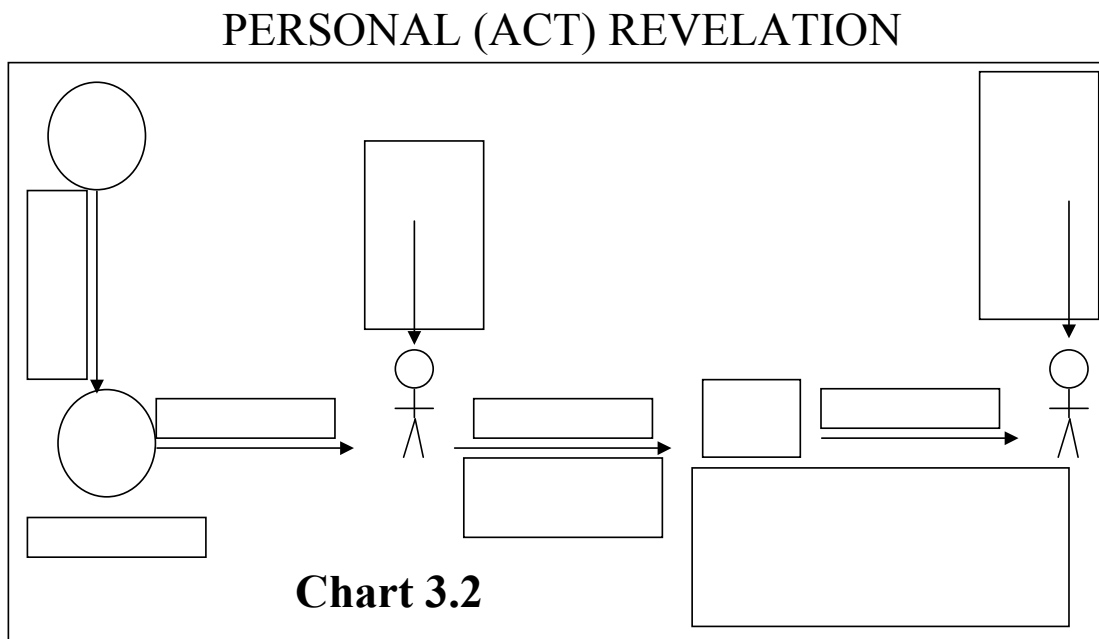
1. List the six kinds of revelation, putting each kind under its proper category of general or special revelation and in proper order.

General Revelation	Special Revelation
a.	d.
b.	e.
c.	f.

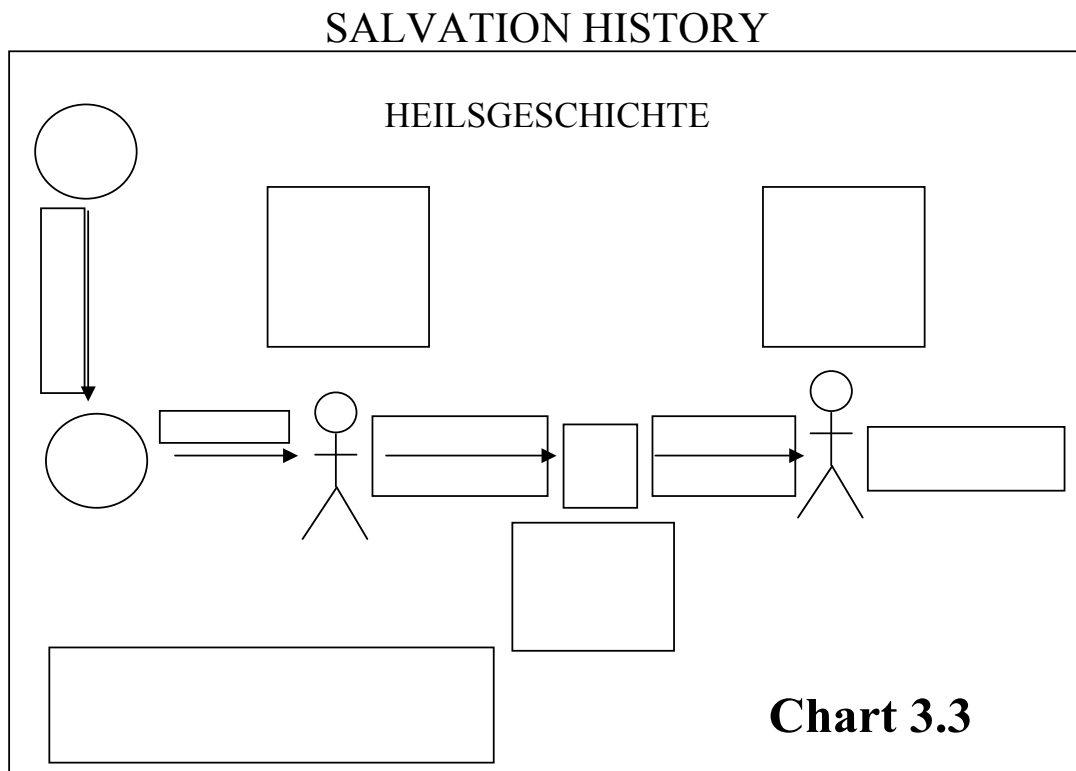
2. Complete the following chart of Propositional Revelation.



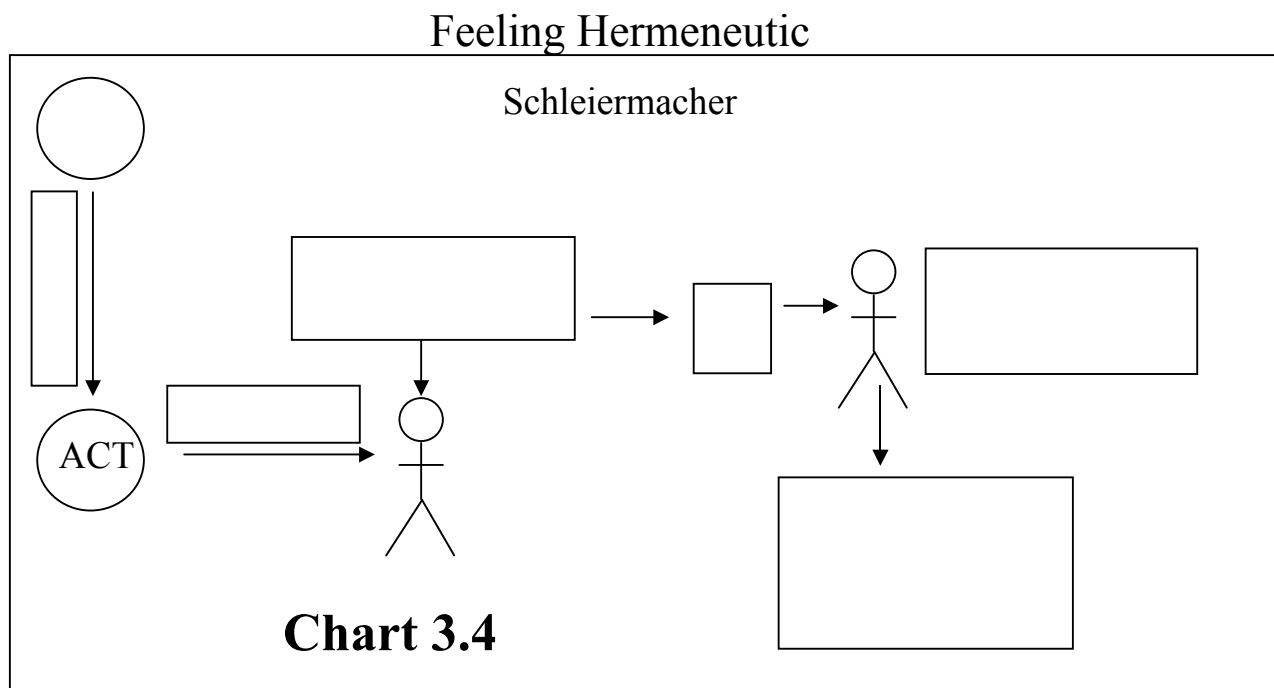
3. Complete the following chart for Personal (Act) Revelation.



4. Complete the following chart on Salvation History.



5. Complete the following Feeling Hermeneutic chart.



6. List and describe the theories of inspiration.

Chapter 4

REVELATION, PART II

This chapter compares propositional revelation with personal revelation. The student needs to understand how some men reduce the Scriptures to reflect what they want them to say. What is authority? Where does authority come from? What process occurs when the hermeneutics become skewed? What is hermeneutics?

In this process we examine the objective Word and compare it with the subjective Word. Some Christian thought is subjective and some is objective. When it is all of one or the other, what happens to biblical truth? History comes into play here, and has a great effect upon how man views the Scripture today. It is important that Christians understand how these thought processes can move us into erroneous thinking. We need to understand how important it is that we look for biblical truth to guide us in our thoughts.

How was the Bible written? Is it inspired or is it the writers' thoughts? Is the Bible revelation, or is it the written "record" of revelation? What is *exegesis*, and how does it compare with *eisegesis*? How does illumination fit in with reading and understanding Scripture? What is the thinking of other theologians?

The doctrine of revelation is a difficult doctrine to grasp. This chapter will continue the discussion of revelation by contrasting propositional and personal revelation models. The scope of contrast will be over seven characteristics: authority, norm, history, inspiration, application, Scripture, and Word of God.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST PROPOSITIONAL WITH PERSONAL REVELATION

1. *CHARACTERISTIC: Authority*

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
Scripture is the authority (author-ity) because God is its author.	Christ is the authority through existential experience.

In propositional revelation Scripture has authority because God is the author. Thus the Scriptures have an unbending authority. They are locked in and will not change. The only wiggle room that one may have under propositional revelation is in the hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is how one interprets Scripture. We play a lot of games in hermeneutics in order to achieve novel interpretations of propositional Scripture. Through these interpretations, we may bring our personal prejudice into the Scripture and begin to read meaning into the text. That is called *eisegesis* (put your meaning into the text) instead of *exegesis* (getting God's meaning from the text). When you play games with the text, wiggle room can be gained, but we are not supposed to play games. We are supposed to interpret legitimately what the Word says. Do not run around it, or dance with it, or try to make it say what you want it to say.

Joe: Propositional revelation is definitely not *eisegetic*.

V: Oh, no, it can be *eisegeted*. Propositional revelation is constant. It is fixed at what God said. Thus it has author-ity. But *eisegesis* is not located in what the author said. *Eisegesis* occurs at the point of interpretation, and that is our part of the process. God did His part. He authored the Scripture.

Now our part is to bring a proper hermeneutic to what God has said and to come out of that text with the meaning that God has for us, and that should be constant across the board. After the text, the hermeneutic is primary in how we develop theology.

We can all agree that Jesus is God, and that He is the only way to salvation, and that salvation is by grace through faith. These true statements bring out a constant meaning from the Scriptures, and we can then develop a theology that has constant meaning because we are using proper hermeneutics. If we want to play some games, we can read the same texts and say that Jesus is not God, He is just a great man, or that He is not the only way but that there are many ways to salvation. We can come out with a lot of erroneous statements because we are playing games with the texts. The person doing this would be the kind of liberal who is giving a high position to Scripture but using a false hermeneutic to force Scripture to say what he wants.

You can liberate yourself from God's Word either via hermeneutics or via the Doctrine of Revelation. The hermeneutical method is via *eisegesis*. The doctrinal method is via personal revelation. With either method you do not have to worry about the strictures of Scripture any more. You do not have to practice both *eisegesis* and the personal revelation model at the same time. *Eisegesis* is the inserting of your desired meaning into objective revelation. If you move into personal revelation, it is all subjective. It comes out of you rather than from God. In this case, what is the revelation? It is your personal existential experience.

Joe: Is that how the priesthood of the believer has now been redefined?

V: Yes and a lot of other things are being redefined by this liberation from the Word of God. When you move into personal revelation, the rock-hard, solid objective Word of God, with all the authority of God in it, is set

aside, and you do not have to worry about that any more. It is what is in you that is revelation. You can claim then that God told you to do something contrary to the rock-hard, solid Word of God.

Joe: I have become slightly confused. Under the propositional category after man has written Scripture as having the authority of God, author-ity, you said it is unbending and it is locked in.

V: Yes, the text is fixed. When God says something, it is not going to be changed.

Joe: How do we then bring the *eisegetic* potential into it?

V: We change the **meaning** of the fixed text in order to gain our wiggle room to make us comfortable with the unchangeable text.

Oscar: The text is subjective.

V: No, we are subjective. Here we go: we have the Scripture, and we have us. It is the "us" that is subjective. Scripture is objective. It is there. It is not going to change, not one jot, not one tittle, or anything else. It is there for the duration, and it means what it means. It is our job to find out what it means. When we apply proper hermeneutics (the science or art, probably both, of interpreting what God is saying to us), we come out with a meaning that comes directly out of the text. That meaning should be consistent with all of the other related meanings in the corpus because the author is God.

Jack: So by saying objective, Scripture is objective at the point of its authority. It is sort of like it is pregnant with meaning?

V: Yes! But the meaning does not change. Like God—it does not change. There it is, and it is going to be there forever. It is consistent with God Himself.

We have a lot of problems with this subjective and objective business. God is the ultimate subject, and the ultimate subject has the absolute right of declaring what truth is.

So He did. He sent His Son as the Way, the Truth, and the Life,¹ and He sent His Words as the Truth. His Words are an objective form of His Truth, and His Son is a subjective form of His Truth. We are not object. In relation to the text, we are subject too. Every one of us has a will. If you have a will, you exercise that will as subject.

We are supposed to stand under the Scripture, under the judgment of the Word, submitting our wills to God. Not submitting is called being stiff-necked. We are subjects, and we are going to make some decrees about truth. We have some authority over our wills, so we divorce meaning from the objective word. We want to move over, and stand under our preferred meaning. And we want that meaning to be somewhat connected to the words, but not really rigidly. So we practice a false hermeneutic. We do *eisegesis*: we insert wiggle room into the Words. We seek comfort by smoothing that cross down, polishing it, lightening it, and padding it: “Hey, this feels good! I have it just like I want it now.” That is what we do, and that is the practice of a false hermeneutic on propositional revelation.

In the false hermeneutic, the Scripture did not change. We changed the meaning by using our subjectivity to change that meaning. There is another way to accomplish the same thing, and that is to dispense with the objective propositions altogether, and just have a subject-subject encounter between the saint and God. Personal revelation is that lightning bolt meeting with the Lord. In this way you do not even have to have the words. Now you can just say, “Well, now the Lord says it is okay to do these abortions. Abortion is all right.” Then you can go into the church and say, “It is all right to have same sex marriages.” It is all right because you do not have to obtain your instructions from the objective Word. You are in the subjective

realm, and it is subject to subject. There is no objectivity in this model. Existentialism is all subjectivity. Objectiveness is jettisoned. When you have personal act revelation, you have no exact objective truths.²

I want you to see now that what is happening is not with God’s Word. It is with us, and we can dispense with God’s Word by going to personal revelation, or we can be real conservative and hold to propositional revelation but get our wiggle room through hermeneutics. That is why hermeneutics is now the cutting edge of the frontier of theology among conservatives. You ought to read some of the recent dissertations about hermeneutics. At the time I came through the doctoral program, there was a wave of students that were writing on hermeneutics. It seemed like everybody was interested in hermeneutics. My university work at the University of Texas in Arlington was a hermeneutics seminar. Existentialism was everywhere I turned. Anybody that would be foolish enough to believe in propositional revelation and the objectivity and the authority of God’s Word is often seen as some kind of red-necked and ignorant fundamentalist.

The first characteristic, then, is authority. Under propositional revelation, your authority is based on the author-ity of God. Under personal revelation, existential experience is your authority. This personal revelation model is umbrella-ed under the name Christ. Christ is claimed as the authority, but it is Christ unbounded by Scripture. It is pure subject to subject with no objectivity.

Ted: He is whatever you want to make Him to be.

V: Exactly because you are subject. You can have one set of revelatory truth, and

¹ John 14:6.

²There was a poll not too long ago that asked Christians “Are there absolute truths?” Surprisingly, many said there are no absolutes.

somebody else can have another set of revelatory truth, and everybody is right.

Ted: What happens when you take doctrine, and rename it by calling it theory, and then you take a personal testimony and call it, “Where the rubber hits the road?”

V: You are moving into subjectivity. Once you lose your anchorage to the text, there is no telling where you are going to end up. You get in a rowboat, and get out in the middle of a river. Throw a big, heavy anchor with a good strong rope, and let that thing catch hold. You will not drift. You stay right there, but if you pull that anchor up and put it in the boat, you are going to float wherever the current takes you. Your anchor is the Word, and your rope is hermeneutics. If you do not have your anchor as the unchanging jot and tittles that stay there forever, and if you do not use a solid rope that will hold onto that anchor, you are going to drift because your subjectivity is always pushing just like the current sweeping down. There is always a current in the river. Your subjectivity is that current, and if you do not have a rope, a good hermeneutic hooked to the anchor of God’s Word, you will drift, and you will drift according to your bias.

Paul: The guys that practice the higher form criticism, are they still bringing a lot of subjectivity to it?

V: You bet. Anytime you bring a subjective dimension to the Scripture, you are diminishing its objectivity.

Paul: Do we not need it though? I am not trying to . . .

V: Not higher criticism. Nobody needs higher criticism—textual criticism, yes, but not higher criticism. Higher criticism is top-down criticism of God’s Word. It seeks to question the authenticity and the origin of Scripture. Textual Criticism is a bottom up analysis of the texts. We must establish

which text is correct when there are variances among the manuscripts.

The next characteristic deals with what is normative.

2. **CHARACTERISTIC: Norm**

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
<i>Sola Scriptura</i>	<i>Sola Christos</i>

Characteristic number two concerns the norm. *Sola Scriptura* is one of the battle cries of the Reformation. Scripture is the norm. If you move away from Scripture in your doctrine, you are getting outside of the norm. You are doing abnormal or paranormal theology, and you surely do not want to do that. Your theology must agree with Scripture.

Under personal revelation the norm is *Sola Christos*. *Sola Christos* is another battle cry of the Reformation, and it means Christ alone. The Reformation’s battle cries, which are *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Christos*, *Sola Fidei*, and the priesthood of the believer, are all wonderful, and we should hold to them. *Sola Christos* is an essential element of the Reformation, and it means that your salvation is by Christ alone. Thus it is important to us for the Doctrine of Salvation, but I want you to see that when you take it as the norm for the Doctrine of Revelation, you move into subjectivity. What I want you to understand is that the norm for our doctrines, the rock-solid, unchanging truth of God is *Sola Scriptura*, but your unchanging author of salvation and giver of life is *Sola Christos*. If you begin to mix them, then you will get something that is abnormal. *Sola Christos* as the norm for revelation is a move into personal experience and subjectivity.

The extreme use of *Sola Scriptura* is to confine Scripture as the only element of revelation. To do so is to move into intellectualism because Christ would have no part to play. When dealing with *Sola Scriptura*, the

idea is that Scripture is the “norm,” not just the sole element.

The third characteristic for comparison is history. What is history in the two models of revelation?

3. CHARACTERISTIC: History

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
<i>Historie and Geschichte</i>	<i>Geschichte</i>

Under propositional revelation, history is composed of both *Historie* and *Geschichte*. *Historie* is the objective form of history, the fact. *Geschichte* is the interpreted form of history. In the English word history there is the actual fact, the event that happened, plus the interpretation of that event, the description of it. Under personal revelation there is *Geschichte*, and that is an interpretation. It does not necessarily have to have a *Historie* connected with it. It could be myth, or it could be a projection of your desires.

I want you to clearly distinguish between propositional and personal revelation. In the former, revelation is propositions, and in the latter, revelation is a person. The propositions are the Scriptures, and the person is Jesus.

Geschichte is an interpretation of something. The something would be taking the place of *Historie*. If the *Historie* is fact and God gives the interpretation of it, then you have inerrant documents. But if either nonfact is substituted for the *Historie*, or God does not give the interpretation, then the document is a human document filled with human errors and foibles.

The next characteristic is inspiration. What form does inspiration take under the two models of revelation?

4. CHARACTERISTIC: Inspiration

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
Objective and subjective	Subjective

Under propositional revelation inspiration is objective and subjective. Let me ask you, “In propositional revelation what is subjective inspiration?”

Joe: Subjective inspiration would be like a personal encounter with God.

V: No, that is way out in the illumination stage. Under propositional revelation subjective inspiration is . . .

Henry: How we interpret it?

V: No.

Ted: How God moves a person to do something.

V: Right, Ted, it is the movement of God upon a person. The subject-to-subject is subjective inspiration. God moves the person to write. That is subjective inspiration. It is inspiration of the person.

Under propositional revelation, what is objective inspiration?

Joe: That would be the act, what actually happened, would it not?

V: No, you are describing *Historie*.

Henry: When you take matters in your own hands?

V: No, you are describing subjectivity.

Mary: When you interpret it the way you want it.

V: No, you are describing subjectivity also.

Ted: God gives you the words to write.

V: Yes, God gives you the words. God moves the writer, but if that is all He did, the writer could write down whatever he wants. But God is going to interpret His own acts for the writer so that the writer writes down the right things. If you do not have objective inspiration, you cannot have the Word of God. The lack of objective inspiration would mean that the Scriptures are the word of man

or a record of revelation or a witness. Please note that you will see throughout all of your theology books those exact words. The witness: the witness of John, the witness of Peter, or you will see the record of revelation, and when you see those words you are seeing the theology of that theologian. He is expressing subjective inspiration. It is not objective inspiration because in objective inspiration, God gives the interpretation of what He did. God is the Author of His Own Words.

Carl: So just to help me draw the line, Moses got Ten Commandments. In contrast to Moses John got subjective revelation. Is my understanding right?

V: No. Both John and Moses were inspired both subjectively and objectively. All your prophets received both objective and subjective inspiration. Every word in the Bible is objectively and subjectively inspired. It was inspired subjectively because somebody, the witness, was moved to write. It was inspired objectively in that what he wrote was the words of God. Every word in the Bible, not just those of Moses, every word in the Bible has both kinds of inspiration, subjective and objective, and that goes into your chart now under propositional revelation. What is inspiration under propositional revelation? Objective (the words that express God's interpretation of His manifestation) and subjective (God's movement of the writer to describe God's manifestation in writing) are both contained. What inspiration is under personal revelation? Subjective inspiration is of the person. The person was moved to write, but what he wrote was his own understanding of what he saw or heard (God's manifestation). That is what subjective inspiration is, a movement on the person. But in propositional revelation there are both forms, subjective and objective. When both are included, the words that are written are the words of God. All inspiration comes from top down. It comes from God.

Subjective underneath personal is a moving of God upon the person. He is telling the person, "I want you to write about what you saw or heard." The person then writes his own interpretation of the manifestation.

Pete: Would that mean, then, when these new versions of the Bible got written and people started substituting words that were more common or easily understood or more contemporary, was that a more subjective translation?

V: Yes! Every translation has subjectivity in it. Do not ever think that a translation has departed from subjectivity. When you translate, when you interpret, your subjectivity enters into what you are producing.

Let us say we all got together, and were charged with translating John's Gospel from the Greek manuscripts. We get our dictionaries, and we wrestle together over every word, and we come out with the very best that we can come out with. Please realize that subjectivity has entered into what we produced because you cannot get away from your subjectivity. You are subjects. There is nothing you can do about that except do battle with yourself (deny yourself) and use legitimate hermeneutics (pick up your *kenotic* cross) and keep your integrity (following Jesus) intact.

Pete: Objectivity is a matter of the Word unchanged, unchanging, unbroken, no wiggle room, and the subjectivity has to do with something similar to a prejudice.

V: Yes, subjectivity is when you bring your slant into it. God gives His Words. They are solid, and you cannot improve them because they are perfect. However, we come to the Word of God as subjects. Our subjectivity has will, prejudice, all of the stiff-neckedness, all our carnal natures, all of the baggage that we bring to the reading of something that is very pure. As we read that pure Word that God gave, we interpret God's

truth through the lenses of our subjectivity. Then, what we produce is imperfect.

We mess up the perfect Word because we bring foul ideas, thoughts, and theories to the job. It is our job as theologians to remove those biases and get back to the true meaning. We strive to do *exegesis* instead of *eisegesis*.

Subjectivity produces a variety of commentary on the same piece of Scripture. The variances can be such that the extreme on one side contradicts the extreme on the other side. Both interpreters are Christians who each think that he is correct and the other is in error.

Henry: And so you are saying that the danger is in reading this Word and making it sound like what you want to make it sound like on a personal level. Well, what about understanding what you are reading? How do you do that and stay safe?

V: By use of proper hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the practice of legitimately interpreting the Word of God. Proper interpretation, *exegesis*, is the bringing of meaning out of the text.

Exegesis is when you go into a gold mine with a pick and shovel. You start digging the nuggets out. *Exegesis* is getting the meaning out of the text. You do not go to the mine to get what you brought with you. You go to the mine to get what is in that mine. You are digging it out. You pile it all up, and then when you want to examine what you have in order to develop your theology, you start pushing the pile around and rearranging it. You pull that nugget, and you lay it aside. Boy! Here is another one! You stack with the other. Pretty soon you will see how those nuggets fit together, and all of a sudden you have a principle, and it will govern your life. Then you find some other things, and you go back in and dig some more. It is fun. You get those nuggets out, and man, you want to

run around saying, "See my nugget?" You start building a theological system.

It is illegitimate to build your system with your foundation off a little bit or build it by forcing the pieces to fit when they do not fit. You force the piece in. It is just hanging there, and after awhile your system is about to tip over. You shore it up somehow, and you are building this funny looking systematic theology, but it contains your biases because you are not keeping your integrity. Listen, when you find a piece that does not fit, do not throw it out because it is a precious nugget that came out of the mine. You must tear the whole system down and then put it back together again with all the pieces in their proper places. Each time an error is found in your system, you must tear it down again and rebuild.

Sybil: The problem is that churches have thrown out what has not fit.

V: Yes, sometimes they do. Other times, however, the pieces are forced to fit by changing the meanings. When you are digging out of your mine, the mine is the Scripture, and Scripture is an objective form or propositional revelation. But when you are doing your theology, you may build amiss by using materials that did not come from the mine. This results in moving away from God's solid Truth. You are getting your meaning apart from the unbending and unchanging Word, and you are doing that through false hermeneutics or *eisegesis*.

Eisegesis is when you have a pet nugget in your pocket. Grandma gave one to you: "Cleanliness is next to godliness" or something like that. You put that in your pocket, and when you go up to your mine, you take that nugget out and throw it in there. You dig and dig, and you find it. "See that! I found that nugget in the mine." It is *Eisegesis* when you were the one that put the nugget in there. In the old western days here in Texas, it was called "salting the mine." You put a little

gold in a shotgun shell, shoot it in that mine, and then you try to sell the mine by persuading the buyer that the mine is full of gold.

The next characteristic is application of knowledge. How does one apply the knowledge gained from revelation?

5. CHARACTERISTIC: Application of knowledge

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
Illumination: Understand via hermeneutics plus conviction via encounter.	Conviction via encounter. (Emotional crisis)

Under the propositional revelation model, application of knowledge starts with illumination. Under illumination, you have two factors: understanding via hermeneutics plus conviction via encounter. In these two factors, we have a subjective form and an objective form. Which one is objective and which one is subjective under illumination?

Ted: Hermeneutics is subjective.

V: No, hermeneutics is supposed to be leading to an objective understanding while conviction is subjective. Conviction is in the form of an encounter, and you could be encountering your alter ego or your desires or some kind of thing that is in your own mind. But in understanding you are to go to the objective word and apply a science called hermeneutics to *exegete* the objective meaning out of the text. You get these nuggets out of it. Each nugget is an objective truth. It is good when the content is objective, but it is bad when you bring your subjectivity into the text because your hermeneutics becomes subjective through *eisegesis*.

Under the personal revelation model, you have conviction via encounter alone that is totally subjective, and you can put in parentheses there: emotional crisis. You come to an emotional crisis, and then you must then make a decision. Crisis means that you are

brought to a fork in the road, and you must decide whether to go right or to go left. This crisis of belief is an existential system. What are you going to do with your conviction? You make a choice, and guess what? You all are at that point of making a choice because you are subjects. I just want your decisions to be informed by the objective Word of God.

Scripture is the next characteristic. Is Scripture the Word of God?

6. CHARACTERISTIC: Scripture

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
Revelation (Word of God written).	The record of revelation (witness)

Under propositional revelation, Scripture is itself revelation, and under personal revelation Scripture is the record of revelation, or a witness.

The last characteristic is the Word of God. Which one is the Word of God? Is it Jesus, or is it Scripture?

7. CHARACTERISTIC: Word of God

PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
Jesus is the Word of God incarnate. Scripture is the Word of God written.	Jesus is the Word of God

Under propositional revelation, Jesus is the Word of God incarnate and Scripture is the Word of God written. Under personal revelation, Jesus is the only Word of God.

IMPORTANT SCRIPTURES

Here are some important Scriptures for you to use and remember. They apply to all of the above. Discussion of these Scriptures follows the table.

2 Timothy 3:16: All Scripture [is] given by <u>inspiration of God</u> , and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
2 Peter 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any <u>private</u>

interpretation.

1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost.

1 Thess. 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received [it] not [as] the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

2 Timothy 3:16 says that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. God has clearly inspired His Scriptures, not just the writers!

In **2 Peter 1:20-21**, you see both subjective and objective inspiration described. Inspiration is where you get the original interpretation of God's manifestation. If your interpretation were subjective, then the Scripture would come out of the witness' interpretation, and it says right there in 2 Peter that will never happen. Here it is again: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." Did the writer interpret the act of God? No, it says right there that it is not of any private interpretation. "For the prophecy," i.e. the words, "came not in old time by the will of man"; man did not decide on his own to write his witness, "but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Subjective inspiration is the moving of the men by God, and objective inspiration is the interpretation of the manifestation of God by God Himself. This one Scripture describes both parts of the inspiration.

Pete: On that propositional revelation chart where God is manifesting something into an act, the inspiration that follows would be subjective or objective . . . ?

V: It would be both subjective and objective.

Pete: An objective meaning is given to the subjective witness, and that brings him to

the point of establishing the actual propositions inviolate?

V: Yes! These propositions are described by the English word history that contains both *Historie* and *Geschichte*.

God says in **1 Thessalonians 2:13**, "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received [it] not [as] the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God." We have an explicit statement that the Scriptures are the Word of God. Scripture is not a witness, and it is not a record of revelation. It is the Word of God. These Scriptures are solid, and you can hang your life on them. As a matter of fact, you are going to hang your life on something. You had better make sure that it is not on a subjective whim that you are hanging it. Hang it on something that is not changing. Do not trust something subjective because you will be just blowing about and drifting down a river without an anchor.

Jack: I just really need for you to tell me why propositional revelation is called propositional.

V: Propositional means that it is made up of words. It is a gathering of words into propositions or meaningful sentences. In theology a proposition is not a proposal for swapping. We are talking about the more classical definition of proposition. It is a statement of fact composed of sentences made from a collection of words.

Jack: How are we supposed to feel in some of our texts and required readings at seminary, when we read that theologians or Old Testament experts say, "There were three or more writers to the book of Isaiah"? How do we deal with that?

V: Well, what I am trying to do here is arm you with the tools to deal with that kind of issue. How you are going to deal with it is up to you and God. That is God's business for you, not mine. Certainly, you should not accept that kind of higher criticism. Whether

you speak out in class or not is God's call. I usually stay in trouble because God calls me to speak out.

Sybil: What is *Geschichte*?

V: *Geschichte* is interpretive history. Let me tell you, everything in written history is interpreted, and whenever something is interpreted, your bias and subjectivity enters in. If you see a car wreck and standing beside you is your friend who sees the same car wreck, you both can swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth so help you God, and sometimes the descriptions appear like they were of two separate accidents.

Joe: Basically subjectivity is an opinion.

V: Subjectivity is your perceptions and biases that you bring into interpretation. You cannot help but bring your baggage into the process because every one of you has opinions. Your historical background causes you to bring your personality, your likes and your dislikes, your values, your judgments, the way your mind processes, and things of this nature to the table.

Carl: So because of all that we bring to the table, our opinion is hardly changeable or not easily changed.

V: Yes, and when your opinions resist the objective Word of God, you are called a stiff-neck. The Lord said, "You stiff-necked, unbending people." That is when He starts hammering away on you, and loosening that neck up.

Carl: In New Testament, the professor said that when Jesus spoke in the Bible those were not His actual words. They were the essence of what He said. That upset me.

V: I understand. What I want to do is arm you with the tools so that you can do legitimate theology, but you are going to have drift. There is nobody in here that does not have drift. There is only one perfect theologian, and it is not any of us. All of us have

drift in our theology, and what we are trying to do here is learn how to get the drift out, to get the anchor down all the way to the bottom and a good rope on that anchor. Then when the tide gets strong, and your anchor is secure, and your rope is strong, you're going to minimize your drift.

Joe: The rope is objectivity and the anchor is subjectivity.

V: No. The anchor is Scripture (objective), and your rope is your hermeneutics (subjective).

Joe: My hermeneutics professor said that we are all subject to bias. When he gave us a passage of Scripture to interpret, we had to explore fifteen or more different references to that same passage of Scripture to try to weed out our biases. Now I can see the relevance of that exercise. We need to look at the viewpoints of others, even people with whom we do not agree, and let it challenge us to look at our own personal bias and how that affects what we read in the Scriptures.

V: That is very good. What we tend to do is wear blinders, and we come at the Scripture with our biases which are invisible to ourselves. Each of us is a perfect theologian in his own mind. We read our own meanings into the text. Someone may preach a sermon, and you think that he is a heretic. Why is he a heretic? because he does not agree with you.

You may disagree with God because you came at a passage with all of your subjectivity. You brought all your baggage with you. You opened up the text, and you picked out the Scriptures you liked, threw out some and twisted the others. You built your systematic theology, which is skewed and leaning way over and about to collapse.

Joe: What I have picked up out of this lesson is that when we read the Scripture, we need to study other Scriptures to ensure that the Scripture that was just studied was

understood correctly. Then we dig all the doctrine out of it so that our system will be sound.

V: That is very good. The best commentary to Scripture is Scripture. If you are digging out a nugget thinking it is a wonderful nugget, and it is contrary to all the other nuggets in the Scripture, there is something wrong with your nugget.

Use Scriptures to study Scriptures, and stay consistent. If you have something that is inconsistent, then there is something wrong with your system.

Geschichte can be right on the money, but it only gets there through right hermeneutics. There must be a corresponding *Historie* with that *Geschichte*. Otherwise you have a *Geschichte* that interprets what is inside of you, not what is objectively written and given by God.

Titles, like the Gospel According to Matthew or the Gospel According to Luke, indicates that that person was the inspired writer to whom God gave the interpretation and who was moved to write it. Inspiration like this means that we can depend upon that text as the Word of God, not the word of men. Just like 1 Thessalonians said, “You received it just as it truly is, not the word of men, but in fact the Word of God [paraphrased].”³

Wanda: They were more than mere witnesses.

V: That is right because a witness writes *Geschichte* only because what he writes is his own interpretation. If it is truly God’s words through Luke, then the words that are coming out of Luke are God’s words expressed from Luke’s vocabulary. Luke is inspired to write, and the Holy Spirit brought those words out of Luke that were what God wanted to give to His church throughout history. Scripture is dependable if it is from God, but if it is from

Luke, and it is just his witness, then reliability comes into question.

In the *Geschichte* understanding in which the writer is writing his witness only, the primacy of the witness consists in how close in time he was to Jesus. Authority, in this case, would be based on primacy. Primacy would be based on time rather than on Who provided the interpretation.

Steve: Isaiah 6, “In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord.” He wrote down what he saw, but because God gave him the vision, that makes it objective.

V: That is partly right. God gave him the vision, and moved him to write it. But what made the Scripture objective is that God interpreted His Own manifestation and provided the words through Isaiah.

There is a subjective element all the way through the Bible because every bit of it is subjectively inspired, but it is also objectively inspired.

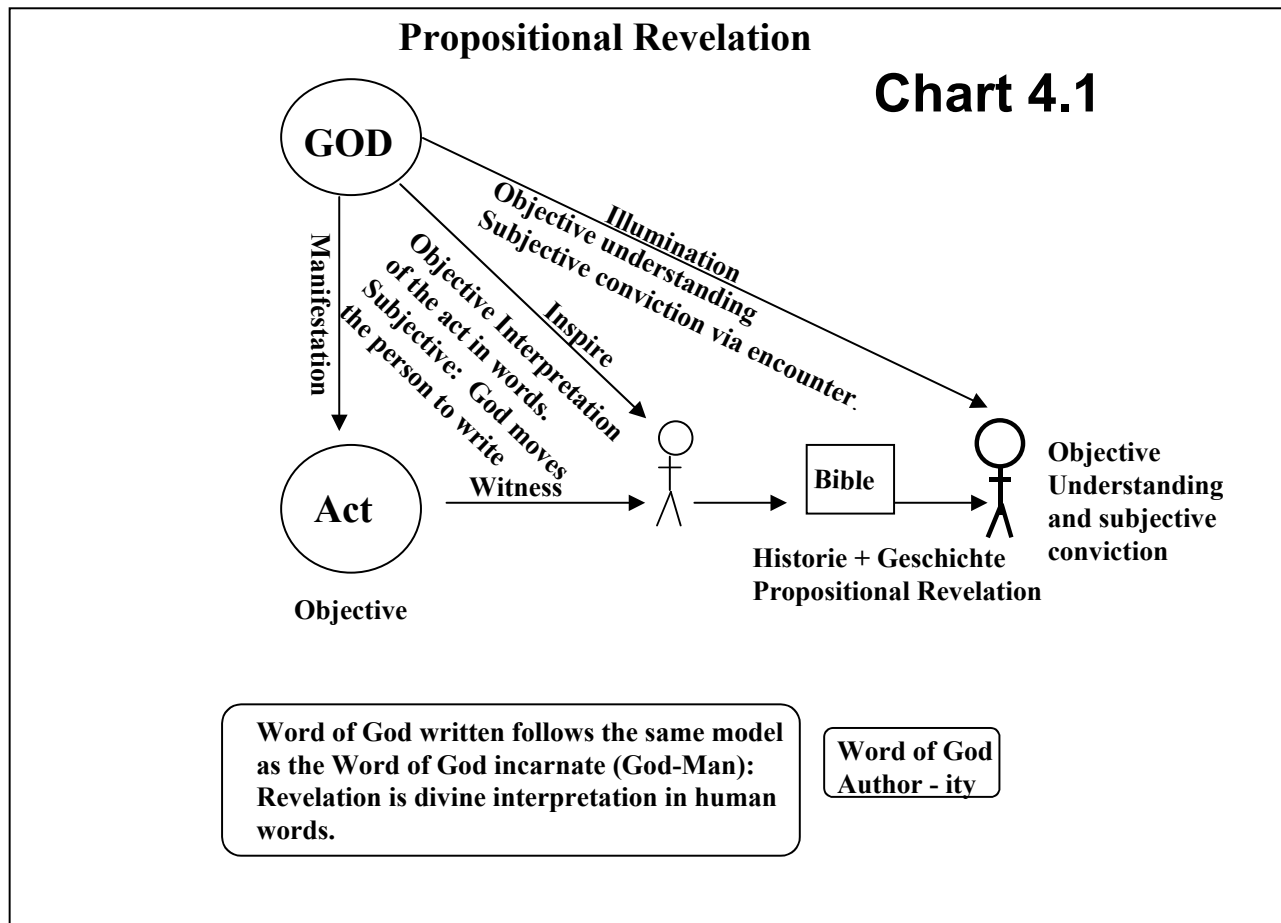
Steve: What about when Paul says, “This is my opinion.”

V: When he says that, he is stating that this particular part is not objectively inspired.

Chart 4.1 (on the next page) shows the act, i.e. the manifestation, the witness, and the witness’s writing of the Scripture. Herein is both objective and subjective inspiration. That inspiration means that the writer is moved by God (subjective) to write God’s interpretation (objective) of God’s manifestation.

The writer is the person who was subjectively inspired. The words that get written are the words that are objectively inspired. Objective inspiration means interpreted by God. It is not a private human interpretation, but an interpretation by God.

³ 1 Thessalonians 2:13.



Questions on Chapter 4

Compare and contrast propositional with personal revelation.

CHARACTERISTIC	PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

Chapter 5

GOD, CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

GOD

Theology literally means the study of God. God, however, cannot be objectified and studied as a scientist would study something on earth. Our doctrine of God must be of a person. Thus we are going to be looking at the characteristics of God in our study of Him as a Person.

1. *His immanence and transcendence.*
Jeremiah 23:23-24

God's immanence and transcendence are two opposing characteristics of God. Immanence means to be very close, present with His creation. Transcendence means to be very distant from His creation. Many people emphasize one over against the other. When you do that you get a skewed idea of God. God is both present and distant. He is so distant that we cannot reach up to Him, but He is so present that you cannot escape His scrutiny. When you practice the immanence of God, then you behave as if He were looking at you. When you practice the transcendence of God, then you behave like you want to behave. So we tend to move immanence into a place like church, and then practice transcendence when we are in the market place. Thus, your idea of God impacts your behavior.

2. *Spirit.* John 4:24.

This passage says that God is Spirit, and that if we are going to worship Him, we must worship in spirit and in truth. What does that mean?

Carl: The Spirit of God is omnipresent because He is Spirit. That takes the boundaries off of worship. Worship that can happen anywhere, anytime, and any place is worshiping in spirit. It is not necessary to go to a

church "house" to worship, but it is worshiping right here or on your way home or wherever you are, and I think it is just pulling the boundaries off of worship so to speak.

V: That is good, Carl. Let me separate those two words, spirit and truth, for a minute, and ask you what is worshiping in truth?

Tom: In Philippians 3:18 Paul speaks about how anybody who has another mind than the mind of Christ may come and worship, but they are enemies of the cross. We can actually go to church to worship, and be an enemy of the cross because we do not have the mind of the *kenosis*. The *kenosis* is the **truth**. It is the mind of Christ. If you come with your self-satisfying mindset, then you are not worshiping in truth.

V: Amen. And no matter how good your intentions are, if you have a false doctrine, and you are worshiping according to that doctrine, then your worship is not in truth no matter how well intentioned you are. Truth must correlate to the mind of Christ. The *kenosis* is that mind: "Have this mind in you which is in our Lord Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). The Gospel is truth, and it includes the *kenosis*. The *kenosis* is a self-sacrificing, downward moving mindset that is going to take you into a pilgrimage that is going to cost you dearly on this side of death. It is a sacrificial pilgrimage, and anything outside of that is not worshiping in truth.

Now let us turn our attention to worshiping in spirit. Worshiping in spirit has to do with not limiting Him to some kind of a building or particular day or a particular time. Our people should be worshiping the Lord when they are on the job, when they are outside playing, when they are eating, wherever they are. We should avoid drawing a circle around ourselves for a space and time

designation for worship.

Certainly, corporate worship has a specific space (where the body is gathered) and a specific time (when the body is gathered) for worship. But for the individual, God's Spirit is always with you no matter where you are. Worshiping in spirit and truth means that you are the same person in the world that you are in church or wherever you go to publicly worship Him. God's Spirit is with you, and everything you do should be worshipful of Him whether it is at your job or wherever else you are. Worshiping in spirit and in truth must include allowing God the Spirit to integrate all aspects of your life.

But there is also another issue with spirit. Being in the Spirit means that your **will** has to be aligned with the Lord, and if you are not aligned with the Lord, then you are in the flesh. When you are in the flesh, guess what—you are an enemy of Christ. You become an enemy of the cross, an impediment to what He is trying to do. No matter how dearly you love Him or how dearly He loves you, the flesh is a problem area. Spirit and truth are important things that we need to begin to bring into our understanding of worship.

3. *Infinite*. Exodus 3:14

Infinite means that He is not limited by space and time. This idea is exemplified by the words "I AM" in Exodus 3:14.

Do you know about *kairos* time as over against *chronos*? *Chronos* time is linear, the clock on the wall, or the watch on your wrist is a chronometer. That time is our time. *Chronos* is the Greek word for time, and that is where we get our chronometer word that identifies a clock or a watch. We are stuck in *chronos* time. God, however, is in *kairos* time. That is a different kind of time. *Kairotic* time is vertical time. God is in the past, the present, and the future all at the same time. He is unlimited, unbounded by

chronos. However, He enters *chronos*. "In the fullness of time,"¹ i.e. in the intersection of *chronos* and *kairotic* time (see Chart 5.1), the Lord entered *chronos* through the birth of Jesus Christ. He does the same thing now. God in *chronos* is the immanence of God. When He enters creation and brings to pass miracles, answers to prayers, and providence, that is the intersection of *kairos* and *chronos* that is a fullness of time. And every time you preach the Word of God, it happens again.

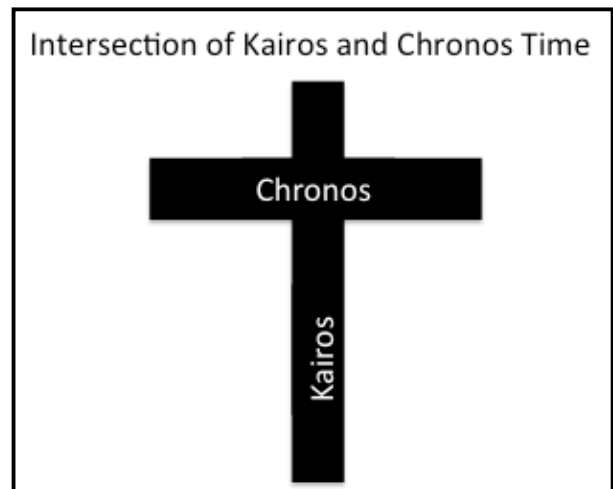


Chart 5.1

Kairotic time intersects *chronos* when transcendence becomes immanence. And that is why you can be so confident in your proclamation. When you preach or witness to somebody and give an invitation, you can be guaranteed that God is there. He is doing something right there. That is the intersection of *chronos* and *kairos*, and you are involved in it. You stand in the cross hairs of time. This thrilling event gives power to the evangelist, to the preacher, to the teacher, to the witness. It should also give you confidence to go forward in your ministry. Why? because *kairos* always intersects *chronos* in God's ministry on planet earth.

4. *Constant*. Malachi 3:6 and James 1:17

The words, "I change not" and "with

¹ Galatians 4:4.

² Romans 4:3.

whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning with God” mean that He is constant, reliable, and consistent with His own purpose and values. God does not change. He is true to His Word. We can count on His Word. Believing God is faith. However, our faith is in an absolute. When Abraham believed God, it was counted to him as righteousness.² Thus our belief and the reliability of God’s Word form the basis for John 3:16.

5. **Holiness.** Leviticus 11:45

There are two ideas contained within the word holiness.

- a. “Set apart” is one of those ideas. God makes something holy by setting it apart for His own private use. Holiness includes transcendence in its meaning. So being transcendent is part of His holiness characteristic. God Himself is the essence of holiness. He is completely other. He is not part of creation. He transcends creation.
- b. “A morally right behavior” is the other idea. Moral behavior is the second part to holiness, and this is the part we tend to major on, but you shall not major on it because when you do, you will lose the “set apart” or transcendence conceptualization. I want to talk about this imbalance and relate it to us.

When we declare that someone is a “holy” person, we tend to think in terms of the moral side of the equation, but there is the transcendent side of the equation, too. Get hold of this transcendent concept because it is extremely important for you to understand that morally right behavior being established as your only understanding of

holiness will lead you in a wrong direction.

To be “set apart” is to be set apart **for God’s use** (see Chart 5.2). If you are a holy person, you have been taken out from among the people of the world and set apart into a new community, which is the people of God for Him to use. When you are to be used by God, that means that you are no longer your own, you cannot use yourself, you do not have your life, you do not have a self-determined destination, you do not achieve your desires. You belong to God, and He can use you how He wants to. He spends His resources just as a king spends his money. God spends you just like He wants to if you are holy. You can stop acting holy by saying, “I will do with my life as I see fit.” That means that you are bringing yourself under your own will rather than allowing the Lord to spend His own resources like He wants to. If we change holiness just to moral behavior, then we lose the larger concept which is to be set apart for God’s own private use.

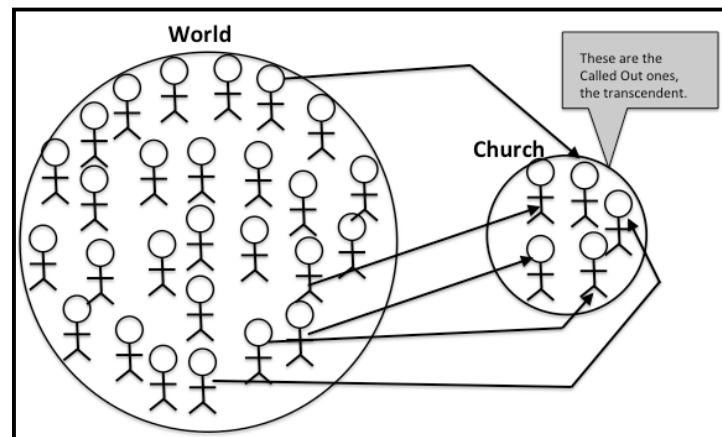


Chart 5.2

You can be moral and not be holy. It is extremely important that you understand this concept of being set apart for God’s use because once you understand holiness, and you are a holy person, then you are beginning to understand that you do not have any choices in this life anymore. You belong to the Lord, and the Lord has the choices.

² Romans 4:3.

In Christianity, there are only two categories. One is holy, and the other is sin. However, the Church, in general, has developed a third. This third category is neutral. It is the good life. Seeking fame, fortune, and pleasure is this neutral, middle category. Under this concept, there are holy men who makeup the clergy and sinful men who are the murderers, thieves, and criminals. The vast majority of Christians fall then into the neutral category. This thinking is an abomination. There are only two categories: holiness and sinfulness. That supposed third category is actually sinfulness. It is the lukewarm category that Jesus despises. In Revelation 3:15-17 He says that He would rather we be cold or hot. Luke warmness makes Him sick at His stomach.

Now, what is the Church? It is the *ecclesia*, the called out ones. That is the same thing that “holy” means. If we are in the world, and we are called out, then we become transcendent from those in the world. Clean and set apart for God’s use is holiness, and so *ecclesia* is a definition of holiness. It is a picture of what holiness means, the called out ones. That is what all of you are, the Church. *Ecclesia* (the Church) means the called-out ones. What did you get called out of? The world. What did you get called into? The Church. What is the Church? It is the transcendent ones, the holy people, those who have been set apart for God’s use. All of the Church is God’s; the Church is what He is going to use (to spend as He did His Son) to impact the world.

The holy person is a saint, a person who is sanctified, or made holy. Each saint is to be a disciple first. But He called even the disciples one at a time: “Follow me! Follow me! Follow me!” When disciples follow Him, He is going to tell them what to do. He told the twelve, “I want you to go two by two out on a mission.” He told them all kinds of things, but they were His, His possessions. He is going to give the directions. You do not give

your own directions to yourself. That means, then, that you do not get to go where you want to go on vacation. That means you do not get to go where you want to go to start a church, you do not get to choose what you want. I see people all the time saying, “Well I want to go pastor in Colorado because we like the mountains, and we like this and we like that.” What do your likes and dislikes have to do with anything? When you start looking at the *kenosis* there is nothing in there about what you like. It has all to do with sacrifice (your being spent).

Joe: This called-out ones doctrine is why the Church is a theocracy rather than a democracy.

V: Yes! Submitting completely to God points to theocracy (or rule by God). Holiness and democracy will always be in tension because democracy means to be ruled from below.

Joe: Is assenting to God like being borne by the Spirit?

V: Yes, because “called-out ones” have just moved out of a “borne by the flesh” into a “borne by the Spirit.” The “set-apart” idea is in the Word *ecclesia*. Everywhere you see *ecclesia* (church), you have a picture of holiness, the called-out ones for God’s use.

Joe: When Isaiah saw the Lord in Isaiah 6:1-6, the angels call Him holy.

V: Yes. He was high and lifted up; he was apart; he was away; He was totally other. However, His immanence was portrayed in that passage as well. The fact that the scene occurred in the temple means that God had come down to earth and entered *chronos* to encounter Isaiah.

Notice that when Isaiah said: “Here am I, Lord. Send me,”³ it was a response of holiness. Also when God indicated that Isaiah’s people would not respond to his preaching,

³ Isaiah 6:8.

He was warning that holiness knows no bounds. Thus when we are responding to God, He establishes the where, who, to whom, what, and how long. We establish nothing but the willful surrender, the “Here am I, Lord, send me.”

The transcendent side of holiness is in Jeremiah 23:23-24 which describes God as “afar off.” But like Isaiah, Jeremiah addresses the immanence of God in His ability to see everyone even when they are hiding.

The moral side of holiness can be found in Habakkuk 1:13 and James 1:13 both of which say that morality is set by God. His character is the essence of morality and from it issues the commandments of God, the definition of morality. Thus holiness defines what is moral and immoral.

6. **Righteousness.** Psalms 19:7-9

What you need to see in this characteristic is that what the Lord commands is basically out of His ontology. Everything that He says or does coincides identically with Who He is, and so His ontology and His function connect very tightly. There is no hypocrisy in God. When He gives us laws, they are righteous. If He is righteous, His laws are righteous. Psalms 19:7-9 connects His laws with His righteousness over and over again.

You can see that there is nothing differing in His ontology from His Words. Since He gives us the words, then the entire Bible has to do with Who God is because What He says coincides exactly with Who He is. The Law of God, the Mosaic Law, is not the answer to salvation, but it is still the Heart of God. It coincides exactly with Who God is, and He gives a gospel message that perfectly fulfills that perfect law, and gives you righteousness and salvation in place of sin.

7. **Justice.** Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23; James 2:9; and Amos 5:15 and 24.

God’s justice demands repercussions to

sin. When He says, “If you violate my law, you will not escape my punishment,”⁴ He fulfills His Word because He is just. Our Doctrine of Salvation has to do with making us “just” as well. Even though we have sinned there is a process by which God can make us just by meeting the demands of sin.

Galatians 6:7 says, “Do not be deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ”The Law of the Harvest” means that there is going to be retribution for sin.

Henry: Many Christians feel like God’s mercy will always out weigh His justice in their lives. I preached once that “we need to expect loss for the sins that we have committed against God,” and I got a rebuttal on that: “Oh, He is faithful and just to forgive.” Sin always result in loss even though God forgives.

V: The Law of the Harvest indicates that with sin there is going to be loss. If you choose to sin, you are going to have loss. Retribution, however, may be eschatological loss of reward, and we are warned about that in Matthew 25. It may not be punishment right here and now. We may get to enjoy our sin, but that enjoyment will be only for a season. The Law of the Harvest is that you are not going to get away with mocking God. If you sow to the flesh you will reap corruption.⁵

Mary: God’s word says somewhere that if we repent, He is just to forgive. Are we still going to face His judgment?

V: There are two kinds of judgment. If you are saved, then you have already faced one of them. Your **person** has been judged, but you still face a **works** judgment.

Let me tell you what happens when you sin (if you have not taken Hebrews you need

⁴ Romans 6:23, paraphrase.

⁵ Galatians 6:8.

to take it because it deals specifically with the salvation pilgrimage). Your Christian pilgrimage is from your new birth to your death. During your pilgrimage, you are being sanctified to God's use in accomplishing ministry. The further you get the more you have accomplished. However sin impedes your progress. Let's say you have ten years of life for this pilgrimage. You start out, and, after one year you have one year of growth and accomplishments. After two years you have two years of growth and accomplishments, and then sin stops your growth. You use up eight years in self-indulgent sin, and then you die. Did you get ten years of growth and accomplishment? No. Even if you repent before dying, "Lord, forgive me." He does! But did you achieve the ten years of growth and accomplishments? No, you only achieved two years. Can you see what you lose now? There is a harvest. God will not be mocked.

Now if you can avert the Law of the Harvest by wasting your life and still have the praise of God, then God's forgiveness is a substitute for our good works. God does not turn your two years of obedience into ten years of obedience because you repent right at your death. If God should make you the equal of the Apostle Paul who actually ran his race, then God could be mocked.

God is just. In the book of Hebrews we deal extensively with the Christian's pilgrimage. Hebrews talks about the river of God's will flowing by, and you are supposed to be in the river and flowing with it in God's will. When you get in the river and flow with God, then you are going where the river goes. But you can get out of the river. You get out and the river flows on by. If you had not gotten out, you would be further down the river. But you came out, and you play around on the bank or in the shallows while the river of God's will flows on by. Then you repent, "Oh, I am out of the river, I need to go back into the river." You re-enter, but you are not

as far down the river as you would have been had you remained in the river. We reap the consequence of not being as far down the river as we should have been.

Forgiveness does not eliminate all the consequences. If you should cut off your arm, you will have sinned by mutilating your body. You say, "Oh, Lord, forgive me." The arm does not jump back on your shoulder.

Mary: As soon as you sin, forgiveness is already in place, but there is more indignation at the judgment of the works, right?

V: That is right, and when we get to the end, He is going to judge us according to our works. A saint might say, "Well, Lord, I dug a hole, and I put my gifts and opportunities in there, covered them up, and kept them safe." He will say, "Possessing them is not the metric. I want to know how did you use them for me?" If the saint does not use them profitably for God, He will say, "Give Me those gifts. I am going to give your gifts to this obedient saint who used his gifts. He was a good steward who believed Me."

Class, according to Matthew 25 the guy who did not use his gifts ends up in heaven with less than he had on earth. Can you hear that? God will not be mocked!

8. Faithful.

I Thessalonians 5:24 connects with integrity. The Lord is faithful. What is He faithful to? He is faithful to Who He is, to what He has said, and to what He is going to do. He is not going to say one thing and do another. He is faithful when He gives you His promise. Somebody is going to have to break God in order to force Him to break a promise because when He gives His Word that is the same as giving Himself.

Ted: He is not faithful to our little meanderings. He is faithful to "Himself."

V: Yes, He is not obligated to be faithful to our misunderstandings of His Word.

9. Love.

I want to express this characteristic in the term benevolence. You see how, in the passage Matthew 6:25-33 the Lord has good intentions even for the sinner. God has good intentions for everyone. He is benevolent. He gives the rain to the just and the unjust. The bad guys get the blessings of the sunrise and the rain. All of the benevolence of God is for everybody, every creature. He does not give evil. Even to the evil He gives good.

Love also goes beyond God's giving good gifts. It includes sacrifice for the benefit of the other. *Agape* (love) is a unilateral sacrificial giving for another's welfare (see Chart 5.3). There is a cost for the lover and benefit for the object of that love. *Agape* differs from *phileo* by the element of sacrifice. *Phileo* has mutual benefit, a giving and getting, but *agape* has only the giving for the lover and a getting for the one being loved.

Eros has both a giving and a getting by the lover. It differs from *phileo* by its lack of mutuality.

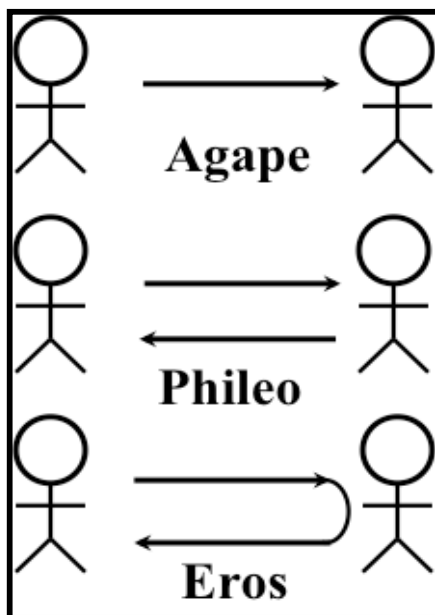


Chart 5.3

10. Grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9 declares that salvation is by grace, not of works. Grace is the unmerited favor of God where He gives more than His benevolence. He even gives favor. Thus since salvation is of grace, it is more than being made just. It includes justification, sanctification, and glorification. More will be

said about this doctrine in the chapter on salvation.

11. Mercy.

His mercy in Psalms 103:13, Mark 1:41, and Matthew 9:36 is expressed as compassion. When we get into a dire strait, and even though we have caused it ourselves, God is still merciful to us. He wants to lift us up, and He wants us to ask for mercy. He wants us to ask for forgiveness, and when we do, He wants to reach down and pick us up and put us on higher ground. He will be faithful to do these things because that is what He is. Mercy is part of his character. It is up to us, then, to ask for it.

12. Trinity.

When we are dealing with Trinity, it is one God in three persons. Our confession is that God is One. The *Shema*, of Deuteronomy 6:4, declares that "Our God is One Lord." That is Israel's confession and ours as well. Our God is one God in three persons (Matthew 28:19). We have already looked at how the councils dealt with who Jesus is. They resolved how Jesus is one of the three Persons of the one God.

How does God show Himself in three Persons? The pictured model in Chart 5.4 is called the *Hypostatic* model. There is One God, but there are three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and so when you are talking to Jesus, who are you talking to? God. When you are talking to the Holy Spirit, to whom are you talking? God. When you are talking to the Father, to whom are you talking? God. So you see that God is One, but He is in three Persons. Each person is a *hypostasis* (*hypo* = under; *stasis* = standing). Thus each person is the essence of God, which stands under the Godhead.

CREATION

The originator of the universe is God. He

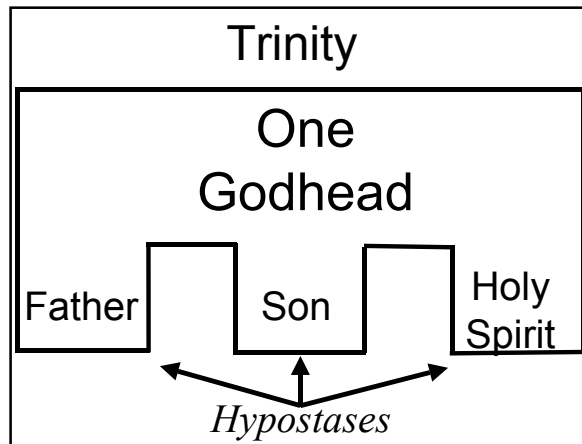


Chart 5.4

made it all freely from His own rational design and plan. What came into existence had no pre-existence either in form or substance. *Creatio ex nihilo* means created out of nothing.

There are many who reject the idea that God created the universe. Once the doctrine of creation is accepted, then the acceptance of miracles follows. Liberals who reject the miraculous have developed various theories concerning the origin of the universe.

Opposing Theories

Dualism

The first opposing theory is called Dualism (see Chart 5.5). In this theory there is God, and there is the universe. Both are eternal, and one did not create the other. That is called dualism. In this model there are two continuous eternal things. When you start having eternal matter, then that basically is your God, and you are trying to baptize the concept by saying there is a God that is other than the matter. But when you have eternal as a description of the universe, then the universe is self-existent, and that makes the universe God. Eternality deifies it. Something that is self-existent is deified.

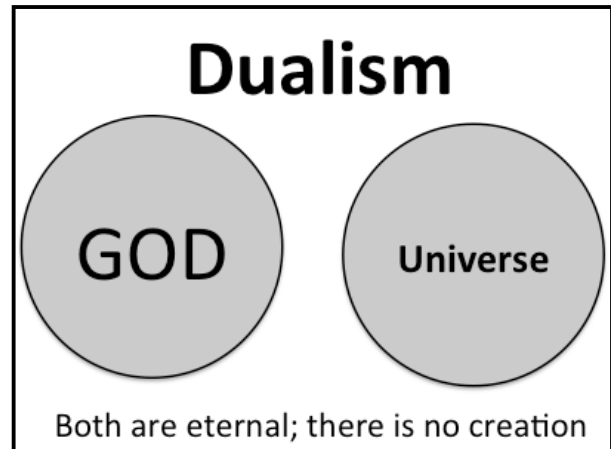


Chart 5.5

Emanation

A second theory is emanation (Chart 5.6). In the doctrine of emanation you have God, and coming out of God is the universe. That universe emanated from God, and so this is a pantheistic view.

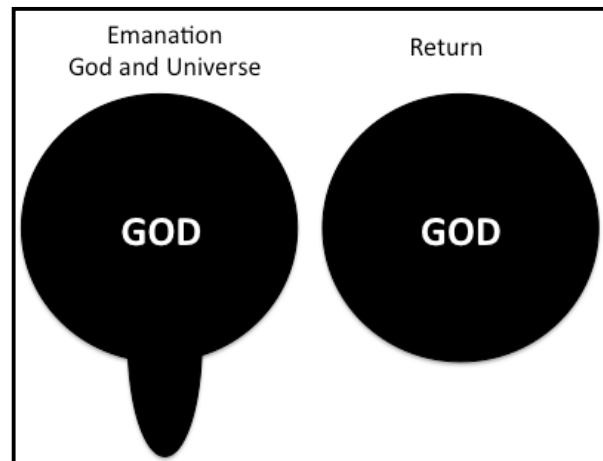


Chart 5.6

Redemption under a pantheistic view is called theosophy, and that is when the universe returns back up into God. When the universe returns back into God, the universe has been redeemed. In that kind of model you have a Christian theosophy. Man falls as an emanation of God. Mankind is still part of God but needs redemption because they have fallen, and they need to be pulled back up into God. You will read in Plato and in *Neo-*

Platonism the idea of returning to the One. That returning to the One either through ecstasy or through ethics is the basis of platonic redemption.

The knowledge that is required for platonic redemption is theosophical, *i.e.*, divine wisdom. This knowledge is not obtained through the senses. It is only obtained by unlocking the mysteries contained in the nexus of man and God because of the pantheistic emanation.

Re-incarnation fits this model. You have the soul that comes out, and it returns. It comes out in another creature, it returns. It comes out in another creature. It returns. Theosophy is a pantheistic view, a monism, in which you have the emanation and return. Whether you go up or down in the next cycle depends on what you did with the divine wisdom acquired in the prior cycle.

Spontaneous Generation

A third opposing theory is spontaneous generation (see Chart 5.7). Basically this has to do with eternal matter for me. It moves without God, and so you have only one thing, the universe, and this then is a monism too. Spontaneous generation is where evolution begins. Somehow life is generated out of dead matter in this theory.

These are the three main theories that oppose the doctrine of creation. How then is the doctrine of creation relating to the doctrine of salvation?

Joe: If we just spontaneously banged into existence then there is no salvation.

V: Correct, we would be trapped in our existing evolution.

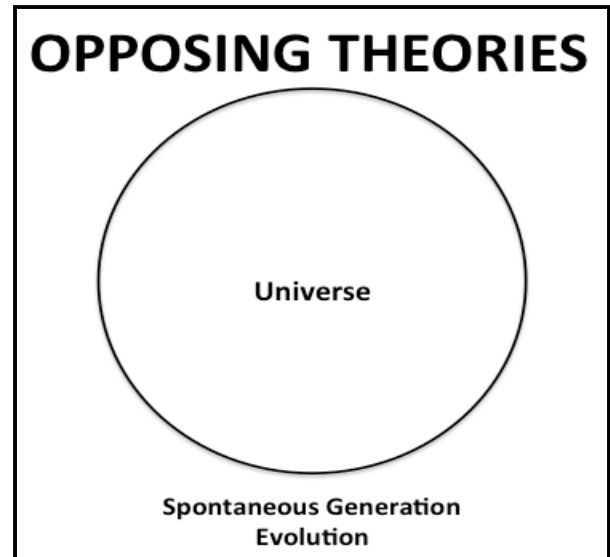


Chart 5.7

Henry: If we were born in the goo, and then in the zoo, and now it is you, we would not be worth much (laughter).

Ted: If the emanation were true, then there would be no need for salvation because we are god. If we emanate from God then we are god, we do not need salvation. There is no sense in having a heaven if everything is god.

Joe: In the spontaneous generation theory, life came out of dead matter. From where did the dead matter come?

Paul: The Doctrine of Salvation, and *creatio ex nihilo* connects God's omniscience and omnipotence to the Doctrine of Creation. God is omnipotent, and He had a rational plan. He knew that we would be in the situation where we are today. He had a design and plan in place to bring us to salvation, and that fact is very comforting for us to know that from the beginning, He had this design in place when He created us.

V: You all are correct. What you said, Paul, is important. It plays back on the benevolence, faithfulness, truth, and the mercy of God. All of the characteristics play a part in the Doctrine of Salvation which links very closely with creation. A plan of creation without a matching plan of salvation would not express the benevolence of God. He is so benevolent that He gives grace and mercy. When He made the creation, He looked at it and pronounced it to be good. You need to know that creation is holy. If God created it, it is holy. It was created for His purposes, set apart for his purposes. But we became unholy because of our wills which opposed God, and we began to mess everything up by using things that were dedicated to God for our own purposes, including our using of ourselves.

Carl: God said that His creation was good. Was there a plan for man to be saved at that point?

V: Yes. Before He ever created, He had a plan for salvation.

Tom: Under the spontaneous generation theory, would salvation come because Christ has died in order for us to be able to live?

V: No, spontaneous generation is an atheistic theory of evolution opposed to the Doctrine of Creation and salvation. Life in this theory is spontaneously generated, not created.

Joe: Mankind decides that he can improve the universe via scientific progress in evolutionism.

V: That is a good point, Joe. Without God, then we think that we are the master-minds in charge of guiding evolution.

Christology also deals with the Doctrine

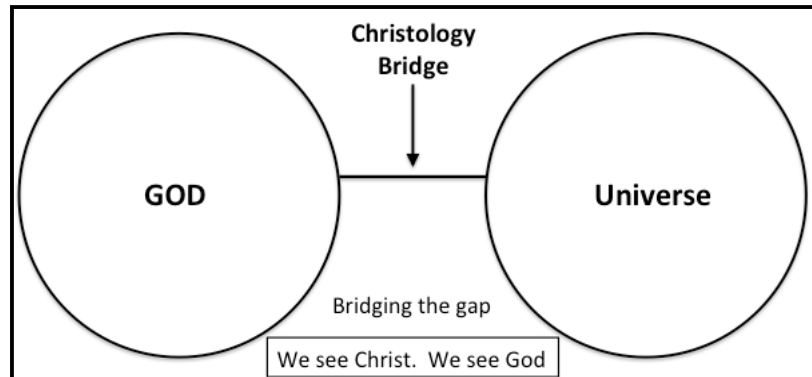


Chart 5.8

of Creation. You have God and the universe. He created the universe out of nothing. We, part of creation, are at a distance, and we cannot see God. We are at a distance, and He is different in kind. He is not part of the creation. We are stuck in creation. Christology bridges the gap between God and man so that when you have seen Him, you have seen the Father (see Chart 5.8).

That bridging of the gap is how we can come to know God. You cannot know God apart from Him coming to us because you cannot go to God. You are different in kind, and thus cannot bridge the gap of transcendence. You can only know God by knowing Jesus. No one can come to the Father apart from Christ, the Son.⁶

DOCTRINE OF PRESERVATION

Once God created the universe, He is going to manage what He created. He will do that through preservation and providence.

The definition of preservation is that God sustains the existence of His creation. He gives it its existence, and He keeps it in existence. Without God we would not have a beginning of existence nor would we have continuing existence. God keeps us here through the Doctrine of Preservation.

⁶John 14:6.

Opposing Theories to Preservation

There are two opposing theories to preservation: Deism and continuing creation.

Deism

Deism describes God as a machine maker who makes a machine, and then walks away from it. Many believe that God made the universe, set it in motion, and then walked away to let it operate via His rules of nature.

Deism overemphasizes the transcendence of God. When you overemphasize the transcendence of God, you get into this kind of mindset where the world is going on, and you are going to be a part of that world, like a cog in one of the gears in a huge machine. It is fatalistic. You do not even need to pray in that kind of situation because God is too remote to hear or even care. He is not going to work and intervene into the continuum of history in order to work a miracle to change history. So, why ask for it if He is not going to do anything?

Deism was popular in the Nineteenth Century in England, and it has, of course, moved over here. As a result of deistic ideas, people began to act like God is transcendent to the point of being uninvolved. But that is because they do not even understand their theology. It is up to you to begin to bring your people up to speed as to what the deistic beliefs are. Deism is the overemphasis of transcendence where God is so distant or remote that this world is going to go its own way as if in a closed continuum.

Deism opposes the idea of God's intervention in history. Some Christians have fallen victim to its fatalism. They do not pray and expect miracles. They cannot understand that by God's bridging the gap through Jesus, there is the introduction of physical immanence. An immanent God means the presence of the Master of creation and His involvement via *miracles*.

Continuing Creation

The second opposing theory to preservation is the theory of continuing creation. Have you ever seen a strobe light? This theory is like atoms of existence. Think of a strobe light and someone walking across the room. At each flash of the light, it shows him in one place, the next time somewhere else. You just see blips of a person being there. It is like the person disappears between blips. Continuing creation is where you are blipped in an instant of creation, and you are in one place, and then blipped in another instant of creation, and you are somewhere else. You think you have continuing existence, but in fact you are being created in these blips. This doctrine, you see, impugns the integrity of God because of its deception. The deception is that people think that they have continuous existence, but instead they have only instances of created existence.

DOCTRINE OF PROVIDENCE.

Providence means to see before. *Pro* is before, and *videre* is to see. God brings the universe to the goal for which it was created. It is the progression of God's plans that involves foreseeing. God knows where the universe is going, and because of that foreseeing He uses all circumstances and events to bring it to where He wants it to go. That is providence.

Opposing Theories to Providence

Fatalism

Fatalism is the idea where your fate is already set. What you do and what happens to you are set. You are going to go where you want to, but you will end up at a predetermined point. No matter what you do or pray, you will still end up right there at your predetermined destiny.

You need to understand that through providence, in contrast to fatalism, you can change the future. God's judgment is at the

door, and it is coming down. If you will humble yourself, repent, turn from your wicked ways, and seek God's face, He will heal the land, and His judgment will not be coming down. Instead there will be blessing upon the land. You who are called by God's Name have the future of this world in your hands.⁷

You can intercede. You can bring miracles down through prayer. You can change all of history through providence. The Doctrine of Providence is that God will enter into history to bring about His purpose while at the same time allowing the moral free agency of man. All He needs is a humble, righteous people. "Prayers of a righteous man availeth much."⁸

Joe: Moses changed God's mind when He was on the mountain. God said, "I am going to make you a nation unto yourself because those vile people are down there disobeying." Moses said, "Wait, God, if you do that then the Egyptians will say you led the people out only to destroy them." He changed God's mind.

V: God's mind is not changing. God's mind is for blessing the repentant or judging the unrepentant. God will test you, and He will threaten to rain down judgment, but what He wants you to do is to repent. His will is actually to rain down benevolence.

God knows the ultimate decisions that we are going to make in our lives because He is omniscient, but He does not force us to do this or that. It is our choice. He knows what choices you are going to make because He knows everything. But He has not predestined or predetermined your decisions that you will make in your life. Those are your choices. Does He know what choices you will make? Yes. But He has not predetermined that you will choose correctly.

⁷ 2 Chronicles 7:14.

⁸ James 5:16, (paraphrased).

Fatalism occurs when you are predestined. Fatalism means that you are going to your assigned destiny no matter what you prayed, no matter what you do. That is fatalism.

He predestined us before time began to have a relationship with Him, and we broke that relationship. We are predestined to be with Him, but we choose to break that relationship.

Mary: He sent Jonah to Nineveh to preach to them so that they would repent and not be destroyed. What God says about curses and blessings is conditional. Repentance will always stay God's punishment.

Paul: The Lord knew that Judas was going to betray Him, but couldn't Judas have changed his destiny? Could he have not changed his mind?

V: Yes, to both of you. The opportunity was there for Judas. He made his choice. God would have foreknown it if another choice was made. God's foreknowledge of the betrayal was not causative because that would be fatalism.

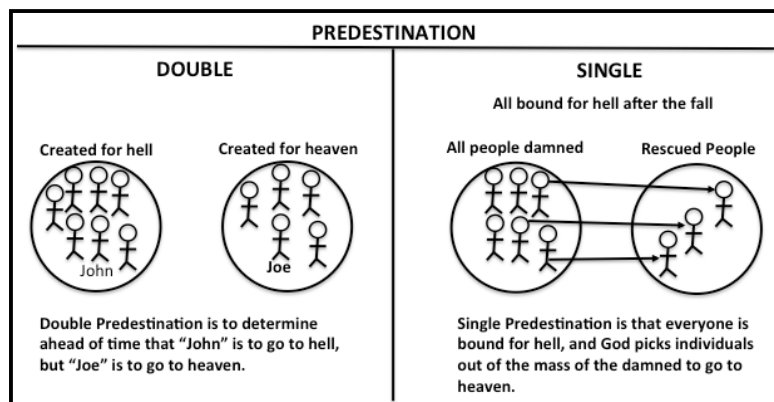
CALVINISM

In Calvinism the acrostic TULIP describes its five tenets:

- T - Total depravity
- U - Unconditional election
- L - Limited atonement
- I - Irresistible grace
- P - Perseverance of the saint

In Calvinism you have the hyper-Calvinist, which would be the double predestination, and then the plain, ordinary, run-of-the-mill kind of Calvinist, which has single predestination (Chart 5.9 on the next page). Double predestination is when God creates one person to go to hell and another person to go to heaven. He is doubly predestinating.

In single predestination, which is infra-

**Chart 5.9**

lapsarianism which comes under the umbrella of creation, you create all to go to heaven, but there is a fall, there is an oops, and in the oops all are now headed for hell. Single predestination is to elect out of the mass of the damned the few to go to heaven. The lapse and election are after creation.

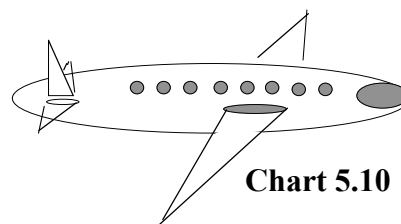
In double predestination the decision is made prior to creation. Some are "created" to go to heaven, and some are "created" to go to hell. That is called supralapsarianism. Before the lapse there is the decision.

In infralapsarianism, the decision is after the lapse. Infralapsarianism corresponds to single predestination. Supralapsarianism has the decision before the lapse, and it corresponds to double predestination.

Do I believe in predestination? You bet. Do I believe in supralapsarianism or double predestination? No, I do not. Do I believe in infralapsarianism, the election of individuals? No, I do not. What I believe in is the predestination of Jesus Christ and those in Him. It is a Christocentric predestination. Here is how it works. I will use an "airplane" analogy (See chart 5.10). Suppose that you have a plane that is going to go from here to Atlanta, Georgia. The people say, "I want to go to Atlanta, Georgia." Well, here is the plane that goes there. They get onto the plane, and then sure enough the plane takes off, and it flies over to Atlanta, Georgia. That is "plane"

predestination. The people in the plane will go where the plane goes. It happens every time. Every time I get a ticket, guess where I go? Wherever that plane goes. Christ is predestinated to go to heaven because He is Lord, and He is going to be Lord in heaven. Who else is predestinated to go with Him? everybody that gets the ticket. If you get on board, you are going to go just like when you get on a plane. You are going where the plane goes. What is the

ticket? Salvation, a free gift, a free ticket. This is Christocentric predestination. The Doctrine of Election is a corporate doctrine. He and all in Him are the elect.



You need to take my Books of Exodus and Romans courses. We deal with how God elects the many by narrowing to the one. When God narrows, when He chooses one, it is for the purpose of blessing many. Do not ever forget that. When He chooses one, it is for the purpose of blessing many! When He chose His Son as the elect One of God, it is because He wanted to bless many. I am one of the many. I am on board!

When you get to heaven, there will be an accounting on how you behave on the trip. You misbehave in the plane, but you still go to Atlanta if you get on the Atlanta plane. But they are liable to fine you when you get to Atlanta if you misbehaved enroute. When you get in Christ, you are going to go to heaven, but if you misbehave during the trip there will be some retribution in the form of loss of rewards when you get to heaven.

Ted: When Israel asked God for a king, He gave them Saul, but He knew this guy was

not good for them. Why did it happen like that? I am thinking of predestination in this situation. Why did it happen like that?

V: They chose to dethrone God. God Himself wanted to remain their King. Suffering and destruction will always occur when we choose against God.

Ted: Why did He not give them a good one?

V: Because He Himself was the good one. He wanted to remain as the good one, but they said, “We do not want You. We want a sinner.”⁹ So He allowed them to choose what they wanted. What did they want? A man of huge stature.

Ted: Why did He not explain it to them?

V: He did! He warned them and told them all the bad things that were going to come out of their terrible choice: “If you choose a king like you want, you are going to have onerous taxation. He is going to take all your first fruits, your maidservants, your daughters, and your sons. They are going to be used in war. He is going to take all the better parts of your stuff, and you will end up with nothing. Be warned! Is that what you want?”¹⁰ They said: “Oh, yes that is what we want.” Guess what? Today we are running

around saying, “Oh, yeah, we want some more taxes. Give us some taxes. We want a king to take care of us. That is what we need.” The same thing is still happening.

Joe: The whole problem was that Israel wanted to be just like the world. Instead of being set apart for God’s use, Israel looked at the world and said, “They have a king! We want a king!” God said, “I am your King.” They said, “No we want somebody we can see and touch and feel.” They got what they wanted.

V: Now, guess what comes out of that one decision? the birth of a lineage that will go all the way to the end times. Who is the king going to be just before the judgment? Antichrist, king of the world.

Jesus will dethrone Antichrist at His second coming. Jesus will then be recognized for who He is—our King, the Lord of the universe. God will once again be King. With Jesus as King, we will have restored God as King.

⁹ 1 Samuel 8:5

¹⁰ 1 Samuel 8:11-18

Questions on Chapter 5

1. List and explain the characteristics of God.
2. Explain/illustrate *chronos* and *kairos* time.
3. Explain/illustrate the Church.
4. Illustrate and explain the Trinity.
5. Illustrate and explain the first opposing theory to creationism—dualism.
6. Explain and illustrate the second opposing theory to creationism—emanation.
7. Explain and illustrate the third opposing theory to creationism—spontaneous generation.
8. Illustrate the Doctrine of Christ as the Bridge.
9. What is preservation?
10. What is providence?
11. Explain Calvin’s predestination.
12. Explain Christocentric predestination.

Chapter 6

MAN

CREATION REVIEWED

The discussion of God in the last chapter leads naturally into the doctrine of creation. Our view on the doctrine of creation will bear directly on all other doctrines. If we believe that God created the universe out of nothing, then all other miracles are possible for us to believe. If, on the other hand, we reject the doctrine of creation, we will move onto the slippery slope of trying to explain away the miraculous.

Pantheism

How does pantheism differ from the idea that God is creator?

1. A monism means that creation is god. The universe is all there is.

In the diagram of the prior chapter, I showed you a dualism and a monism. A monism is when there is just a one, and pantheism is the idea that there is just a one something. If there is just a one something, then we have the conclusion that the creation and God are the same thing.

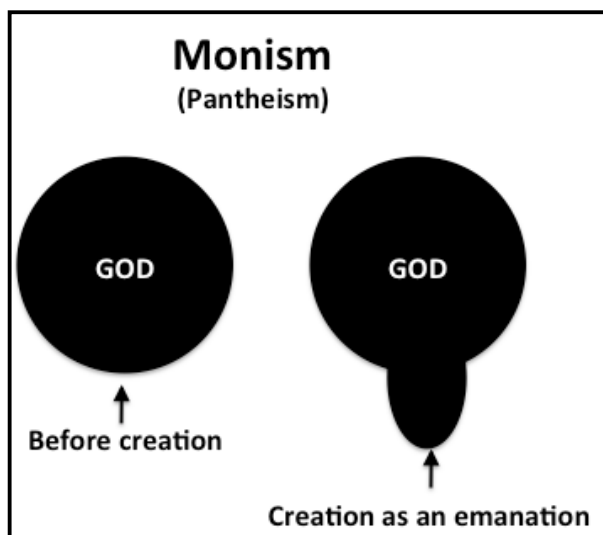


Chart 6.1

2. The universe comes into being as an emanation.

For something to emanate means that it comes out of the original source and is of like substance (see Chart 6.1). If in a monism there is just one something, then everything in that one something must be of like substance.

3. God's personal being and His freedom are impugned by the concept that He is constrained by natural law. If the universe that includes God in a monism operates by natural law, then God would also be under natural law. In a monism, nature and its laws are god.

You understand that in creationism you have God at the beginning of time when he creates time for us. He is the only being that exists. Hence, we have a monism prior to the beginning of time. God is the only One. He then creates time and the entire universe, and now there are two, both God and the universe. Then He controls that universe and brings it to His destiny for which He created the entire universe. That is the doctrine of creation, and He did not take a pre-existing matter and shape that into what we have today.

If something other than God were pre-existent, then we would be back into ultimate dualism. However He created something from nothing, and there was no ultimate dualism. There was nothing other than God. Then He created everything that exists. This act of God is called *creatio ex nihilo*. Out of nothing He created the universe. He even created time "in the beginning." In that statement is the beginning of time and of matter and all of the stars; all of which are part of creation. Prior to that there is only God. The Doctrine of Creation has One alone, and then there are two. The One created and governs the other.

In a monism there is nothing but the One, and that One is the universe, and that is a pantheistic view, which means that the universe is god because it is the self-existent one. For us to have the new-age model, the idea of reincarnation, then you have emanation and return, emanation and return. It is that kind of process where you come out of the One and then return to be absorbed back into the One. It is going back up and coming out as another something. The New Age and some Middle Eastern models come out of the monistic or pantheistic view of creation. Basically to use the words monism, pantheism, and creation together creates a paradox because monism and pantheism are not from a creationist doctrine. In monism and pantheism, there is a self-existent one, and we would be part of that self-existent one under that concept. Once you move the word “creation” into the doctrine, it is implied that there are two.

Why Is Creation Good? What Does Good Mean?

1. God’s nature is the source of creation.
2. People redefine good based on their ideological values, but Christians think of good as something derived from God or pleasing to God. In other words, God defines good.
3. Theodicy results when evil enters creation.

Joe: God created everything *ex nihilo*; everything that is was created by Him. How does evil enter into the picture if he is all good?

V: God created everything good, and He gave man and angels free will. Man can choose God’s will or his own. The latter is evil. Man creates evil via choices. Satan was the first creature to assert his own will.

Theodicy

Let me also introduce the word, theodicy. Theodicy is made up of two words, *theo* and

dikeo. *Theo* is God; *dikeo* is to judge. Theodicy is the judging of God. We judge God when we impugn His power or His love on the basis of the presence of evil. The formal statement of theodicy is as follows: *if God is all-powerful, He could abolish evil, and if God were all loving, He would abolish evil. Since evil is not abolished, then God is either not all-powerful or He is not all loving.*

Do you see how the above definition is judging God just on the basis of the presence of evil? Most Christians do not question God’s power. We question His love when we say this: “Why did You let this happen to me? Why did my little granny have this terrible thing happen to her? She never did anything wrong. Why did God let this happen?” When we come at God with these questions, we are questioning His love, not His power because we always say, “Why did you let . . .?” That questioning of His love is an issue that we are charging Him with: “You could have stopped this, why did You not stop it? Why did You let this happen?”

Irenaeus¹ has a way to see how theodicy is resolved in Romans 8:28 as an eschatological benefit. Sometimes you go through the struggles right now, and you cannot see the benefit of those struggles because that knowledge will be complete only in the eschaton. The best thing that ever happened to me was the worst thing that ever happened on this planet, i.e. my Lord was crucified and I was saved. That awful event turned to my good. God has so much power and so much love that He can produce good from evil.

Beyond the Grave

You may not be able to see the good because if you are looking with the eyes of flesh, then you are looking at your time and place, and you cannot see beyond the curtain.

¹ Irenaeus A disciple of Polycarp who in turn was a disciple of John. He lived around A.D. 130-200.

Please consider our forefathers who were burned alive, tortured, and drowned. We could end up reporting to those martyrs in heaven because they have earned that right. They are going to be rewarded. They are going to be in the inner circle because no man has greater love than the one who gives his life for the One he loves. If you asked them when they were getting ready to go into the fire, “Does God have the ability to stop this?” They would say, “Yes.” We could ask, “If He does not stop this, does this mean He does not love you?” They would say, “No. For the joy set before us, we go through these things.”²

When you can see beyond the curtain, beyond the veil, with the eyes of faith, then these hardships turn into opportunities for you to express your love and draw close to the Lord and actually feel His tears. But if you limit your view to the temporal, you will shrink back into your human mindset and look with carnal eyes upon the situation, and then you will start judging God. You will say, “God, why are You letting this happen?” You will start thinking that He had the power to stop it, and you will be questioning His love: “He does not love me enough to stop this terrible thing from happening to me.”

He loves you enough to have given His only begotten Son for you! You cannot question His love. Theodicy, then, is outside the Christian realm of acceptability. Do not participate in theodicy. However, outside of Christian circles, theodicy will be the point of debate. Outside the church arena in the world with people who do not believe in Christ, theodicy will be their point of attack. That should give you opportunity to preach and to witness and begin to talk about the other side of the grave. The power and love of God includes the other side of the grave. When theodicy is their point of attack, you ought to be able to turn that attack around, and turn it into a point of witness. However, theodicy,

which is a good point of witness in extra Christian circles, will have the opposite effect if it is indulged in within the church.

Henry: The Old Testament mindset of the Hebrews was that all things were under God’s control. Is it natural to bring that thinking into today?

V: That thinking is common, but God allows sin to run its course and to bring trial and tribulation on us. Why? Does He want you to hurt? No, He wants you to have an opportunity to stand up for Him, and show Him your true love. If you shrink back from that, then you are valuing your own comforts more than your love for the Lord. But if you stand in there and place your faith on the other side of the veil, then that means that this life is preparatory for the next, for the eternal life. That is how you lay up treasure in heaven.

Mary: There is a little sixteen-year-old girl who is a member of my church and has terminal cancer. Her daddy is a Christian but has not been in church for a long time. I know that I am going to get the question, “Why did God let my baby die?” It makes it a lot tougher because it is not a debate about theory, this is real life. I cannot tell him to look beyond, because all he will be looking at is that baby’s grave.

V: Please understand that in the emotional time of grief, you have to deal with the emotions. So, do not try to teach theology in the emotional moment. Deal initially with the emotions and trust that there will come a teachable time after that. Weep with that man and comfort him. You do not preach or teach in that emotional moment. Wait for the preachable, teachable moment to come, and it will come. But it is not in the moment of the tears.

Ted: Many times theodicy enters Christian discussions because the Christians today do not look at the reason God created us, which was not just for time but for eternity. We get

² Hebrews 12:2.

so caught up in the temporal dimension that we are not looking at the larger scope. We were created to spend both time and eternity with Him.

V: That statement is on the money, Ted. This is the crux of the matter in today's church. We have to see that there is a purpose for us, and if we think that purpose is our own career, our own indulgence, or our own anything, then we have missed the goal—holiness. **Holiness for us is to be set aside as cleansed vessels for God's use.** We have been made holy people. You are not your own. You are His and have been set-aside for His purpose. God is going to use you, and that use is going to be for His kingdom, not for your purposes. God's purpose may call for you to be put to death, tortured, or whatever. That is an honor. If not to be tortured or put to death, you at least will be persecuted. That is guaranteed for all disciples.

Ted: But that is not preached!

V: You are right because we have reversed the *kenosis*; we are on the self-indulgent climb in which we think that the higher we get, the more blessed by God we are. That is our mindset. That is also the mind of the world. It is human wisdom, and it is false!

Love is sacrificial, and it takes the form of the *kenosis*, i.e. self-sacrifice. You cannot love somebody without it costing you something. *Agape* is unilateral self-sacrifice for the welfare of the one being loved.

Joe: Can we go back to the issue of evil? Somebody asked me where and how evil was created and who thought of it.

V: The origin of evil, the origin of sin, and the guilt that comes with it all comes out of free will, and man's abusive use of his free will.

Guess what? All of you have free will. If your free will is used for yourself, that is evil,

and it can even have the appearance of good. But if your free will is in the Lord's model, which is sacrifice for the welfare of others, then that is good, and it can even have the appearance of evil. It is tough to break this pattern. We have been trained and brain-washed since childhood to use our will for our own benefit, and it is hard to break it. You can only break your will by submitting to the Lord, by living the *kenosis*. Even then, while you are pressing on, something may make your attention wander, and away you go, on the climb once again. You will find yourself off path, come to your senses, and think, "What am I doing?" Then you have to repent and get back on the *kenosis*.

Jill: Can we look at the word holy and differentiate the objective and subjective meanings?

V: Wow, Jill, that is a very good question! You are thinking like a theologian already. Holiness is composed of two parts: person and works. Objective holiness is an ontological holiness that means that you have been made holy via **justification**. You are a holy **person**. Subjective holiness is the holiness of your **works**. Subjective holiness is defined in the doctrine of **sanctification** in which you follow the Lord's will in your actions.

DOCTRINE OF MAN (ANTHROPOLOGY)

Most textbooks reflect a dualistic model of man, the body and soul, the dichotomous view of man. The trichotomous view is body, soul, and spirit (see Chart 6.2 on the next page). I hold to the trichotomous view because the Bible speaks of the body, soul, and spirit. However, when you get saved, here comes another person to live in you. That person is the Holy Spirit, and then you are a new creation because prior to this you were just a plain body, soul, and spirit. Now you are something very special with the Holy Spirit taking up residence in your heart, changing

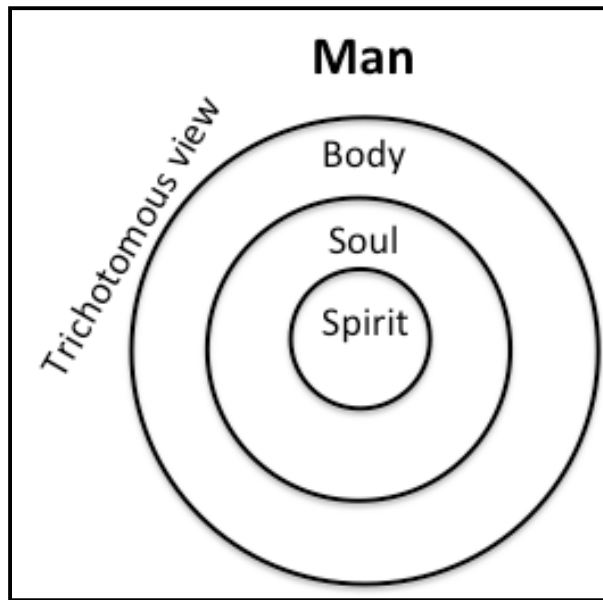


Chart 6.2

your personality, and making it like He wants it (see Chart 6.3). After the Spirit cleans out all your garbage, your personality begins to reflect God's personality.

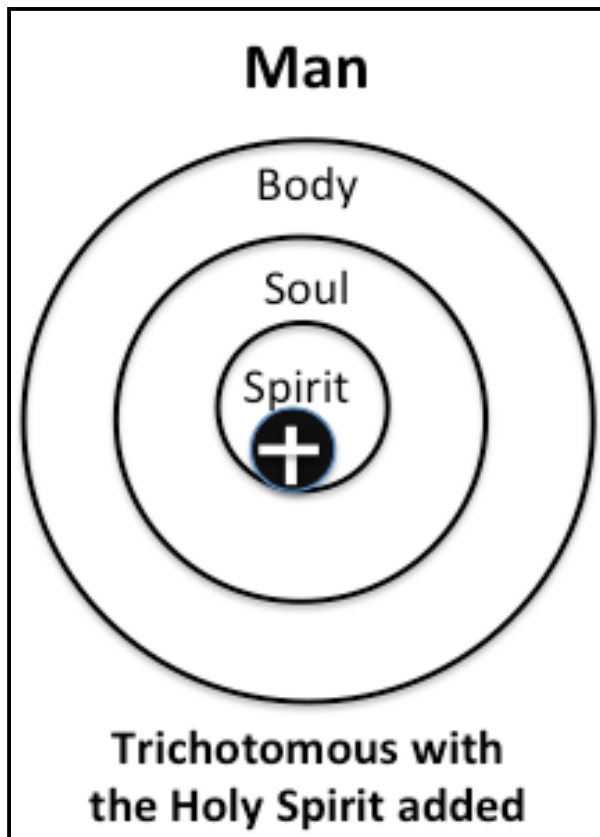


Chart 6.3

Christianity is an inside job. At the fall season of the year, tree leaves change color and fall off. That is an internal change in the tree, and when the Holy Spirit comes into you, and you begin to shed all this excess baggage, that is an inside change for you as well. It is not a conforming change where you adjust yourself to the pattern that is traditionally called Christian. That would be an outside change, and that is a trying to save yourself through your works.

An inside change is when the Spirit takes up residence in your heart and begins to change you from within. That is the kind of change that is permanent, and it will take you to heaven because you are a new creation with the indwelling of the Spirit.

Chart 6.3 pictures a trichotomous view. A Christian is body, soul, and spirit, and that also includes the residence of the Holy Spirit within his spirit. I hold to the trichotomous view of man with the salvation event meaning that Jesus comes to live in your heart.

“Behold I stand at the door and knock.”³ That is the Lord knocking at the door of your heart. If you have been trying to be a Christian by your works, quit it. Instead, pray right now. Tell the Lord that you are opening the door of your heart and inviting Him in. Turn your life over to Him and let Him change you from within.

We will now move to man as the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 5:1; Genesis 9:6, and I Corinthians 15:49). Some of the patristic theologians made a distinction between the image of God and the likeness of God. There is much discourse on this distinction that you will probably run across in your studies. This is ancient theology that is normally found in the ante-Nicene and the Nicene Fathers.⁴

³ Revelation 3:20.

⁴ Patristic theology was constructed by the ante-Nicene

Roman Catholic theology from the time of the Dark Ages, is deductive theology. Deductive theology is when you have a body of truth, and out of that truth, you form your theology by extrapolation. The whole system has to stand on a body of truth derived from the papal decrees. If the pope says that the world is flat, you cannot have a round world. That limits scientific investigation, and when you limit scientific investigation you move into darkness. That is why third world-ism exists today because of that darkness that was being imposed by the limitation of the body of truth to just the papal decrees.

Inductive theology, the kind we do, is when you bring evidence to bear from many places and formulate your body of truth out of all this evidence. One of the huge things that we bring in is the Bible as the supreme and normative truth to which all other evidences

Fathers. They succeeded the Apostolic Fathers, who wrote just after the death of Christ. The ante-Nicene Fathers wrote significantly after the Apostolic Fathers, but prior to the Nicene Council. This council was held in AD 325 and is the council dealing with Arius. The post-Nicene Fathers wrote just after Nicea. Protestants do not study the fathers following that period because after that point all of the writings are Catholic doctrines.

We study the Apostolic, ante-Nicene, Nicene, and some of the post-Nicene Fathers. We do not study all of the post-Nicene fathers. I would guesstimate that our studies stop sometime shortly after AD 450. Most of the writings past that time are mostly about Mary, church, pope, and sacraments.

In church history we will examine some of the post-Nicene conclusions and their impact on theology. Roman Catholic theology has to study the Fathers in Greek and Latin. What we normally do is Greek. Protestants do not do much of the Latin studies because the earlier writings tend to be in Greek, the later ones in Latin. Then we skip to the Reformation, which requires German, French, and only some Latin.

I tell you all of this for you to get the context of our theological heritage. The Dark Ages are the era of the Roman church, and we do not really study those writings because they are nothing more than deductions from papal inventions.

must submit. But we bring in other truth too because we think all truth is God's truth. The difference between systematic theology and biblical theology is that in systematic you bring in truth from a lot of sources. In biblical you narrow your source to just the Bible. In New Testament theology you narrow it to just the New Testament. In Pauline theology you limit to only Paul, etc.

Image of God

The image of God and the likeness of God were sometimes distinguished by the patristics. However, Luther, in the Reformation, said that the two terms form a parallelism and that the image and the likeness are two ways of expressing the same thing. That is basically where I land. Image and likeness connect in my theology. However, where Luther refused to define "image of God," I hold to the image as being a spiritual being that has dominion over creation. You are, then, somewhat like God in that you are spirit, and God is Spirit, and you are somewhat like God because you exercise dominion over things, and God is Lord over all. He created time, the world, the creatures, and put it all together. His last and crowning creation was man. Then He said, "Man, you are in charge of all this that I have created." Your purpose, then, is stewardship. You are in charge. You are boss. Like God, we are spirit, and like God, we have dominion and the responsibility that goes with it.

What Is The Biblical View Of Man?

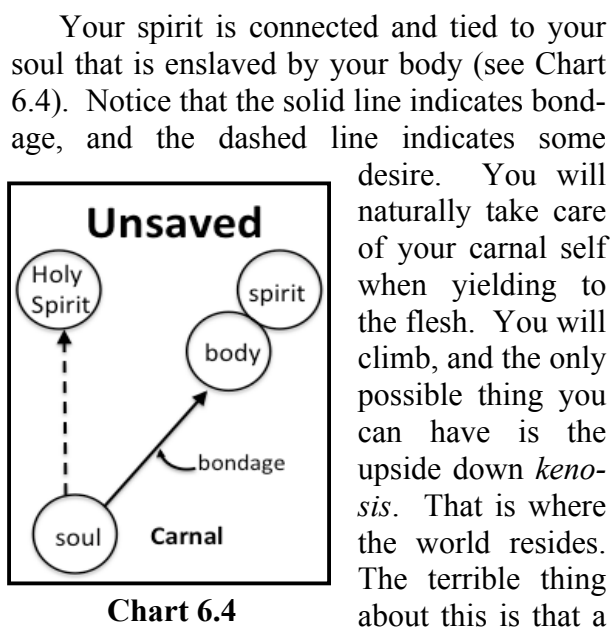
1. He is created in the image of God.
2. Christ is the image of God.
3. Salvation is into Christ.
4. Man is unique in dignity, personality, and responsibility.

When you are dealing with animal rights as over against human rights or the value of animals as over against the value of humans, you have shifted categories because man is in the image of God. Animals are not in His image. Man is spirit and has dominion over

animals. Man is the steward over the animals, and it is not reversed. There is a particular value in man that is not there with animals.

Freedom

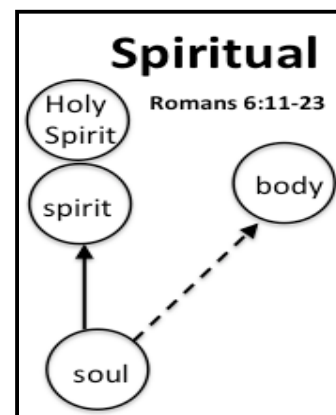
Salvation is a liberation; it is a giving of freedom. When man is not saved, he looks like the following illustration. Your soul is where your volition, your personality, your capabilities, your natural gifts, talents, all reside. Unsaved man (Chart 6.4) has a soul that is bound to his body because his soul can only think in terms of self-preservation, self-indulgence, self-centeredness, selfishness, self, self, self. The only time that he can be self-sacrificing is when one of his friends or his children or a relative is in need, and that is when his spirit takes control of the body and denies the body, and allows the soul to make a sacrificial decision like that of a soldier who can throw himself on a hand grenade in order to save his buddies in a foxhole. That is a sacrificial decision, but that is not proof of salvation. Your spirit creates a sacrificial desire in your soul to help those whom you love. The high calling could be to sacrifice your life in service to your country or to your family or whatever. That is not proof of salvation by a long shot.



Your spirit is connected and tied to your soul that is enslaved by your body (see Chart 6.4). Notice that the solid line indicates bondage, and the dashed line indicates some desire. You will naturally take care of your carnal self when yielding to the flesh. You will climb, and the only possible thing you can have is the upside down *kenosis*. That is where the world resides. The terrible thing about this is that a

lot of the church is in this same kind of carnal model—self indulgence, taking care of self, running after your own glory, get it now, step on the next guy to climb up.

God gives us liberty in salvation, and when He does, it is a breaking of this bondage. It is to break loose the spirit (mind) from that locked-in tie to your body (see Chart 6.5). Your spirit is basically your mind. That is why God says, “Have the mind of Christ” (Philippians 2:5)



Romans 6:11-23 is written to Christians, and God says, “Choose not to serve your body, but instead serve the Holy Spirit.” That is only an option for saved people. The unsaved man is still in bondage. He is locked into being animalistic. Unsaved man is generally going to do what he wants to do. He will seldom deny himself and do what he does not want to do.

Salvation breaks loose the tie of the spirit to the body and restores your soul’s will to its full potential. Spiritual man’s soul is freed from having to follow the desires of the body and is now using his will to switch over and follow the Holy Spirit (see Chart 6.5). Notice the dotted line between soul and body that indicates that there is still a desire in the soul to follow the flesh.

The solid line means that your mind is in agreement with the mind of the Spirit, and your will says, “I am going to go after the Spirit.” The only way you can do that is through self-denial. There is no such thing as following Jesus without self-denial. God said, “If anyone will come after me, let him *first deny himself*, pick up his cross, and then

follow me” (Matthew 16:24). The only way you yourself can do this is to deny yourself. Your body says, “I do not want to do the hard things, to study, to go to class, to take a test, to do a paper.” See how carnality can take you captive? You have to say no to that body. The body is saying, “I want to have fun, take it easy, and have the good things of life.” This is your carnal nature. You cannot help that. It is in me, it is in you, it is in all of us. That is just what we have, but you have to wrestle with that nature. You have to defeat it by denying it because there is no such thing as discipleship without denying it.

When you get saved, the first thing that happens is the severing of the lock that your body has on your mind (spirit). Once your mind has been loosed from slavery to this body of self indulgence (e.g. fun, great career, money, etc.), then you are free to choose another master. Salvation breaks the ties, but it does not automatically move you over into the spiritual model from the carnal model. Salvation breaks the lock between body and spirit (mind). However you can still **choose** the body, which makes you carnal—saved but carnal. To be spiritual, you have to first deny yourself. When you start thinking of following the Lord, and He says you have to give something up, you will actually have to give it up. That is a conscious decision. When you make that conscious decision, your spirit moves over to align with the Holy Spirit, your soul chooses to follow your spirit, and you are then in the spiritual model. You have turned the connection of soul and body into a dashed line, and you are now obeying the spirit (see Chart 6.5). You have lined your mind up with the mind of God. We became spiritual in our salvation in which our mind is loosened from the bondage of carnality, from the things of the world or of our flesh. We start walking like a real disciple only when we are following the Lord in self-denial.

False Kenoses

Soon will come temptation for you to get back onto the upside-down *kenosis*. As soon as you start your climb, you will have switched back to follow the desires of your body. You are then a carnal Christian. Now you have a dashed line to the Holy Spirit (see Chart 6.6) because you are not following the Holy Spirit, but the body. Why? Because your mind/spirit has gone to the things of man, not the things that be of God (see Chart 6.6). When Peter did that, God said to him, “Get behind me, Satan, for you esteemeth not the things of God but the things of man” (Matthew 16:23).

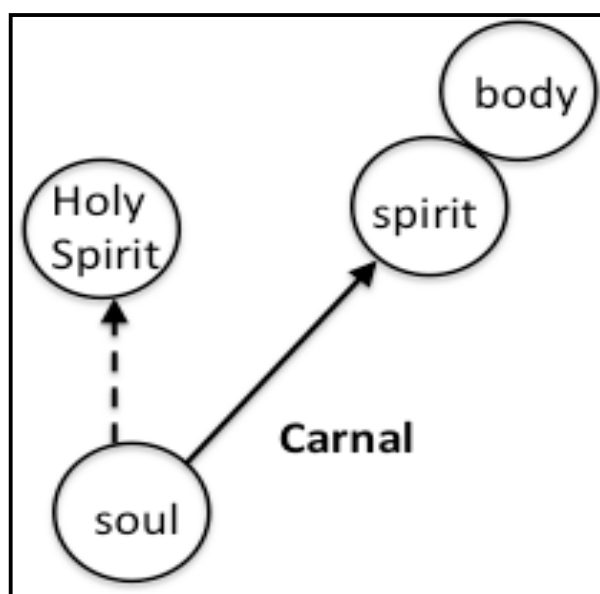


Chart 6.6

The spiritual walk costs you on your flesh side. When you are tempted and want to swing over and indulge yourself and not have to do so much sacrificing, you will crucify the spirit rather than the flesh. We rationalize with: “God does not want me to hurt.” “He does not want me to go without all the nice things,” and “He wants all of His children to be wealthy.” You hear this all the time. Many even think that all you have to do is find someone to agree with you in prayer, and it will happen. Just agree together, and it has to happen, and you will get the wealth or health.

You confess it into being. What you have done is forsaken the Spirit and gone back into the upside-down *kenosis* of self indulgence, and you look just like an unsaved man who is trying to use God as if He were a genie in the bottle.

Joe: Salvation provides that we will enter into heaven and be whole and clean. There will be no evil in heaven. Don't we get rid of that evil now before we get there? If not, how can we enter whole and clean?

V: In salvation your personhood is absolutely and forever cleansed, and that is what goes to heaven. But your actions are still influenced by your flesh. It comes back to the question about objective and subjective salvation. The objective salvation is of your being. You are going to go to heaven not based on your works, but based on your objective salvation. You might be naked, and on the outside in the darkness, but you are going to be in heaven, saved as by fire, smelling like smoke.

The subjective salvation, i.e. **sanctification**, is about works. When you deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow Jesus, you are spiritual. Objective salvation is of your personhood, i.e. the event of justification, and it takes you to heaven. Subjective salvation is of your behavior/works. These two models in Charts 6.5 and 6.6 are about behavior, not personhood.

Henry: Some Christians will prefer the carnal life. They will believe that the objective salvation gives them a license to sin.

V: The subjective part of salvation, i.e. sanctification, eliminates the "license" to sin. Yes, we can still sin, but there will be a penalty for every sin.

Henry: The reality of the Christian pilgrimage is that you are not going to sit in one spot. Isn't our needle jumping back and forth between the flesh and spirit? Obviously if we have our eyes on Jesus, we are headed for the

spiritual Christian life, but every time we stray, the needle jumps back toward the body, and we are off to the races again.

Mary: Yes, the downward trek of the *kenosis* is not smooth. We are constantly jumping up, finding ourselves following the flesh, coming to our senses, repenting, and starting back down again.

V: You are both right. Only Jesus lived an entirely smooth *kenosis*. He set out on His journey, and He did not vary from it. He denied Himself all the way. He was tempted to turn the rock into bread; He was tempted to take a short cut, but He did not take any of those easier paths. He stayed with it all the way, without varying.

On the other hand most of us stay on the climb, the opposite of the *kenosis* because we do not know true theology. We need to know and practice the *kenosis*. Those of us committed to the mind of Christ will start down, and then the next thing you know, we are climbing again. We repent, start downward, and then switch to climbing as soon as we are tempted (see Chart 6.7)

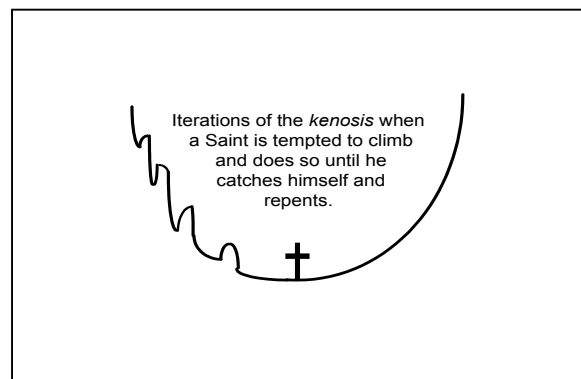


Chart 6.7

You hope that your people will take the *kenosis*. Your best saints will start downward but will only go down so much. It is very costly, and soon many of your saints will say, "Well, that is enough. I am not going any further." That stopping point usually occurs at the witnessing plateau.

When we adopt the upside down *kenosis* of the apostate church, we must deal with guilt for not following Jesus. If you, the pastor-teacher, teach by example the upside-down *kenosis*, may God have mercy on you because that kind of teaching can rarely be undone. Instead, exemplify the *kenosis* and lay up treasures in heaven. But when we get shortsighted and start living for the temporal gain, we are automatically in the upside-down *kenosis*, and our words are invalidated.

Carnal Christian

Galatians 4:9-11 and 5:1 pictures a saved person whose spirit is in bondage to his body. Your carnal desires can begin to shape your mind—what is important to you, what are your values? You may have values that your mother and daddy taught you, like not lying and being a good worker, doing to others as you would have them do to you, all those good things of life. But they also taught you that you are to have a good career, the sky is the limit, you are going to go to college, you will get a degree, you might even get another degree, and you will be a recognized expert in some area. Some great corporation is going to hire you and put you in charge of a whole division, and you are going to climb up and maybe one day become the president of that corporation. You are going to have a summer home and a winter home, a foreign home, and another home, and you are going to have planes and cars and money, and people are going to swoon whenever you walk into a room. That is what we want. Those are goals that we have been taught. That is the good old American dream. One day one of you might even become the President of the United States. But, do you see what that is? That is a mind that is in bondage to the body, the upside down *kenosis*.

You need to have your mind severed from your body. There is only one person that can break that bondage, and that is God Himself. You cannot do it. Nobody under heaven can

do it. Only God can do it. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit gives you a new shot at life, and that new shot is to be able to recognize and obey the voice of the Shepherd. When that happens, you get your will lined up with the Spirit. Your spirit is broken loose from your body and put in line with the Holy Spirit (See Chart 6.8). At that point you have quit obeying your body. Notice the residual carnal desire that is represented as a dashed line from your soul to your body.

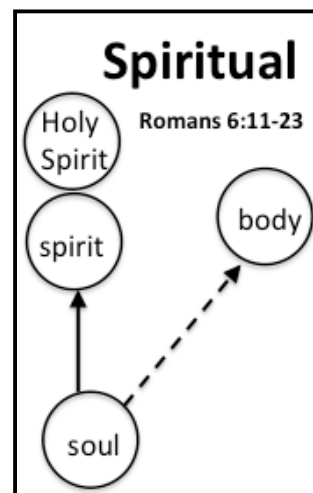


Chart 6.8

Christian, you are in control of your will. You know that Christians can say no to drugs, premarital sex, and the animal appetites. What about unsaved people? They can, too, but they are animalistic. Give them a chance, guarantee that they will not get caught, and they will tend to jump right into the middle of their desires because they are self-indulgent, self-centered, and selfish.

You can train a dog not to touch a piece of meat you have laid in front of him when you say, "Do not eat that meat," by bopping him when he eats it. After a while he will obey your order, but if you leave that dog alone in the presence of that meat long enough, he will eat that meat. That dog will just be wagging his tail, happy that he had some meat. He will not know that he did anything wrong. He will just be glad to see you when you return. But when you add for humankind the spiritual dimension that is freed from the body, that spirit will say, "It is not right that I eat that meat." If my Lord said, "Do not eat the meat," and He goes on vacation and I eat that meat, when He comes back I will not be sitting there wagging my tail. I will be afraid. That is the

difference when the spirit has been broken loose from the body. Carnality for a Christian is by choice, not by bondage. However, carnality over an extended time sets up strongholds of bondage from which you will again need God's help to escape.

We are called to obey the Holy Spirit. This means that my mind must take over my will, not vice versa. My mind says, "The Lord wants me to obey Him no matter the cost. I will pay the cost and obey." That is when the mind rules over the soul's will. But when the body gets hold of the mind, then the soul's will is going to yield to the selfish behavior that you have been saved from, even though God says, "Do not be re-entangled with sin again."⁵

Redemption

It takes power to obey. This power comes from redemption. The miracle of breaking the spirit (mind) loose from the body is redemption. Picture redemption as being lifted out of a hole. You are in a hole, and you cannot get out. God reaches down and pulls you out (see Chart 6.9). He puts you on level ground and says, "I want you to behave in a holy fashion. I will tell you what to do and what not to do. You just obey my voice."

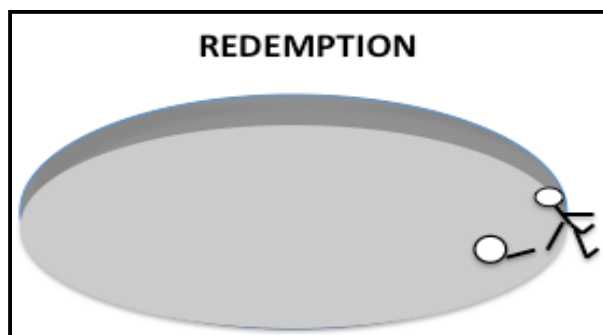


Chart 6.9

Once we get out of the hole, we have freedom, and we get together and say, "What are we going to do out here? This sacrifice business looks like it is going to be painful.

Let's jump back into the hole. All the good things are down there. We get to indulge ourselves; we can party; we can do all the things we used to do. Let's just jump back into the hole. God wants us to enjoy life." Even though God says, "Do not be re-entangled with that flesh-driven self-centeredness," we jump back into the hole.

Mary: A dog returns to its vomit, and the pig goes back into the mire (2 Peter 2:22).

V: Why do we do that? We do it because of the enticement of the body! It is fun, and I do not care who you are in this class, you can love the Lord, and you can be sacrificial, but there is an ever-present temptation dogging your heels right now. It will draw you back into that hole and re-entangle you with the affairs of the world, and the next thing you know, you do not esteem the things that be of God. Instead, you will esteem the things that be of man. When that happens, your spirit (mind) is carnally natured, you are a carnal Christian, and you are no longer following the Holy Spirit. This condition leaves you looking as you were before you were saved. You look like unsaved man.

There is no such thing as following the Lord without self-denial, and self-denial is tough. Every minute of the day involves self-denial. When you yield to your body and your will becomes subject to animalistic self-indulgence, that is not self-denial, and you are not a disciple when you are doing that. Love is sacrificial—*agape* love is self-sacrificing. You are sacrificing yourself for the person you love. **There is nothing in Christianity that does not have sacrifice in it—the essence of *agape* is unilateral sacrifice.** That is the model that the Lord gave us. He sacrificed His own life for our welfare. Go and do likewise.⁶ The form that your sacrifice takes may not necessarily be on a cross. It could be, but it must be in self-denial. Certainly, it could cost

⁵ Galatians 5:1.

⁶ Luke 10:37.

you your physical life. We are going to come to a time when that is going to happen. Just today thousands of Indonesian Christians were killed in a national cleansing by Muslims.

We are not to leave the *kenotic* pattern and be re-entangled. This re-entangling is where you esteem the things that be of man instead of the things that be of God. That is the pattern that Peter fell into. Peter was spiritual when Jesus said “Who do men say that I am?” Peter replied, “Thou art the Christ.” Then Jesus said, “Flesh and blood did not reveal that to you, Blessed are you Peter for the Holy Spirit revealed that to you.”⁷ A couple of verses later Jesus told them that He had to go to Jerusalem, and that men were going to put Him to death. Peter moved out of spirituality and into the mindset of the world and said, “Be it far from You, Lord.”⁸ He was imploring Jesus to forego the sacrifice. Jesus said, “Get behind me, Satan, you do not understand. You esteem the things that be of man rather than the things that be of God.”⁹

We begin to discern good from our own definition rather than the definition from God. The good for you, if you use your definition, is riches and reputation, great prestige, and all that kind of thing. But that is not what God calls good; He calls it dung.¹⁰ *Suffering patiently, bringing honor to the Lord in your suffering loss to self, is good.* This is hard stuff, but it is precious and worth the cost.

⁷ Matthew 16:16-17.

⁸ Matthew 16:22.

⁹ Matthew 16:22-23.

¹⁰ Philippians 3:8.

What Does It Mean To Say That Humans Are Responsible?

1. The ability to respond is based on freedom.
2. Responding is dependent upon understanding and reflection.
3. This ability makes us accountable to God.

In our redemption, God gave us freedom. He has also given us His clear Word and the help of the Holy Spirit to understand it. We are without excuse should we fail to obey God because we have freedom and His Word.

MAN IN RELATIONSHIPS

The four relationships are upward, outward, downward, and inward (see Chart 6.10).

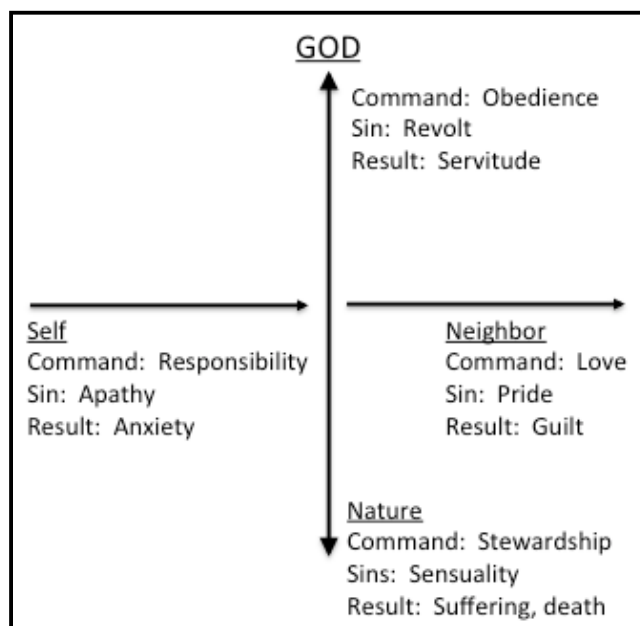


Chart 6.10

1. Upward to God.

This upward relationship has a requirement of obedience. If you disobey, you become enslaved to sin. The unsaved position is one of bondage. Your mind is locked in with your body. Here is the threat: Salvation gave you freedom, it is your gift, you are called to exercise that gift, to deny yourself and follow the Lord. When you indulge yourself, you can re-create bondage—a stronghold can set in.

You should be alert to that possibility so that you do not play around with temptation. Do not indulge sin because if you do, there could be a loss of your freedom once again. Do not mess with sin!

A stronghold does not mean that you are unsaved, but you can be re-entangled in the affairs of the world, and once that happens you can lose your entire usefulness to God. You become useful only for your own self.

Self-indulgence is not to be played around with. We touched on this lightly by showing the spiritual man obeying the Spirit, and the carnal man obeying the fleshly desires, but it is more than that. There are consequences to consider, too, and one such consequence can go to the extent of becoming in bondage to sin again. Do not make light of this. We need to be very serious at this point.

Joe: Once a Christian is in that bondage to sin, they are separated from God, then?

V: Yes, but not in ontology. Separation is in their fellowship and works. They cannot have that sweet fellowship while they are in bondage (servitude) to sin.

This vertical-up vector in Chart 6.10 is the first relationship, and that is to relate to God through obedience. You obey Him. To stay in that right relationship you must obey. If you do not, you can end up in bondage (servitude) to sin.

2. *Outward to your neighbor.*

This relationship calls for you to love your neighbor, and that love is *agape* love, a sacrificial love. One of the very first requirements of sacrificial love is that you will risk loss for that person's welfare. That means you are going to witness. If you do not witness to somebody, you do not love that person. *Agape* love is a sacrificial love. So you take your risk, you witness, you may take the hit, but love overcomes fear. When you do not witness, then you are guilty. Pride is your

self-esteem becoming excessive to the point of being above any requirements to sacrifice for another. Basically, pride is to esteem ourselves so highly as to require the sacrifice from others for our own welfare.

3. *Downward to nature.*

Nature is the world of things. You are to have a right relationship to things. That relationship is called stewardship, i.e. you manage things. You own and use things. Things do not own and use you. You are to manage things by using them for the benefit of the Kingdom of God. Anything that is in your control is a holy thing. What does holy mean? Set aside for God's use. Your body is a holy thing, set aside for God's use. Your clothes are holy clothes, set aside for God's use. Your money is holy money, set aside for God's use. Your talents are holy talents, set aside for God's use. You get the drift? Stewardship means that you manage those things to bring maximum profit to God.

We were looking at man in the image of God as meaning to have dominion? Dominion is stewardship. Stewardship is management to bring forth a spiritual profit. In Matthew 25, the stewards are going to be judged on the basis of profit, i.e. return on investment. You gave me five talents; I used them to earn five talents more. You gave me two talents, here are two more talents. You gave me one talent; here is only the one talent back. The third guy did not have a profit. He was a bad steward even though he brought back everything he was given. Many of the saints of today squander what was given to them and use it for their own indulgence. What is God going to say to them? I do not even want to be close to any of those guys when that happens. I might get hit with a backlash.

The sin in this quadrant is sensuality. Alcohol, drugs, promiscuity, indulging the flesh, and other things are sensual sins. The results will be diseases, imprisonment, loss of family

and friends, other sufferings, and death.

4. *Inward to self.*

In the middle of the chart where the vectors cross are you. You have a relationship with God, a relationship to neighbor, a relationship to things, and you have a relationship inward to self, and that totality of relationships is responsibility. Responsibility is based on freedom. That responsibility is built upon your freedom to be holy (a clean vessel set aside for God's use). When you are properly related to yourself, your mind is saying, "I myself have been set aside for God's use." When you can do that, then you can hear the voice of God so that you can obey Him, love men, and manage things for His profit.

If you are indulging yourself and running after your own career or your own anything, you cannot hear the voice of God. Many of us begin to say, "Oh, God told me to do this." The "this" is everything that you want to do, and you interpret your own desires as orders from God. You baptize your desires.

The sin of apathy is to be not passionate toward your responsibilities. "Pathy" means passion. The leading "a" of apathy is the Greek "a" of privation. Thus apathy means to lack passion. The lack of passion toward responsibility results in anxiety.¹¹

ORIGIN OF SIN AND GUILT

When does sin and guilt come into our lives? The Baptist Faith and Message has this idea within it that moral action is the point where you may have guilt enter into your life. It occurs when you exercise moral decision.

We are all born depraved. This means you have an old sin nature that is locked into

your body. This is how you are born, and you are going to ratify that nature as soon as you have volitional capabilities. Your daddy says, "Do not play over here," and you go do that anyway. That is a deliberate rational choice that indulges your body and disagrees with and rejects the clear instructions of your parents.

Here is what I have come up with and you can throw this out the window if you want to. I believe that babies that die as infants go to heaven. This is how I come to this conclusion: When Adam sinned all of humanity sinned in his loins. They were seminally present in Adam. When he sinned, sin entered the world, and by the sin of one man death entered in.¹² All men then become sinners. They do not get a choice. Adam did not get created like the unsaved man, you see. Adam was the spiritual man. That is how he was created. When he sinned, he got this lock into a sin nature and physical death, and he passed that lock on to you. He said, "Here, have a lock. Everybody get in line and get a lock. Have you got your lock?" "Yes, I've got mine." You did not get a vote. You got locked in, and you were not even born yet when you got locked in.

That lock on you by Adam's choice was a situation in which it actually is going to be redeemed by God for the benefit of infants. If you were locked in without a rational choice because you were not even born yet, then what about those babies who are born, who have not made a choice before they die? It is my belief that they are in Christ. If seminal causation precludes choices, then our depravity is congenital. If there is not a personal choice in the fall, then there is not a personal choice in redemption prior to the fall's reversal, i.e. salvation. Both fall and redemption, however, must be ratified by personal, moral choice.

You fell without making a choice. You fell because you were not capable of making a choice. You were not even born, but yet you

¹¹ When in college, there were times when I decided to play instead of studying for finals. But the next day, when I went to take the final, I was filled with anxiety. Retribution was coming to me, and I knew it.

¹² 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Romans 5:12-13.

fell because of what Adam did. Well, then you are lifted up as an infant based on what the second Adam did. He covered your sins, and you did not even have to make a choice. Thus, both the fall and salvation are automatic prior to the capability of moral choice. However, as soon as moral choice is capable, then the lock on your life is ratified via moral choice. Sadly, everyone chooses to ratify Adam's old sin nature in his life at the age of accountability. At that point we have guilt, but the good news is that sin's guilt and penalty can be replaced by God's gift of righteousness and eternal life that comes by choosing Jesus Christ.

Everyone is different, and so an age of accountability is not constant. It is when the Law enters. I want to caution you in this regard, when Law entered that is when sin revived. Paul said, "I was alive apart from the Law once."¹³ That was prior to his being able to make a moral choice, but when the Law comes in you are required to make a moral choice. Once you can make that moral choice, guess what you do? You ratify your old sin nature because you have a lock on you. It is so locked tight that the Bible says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."¹⁴ As soon as you become capable of making moral choices, guess what you are going to do? You are going to sin and come short of the glory of God. That is your inheritance from Adam.

Joe: The Hindu has been raised a Hindu, and he has never heard the name of Jesus Christ, and he cannot make a rational decision in regards to this choice.

V: Yes, he can. The answer is based on Romans 1. Romans 1 is the one passage that takes away all excuses from everyone all over the world. Everybody can know that God exists because of creation. That knowledge

makes **him** responsible to that God, and it makes **us** responsible to carry that witness forth. The Hindu has chosen against God in spite of the evidence. The evidence should make him a seeker, and the seeker will find.¹⁵

Joe: My little girl is not three years old yet, and she knows there is a God. She cannot make that choice since she does not have enough information yet.

V: Paul declared: "When Law enters, sin is revived and I died." It is not daddy's law that creates the sin. The retribution for disobeying daddy's law is daddy's punishment. Paul is speaking of when God's Law enters because the retribution for rejecting God's Law is God's punishment. It is not civil law, it is not daddy's law, it is God's Law, and the moral choice has to be in regard to God's Law.

Henry: I think that one must have a concept of sin for a rational decision. Every child wants Jesus to take him to heaven when he dies. But understanding sin is a certain level that must be reached before making that rational decision.

V: Yes. That rational understanding of violating God's Law and the penalty incurred is essential. You cannot be saved unless you know you are lost.

The blood covers children until they ratify their choices. Once they do that, then the Law enters, and they die. Spiritual death is what we are discussing. That is Roman 7:9. When the Law enters, I died. Sin is revived and I died. That is the way that works.

The first law was, "Do not eat of this fruit." When Adam disobeyed the Law, sin entered, and he died. By the sin of one man, sin and death entered the whole world, and we all get born with the lock on us because of what he did. If I had a vote, I would have said, "Do not put me in this jeopardy, and do not give me this sin nature." But I did not get to

¹³ Romans 7:9.

¹⁴ Romans 3:23.

¹⁵ Matthew 7:7.

vote; it just got done to me. But the benefit of that involuntary situation is that I was covered by the blood of Jesus (the second Adam) in my infancy, and so even if I had died, I would still have been covered. But then I ratified my old sin nature that Adam gave to me (I do not like it, but I got it, and I ratified it) and ran in that direction for a while.

Christians are not robots. We still have our wills, and we can still say yes to God or no to God. But if you say no to God, there is penalty involved.

The man raised in the Amazon who has never seen or heard the Gospel is without excuse. Romans chapter 1 eliminates all excuses from everybody around the world. If you are a human being and able to think rationally, then you are without excuse, and that proceeds into reprobation. Once you say, "There is no god," you are on the slide toward reprobation that is described in Romans 1.

Missions are very important. We must witness! God's provision for the man in the Amazon is Jesus. His thirst for God is kindled by his awareness of God through the creation. We know the only One who can answer the thirst. If we refuse to take the witness to the people, how will they be saved? Since Jesus is the only Way to be saved, the lie is that the heathen who does not know Jesus will be saved anyway. Thus, the new evangelistic strategy fostered by Satan is that you can get people saved by withholding your witness.

Children need to have a clear understanding of the sin issue. My first son was talking to my wife when he was five years old, and he said, "Mama, are you saved?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Are you going to go to heaven?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Well, am I saved?" She said "No." He said, "Why not?" She began to explain to him what the penalty of sin is, what the gift of God is, and he said, "Well, I want that." He repented of his sin. He said, "I am sorry that I have

disobeyed You God." He prayed the same kind of sinner's prayer that I prayed as an adult.

My second son is smart, but he did not get the concept of sin. He came to me wanting to be baptized, and I said, "You cannot do that. You must be saved first." He responded: "Well, what do you do to get saved?" I said, "You must repent of your sin, and ask the Lord to come live in your heart, forgive you, and make you a new person." "Well, I am ready to do that." But he was skipping over the sin part in order to obtain his desire of baptism so that he could be like everybody else. After some time had passed, and we were at a church in Fort Worth, he asked me again about salvation. I sat down on the sidewalk and pulled a black shoe off of my foot. I said, "Stick out your hand." He did, and I put that shoe in his hand. I said, "That black shoe is sin (your willful disobedience of God), and that sin is on you. There is only one way you can get rid of that sin, and that is to put that shoe (sin) on Jesus. But right now that shoe (sin) is on you. You cannot get loose of that shoe (sin)." He said, "Well, why?" I said, "The things you have done, you owe a penalty for. That shoe is an accounting right there of all that you have done wrong. There is a future penalty, and if you die with that shoe in your hand, you are going to go to hell." He said, "Well, daddy, I want to get rid of this." He finally understood sin's penalty, and received salvation by Jesus.

See, the problem is that some of these kids are raised in a preacher's home, and they begin to hear so much of the language that they begin to mimic that language back. It is tough, to know when a child is truly convicted of sin. It is easy to be totally wrong about the child's understanding. There has to be some real accountability in that area dealing with sin.

The danger for people who have not heard the Gospel ought to put the fear in us, too, because our accountability is severe. If we do

not go to that tribe in Africa or to those remote people, those who have not heard, it is on us that they go to hell. Their blood is on our hands. That is serious, and when we get to the Great White Throne Judgment in the eschatology chapter, you will hear more about our accountability.

General revelation is available to everybody. It is specified in Romans 1 to remove all excuses. General revelation creates an awareness of the existence of God, but special revelation is required for salvation.

Tom: Concerning that we all got the lock, I have Catholic family members who think that infant baptism breaks the lock.

V.: Only the child's rational choice of Jesus will break the lock.

In the origin of sin and guilt, the Augustinian version is that sin and guilt are passed through the physical process of propagation. This version means that the

baby is born guilty, not just with a sin lock, but guilty and headed for hell. If the unbaptized infant dies, it goes to hell.

Now on the other side is the idea that the blood covers that infant's sin until the infant can make a rational choice under the Law. That is the point in which the sin is ratified and **guilt** enters. When that choice happens, you see, then no longer is the blood covering that person. He is on his own.

Infant baptism is the Augustinian way to save the infant that is headed for hell. But rational choice was still needed. How does a baby accomplish rational choice? through the proxy of a godfather. The priest asks the infant, "Do you receive the Lord?" The godfather says, "Yes." So then the baby has responded and made a choice through a proxy. Infant baptism is an erroneous effort to save the infant that cannot make his own rational choice.

Questions on Chapter 6

1. How does pantheism differ from the idea that God is creator?
2. Why is creation good? What does good mean?
3. What is theodicy?
4. Illustrate a dualism and a monism.
5. Illustrate the trichotomous view of man, adding to that the Holy Spirit.
6. Illustrate the body, soul, and spirit of the unsaved man.
7. Illustrate the body, soul, and spirit of the spiritual man.
8. What does it mean to say that humans are responsible?
9. Draw and label the relationship chart.
10. What is the biblical view of man?

Chapter 7

DOCTRINE OF SIN

A LOOK BACK AT REVELATION

Joe: May I ask a question please, before we get started? On the matter of the Doctrine of Revelation, I was trying to find the six kinds; I have general, I have special, I have propositional, I have personal or act.

V: The basic categories of the revelation chart have three under general and three under special. Under general revelation are nature, history, and experience; under special are salvation history, Christ, and Scripture.¹ Remember please that we must hold to all six.

Under Scripture as special revelation is understanding Scripture as propositional revelation (the typical hermeneutic is illumination). Under Christ as special revelation is personal or act revelation (the typical hermeneutic is encounter). Under salvation history the typical hermeneutic is reason. Liberals tend to lower Scripture from its position of supremacy or to use encounter, feelings, or reason as their hermeneutics.

Objective vs. subjective

Talk to me about the difference between subjective inspiration and objective inspiration.

Joe: In subjective God moves the person. In objective He gives His interpretation of His manifestation.

Henry: In subjective God moves the person to do what?

Joe: To write.

V: Very good, Joe! Now, what are the two parts of illumination?

Joe: Subjective and objective.

V: Okay, but go further and name them.

Joe: Understanding and conviction.

V: Yes. Understanding is objective and conviction is subjective. In illumination, there is the encounter accompanied by conviction, but it is tied to the objective understanding. So do not forget that there is subjective encounter in the Doctrine of Propositional Revelation.

What is the difference between *Geschichte* and *Historie*?

Mary: *Geschichte* is interpretation, and *Historie* is just the facts.

V: Good! *Historie* is objective, and *Geschichte* is subjective.

Talk to me about the difference between Propositional Revelation and Personal Revelation.

Mary: In Propositional, God inspires both subjectively and objectively. He moves the person to write, and He gives them the Words. In Personal or Act Revelation, He manifests Himself or His act, and you describe it in your own words. The Scriptures are your descriptions of God's acts in your own words.

V: Good on both. Additionally, Personal or Act Revelation is entirely subjective. Do you know the difference between subjective and objective when we are talking about revelation or sanctification or anything that we might be talking about?

Mary: Subjective is more opinion.

V: Good. It is under the subjects will or opinion as over against facts. Objective is fact.

Concerning subjective, there needs to be a subject, and the subject in all of theology is

¹ See Chapter 1.

usually the interpreting person. If your truth is bound up in your person, then you have a subjective truth. You make your own truth because you are the subject. That is a subjective truth. If you have objective truth, the truth is not bound up in you. It is outside of you, as in God. The truth is separated from you. You stand over against that truth and it judges you. That is the general understanding of the difference between subjective and objective.

How does liberalism and Schleiermacher's feeling hermeneutic work?

Mary: It is totally subjective because it is all feelings oriented.

V: Yes. Where do you find the truth in liberalism?

Ted: In subjective experience.

V: Yes. In liberalism, truth is all bound up in the person and his feelings, which guide his interpretation. If something feels good, then that is truth to the liberal. If it is suppressing him and makes him feel bad, then it is false, and he begins to act upon his own desires, on his own want-to's. That is very subjective, and that is liberalism because there is no anchor. That is what Existentialism is because it excludes all objectivity.

Existential vs. Existentialism

Please note the difference between existential and Existentialism. Existential is an adjective which means that the thing bears on your very existence. When we deal with our theology in this classroom, it is existential for me because if I should have no theology, I would cease to live. My Lord Jesus and His theology are my life. His truth is objective and does not depend on human approval. It is, however, existential because all humans depend on it for life.

Existentialism, on the other hand, is a subjective approach to theology and all "truth." In Existentialism, you describe real-

ity the way you "want" it to be, and basically you confess your reality into being.

Tom: It is a homosexual saying, "God made me this way."

V: A saying like that becomes truth for the homosexual because it is bound up in his own person. It does not reside outside of him as an objective truth. It is bound up in the subject person as his own personal truth.

Sybil: There is a time factor involved in Existentialism. Does it not say something about the present and how truth is only in present time?

V: Yes. So when you are dealing with hard-core objectivity in your theology on a timeline, then all of that objective truth is back in the past. It is already created, already in place. It is the Scriptures. We are going on the basis of that kind of objectivity in our doctrine of revelation.

In the "now" of Existentialism, the truth is not resident objectively in the past. It is coming to you in subjective, present-day lightning-bolt experiences that are customized to your constantly changing desires as you are moving through life in your pilgrimage.

Existentialism has no consideration for past history. All history is a present history, and revelation is a lightning-bolt experience of encounter. When you have that basis for all your truth, then you can have a weaving back and forth kind of path because the truth of today may be the lie of tomorrow or vice versa. We have a Supreme Court today that is using Existentialism in its hermeneutic. The law can change at the whim of the Court without even the members of the court changing their world-views or philosophies. They can just change their minds about the Constitution. The judges exclude themselves from accusation of change by claiming that the meaning of the document changed under the theory of a "living" document. By focusing on the document as living, its meaning is

moved out of the objective past to the subjective present. Then they can get lightning-bolt revelations from a living and ever-changing document. Thus, the change is in the document, not in themselves.

Tim: You can read into it what you want without being guilty of changing the meaning.

V: Yes, that is the Existentialism that is pervasive in our society. All laws, history, and even news are being rewritten to be what liberals think they should be instead of what they are. Without objectivity, everything can be changed by the subjective will of man.

Relevance of Past History

Pete: If it is historical as in originating in the past, that history has to be brought to a functional present in order for it to be existential. If, however, it is just viewed as objective history it is not existential.

V: Very good, Pete. You are now using the adjective existential. Study of the Old Testament is a good example of your objective versus existential description. If the Old Testament is a document that describes events in the past, and we are here in the present reading the Old Testament saying, "Look there what those Jews did. How could they be so ignorant as to do all those terrible things," then that is an objective but not an existential approach to the Old Testament. If you go to the Old Testament the way God intends, then the document has an objective and personally-relevant truth that survives time and bears on your existence. It is objectively anchored in history, and it will never change, but the truth is applicable to everybody whether here today, yesterday, or tomorrow.

Pete: The Mosaic Code is like that.

V: Yes, but many do not accept it. They view it as the Law of the past, but we are here in the present and are, therefore, immune to it because we are under grace. Today you hear

much malignity against the Mosaic Code, such as, it is an attempt at salvation by works. God's Word is perfect and existential for all of us from the get-go to the end.

Betty: That was what Paul was dealing with in Corinthians when he said, "We are no longer under the law; we are under grace." Their response was that by omitting the Law, they could continue to sin.² They were excusing their right to choose not to be existentially involved in the Mosaic Code. They wanted this new freedom.

V: Very good, Betty. I see the same attitudes in our churches. By disconnecting from the Mosaic Code, we get outside of an objective anchor. By getting total freedom, we enter into subjectivity once again.

Jerry: Would you clarify the Word of God as objective or subjective?

V: The Word of God is objective in that it is there over against you. Its source is God Himself. It is objective facts that are going to judge you. Whether you receive and believe it or not, you are still going to be judged by it, and every *jot* and *tittle* of it is going to be fulfilled. The propositions of Scripture contain both objective and subjective components via inspiration. The giving of the interpretation is the objective component. The moving of the writer to write is the subjective component.

At the illumination stage, the Word of God is also both objective and subjective. The objective illumination is in our understanding of the Word. Our subjective illumination is our conviction by the Word and our appropriation of it. What are you going to do with the Word of God at the point of encounter and conviction? Will you take it in and let it become the transformer of your life, the maker of a new person. Will you give it license to form the mind of Christ in you?

² Romans 6:15.

The subjective dimension is what you do with the conviction. The objective dimension is that it is there and made understandable for you. Revelation is God's manifestation, inspiration, and illumination of His Words.

The Law still has a purpose when you are under grace, and that is when you sin. When you sin you need the Law. It helps you to see where you have transgressed. The carnal Christian needs the law to show him that his behavior is outside the lines. The spiritual Christian needs no law.

When you get saved, your being, your ontology, is saved. It is new, it is re-created, it is totally justified, you are covered with the blood of Christ, and you are going to go to heaven. You are a child of God because Jesus fulfilled the Law.

But that is not the end of it. You still have to do some stuff. In the doing of that stuff, you are going to mess up. How do you know where you messed up? There is the conviction of the Holy Spirit, but there is the Word of God that says, "Do this," and "Do not do this." If you foul up on the "Do this," that is the sin of omission. If you foul up on the "Do not do this," that is the sin of commission.

The Law (both Mosaic and Grace) tells you these things. You have Old Testament Law, the Mosaic Code, and you have New Testament Law. There are many commandments in New Testament Law that we are not obeying. We need to see our behavior in relation to the various commandments and prohibitions.

What we are trying to learn here in our discussion tonight is sin. I gave you a handout³ from which I will lecture about sin. However, I think that I am probably not as expert talking about sin as you are. Maybe some of you need to lecture me (laughter throughout the class).

³ Appendix C is a copy of the handout.

Ontology

Jerry: Can you take a minute to deal more specifically with "ontological"?

V: Ontological deals with your existence or your being. You are saved in your being, your personhood. Your being is perfect. You cannot have it more perfect than you are. That is a signed, sealed, and delivered deal that the Lord bought for you. Your ontology is totally justified and complete, and you are going to go to heaven. It is paid for. It is all done. But your function, your behavior, your actions are the part that you contribute into this big, gigantic doctrine. That part, the behavior part, is under your control, and it is supposed to measure up to your ontology. The Lord says (1) deny yourself; (2) pick up your cross, and (3) follow me.⁴ What we do is we stumble around; we do not follow Him, we do not deny ourselves, we do not pick up our crosses, or we will deny ourselves for a minute and a half, and pick up the cross but find it heavy and throw it down. We really do not want to follow Him because where He goes is uncomfortable. We just turn around and go our own way, and say, Lord, bless what I am doing (i.e. Lord, follow me). That is all sin! The Lord has paid your ontological penalty for it, but there are going to be consequences for your behavior. Those consequences are lost rewards.

What you have to do now is find out how to maximize your stewardship. You have an investment from God, and He says, "Use it to make the most profit you can throughout the rest of your life, and bring honor and glory to me." That is your profitability. When you do that, He not only gets the honor and the glory for Himself, but He turns around and says, "I am going to share all this honor and glory back with you to reward you." You do not deserve it because you are a sinner in behavior. You are stumbling around, throw-

⁴ Matthew 16:24.

ing down your crosses, and bumping people with your crosses and creating havoc.

The judgment of the stewards with the five talents, two talents, and one talent⁵ is about stewardship and how God is expecting a profit. If He invested His blood in you, why did He do that? He did that to save you from hell and into life. We get profit by getting life, and He gets profit by getting us as helpers in His Mission of saving others.

Jack: John 15:16 says, “You do not choose me but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.” I now see that obedience is a prerequisite for blessings.

V: Yes, God gives blessing for obedience and discipline for disobedience. He is expecting no less than self-denying, cross-bearing, fellowship!

DOCTRINE OF SIN

There are three words that sin fits into: act, attitude, and state. The sin act is when your behavior is disobedience to God. Scriptural mandates must be obeyed. God’s commandments are expressions of God’s will, and they manifest the character of God. The Mosaic Law and all of the laws of the New Testament are examples.

Doing good can be sinful in two ways. One is when your attitude or motive is wrong, and the other is when replacing God’s best with your idea of good. An example of the former would be when you are seeking to do something good, such as giving alms to the poor in the sight of others, in order to get the applause of men. An example of the latter would be when you go to church to pray when He told you to go minister the Gospel to a neighbor.

Attitude is the condition of the heart. Behavior issues out of the attitude of your heart. A Christian who is carrying the Lord’s banner and being mean and hurtful to someone has a sinful condition of the heart. He is trying to wear an external banner, but the internal banner is shouting out loud and clear that there is something wrong with his heart. His behavior is issuing out of the condition of his heart. That person is a hypocrite because his behavior does not match his ontology.

The state of sin has two parts to it; we have already talked about this at length, so I will not talk much about it here. There is the state of being, i.e. ontology, and the state of function. If your state of being is in a state of sin, you are lost. When saved, your being is washed with the blood of Christ. As soon as you receive the Lord and His forgiveness, you are justified and washed clean; your whole being is washed clean.

When your state of being has been cleansed, you must still deal with your state of function. The state of a Christian’s function, i.e. relationships, actions, or behavior, can still be dysfunctional.

When being and action are not identical, then you have hypocrisy. Your behavior stands under the judgment of your being. You know how you teach your children that they have a heritage that you have given to them, and then when they behave unseemly, you say, “You are not behaving like a Vinson. You are not behaving at all like who you are.” The Lord does that, too. He comes to us and says, “You are not behaving like a Christian.”

When the world sees us behaving unseemly they say, “Hypocrite” because the function or behavior does not match up with the ontology. Hypocrisy is that condition that we call carnality. When they do match up, then you are in the Spirit. When your behavior reflects your heart that has been washed with the blood of Jesus, you are in the Spirit. You can be in the Spirit washing

⁵ Matthew 25:14-30

dishes, digging a hole, working away at your job, or in any walk of life as long as your behavior reflects the heart condition of a washed heart.

Mary: Is it possible in today's world that you can be in the Spirit, but the world still sees something wrong in you because the world does not understand the way we are supposed to be?

V: Yes, it is getting worse by the minute. We are coming under condemnation even though we are doing the right thing. That is what happened to Jesus. You are going to come under condemnation, and that condemnation is worsening more and more and more all over the world.

Holiness

Basically you are in one of three conditions: in sin, completely in holiness (ontologically and behaviorally), or ontologically holy but behaviorally sinful.

Holiness means that God has cleansed you and set you aside to be used for His purposes. When that happens, you cannot be selfish because once you become selfish, you are placing yourself into your own self-use. You are then setting your own agenda and going your own way. Those ways can be mighty fine ways, ways that are accepted across the world in every church as being a perfect, holy way, but that is not necessarily holy. Holiness means that the Christian is being used by God for His purposes. When you have been set-aside for His purposes, He means to use you for His purposes. When you move outside of His purposes, it can be moving into some mighty fine areas, but that is not holiness. You must understand this!

Mary: According to that definition holiness for your actions may not be holiness for me and vice versa?

V: That is correct because God is the Boss, and He is going to use you for His

purposes. He is going to use me for His purposes. He has equipped you for His purposes. He has shaped you, brought you to this point in time out of a specific context, given you spiritual gifts and natural talents, and He is going to put all that together and use you to do ministry in His world that only you can do.

Obedying all of the "thou shalt not's," clean living, having a career, going to college to get a degree, going to seminary, and doing all manner of wonderful ministry is not necessarily holiness. All of it could be from your own designs.

The prevalent understanding across America is that holiness is a saved person who keeps himself clean from sins of commission, goes to church, and is a good citizen, father, husband, and employee. That is not holiness. Holy actions cannot be separated from obedience. Every Christian is holy in his being. Why? because he had no part in achieving it. God did that part. God is awesomely good because He takes care of all ontological holiness. But we have our function to perform. Our behavior must conform to God's purpose for us. He has a plan for each of us to perform. Our behavior is to be under the control of Jesus Christ. He is our Lord!

Romans speaks against allowing anyone besides the Lord to judge our behavior. It says, "Why do you judge another man's servant?"⁶ You and I stand or fall under the judgment of our Lord, Jesus Christ. So God has a plan for each one of us. If you fall outside of God's plan for you, no matter how good you are doing, how wonderful a life that you have, that is sin, not holiness.

Every one of our pilgrimages will be *kenotic* if they are holy. Understand that *kenosis* also means that you are to deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow the

⁶ Romans 14:4.

Lord, or you cannot be His disciple.⁷ If *agape* love is unilateral sacrifice for the welfare of another, then that is also required by *kenosis* and holiness. It is a loving of God so much that you give yourself to Him. *Agape* describes the *kenotic* and holy kind of pilgrimage. It is sacrificial. It is not self-indulgent and not for your own benefit. It is sacrifice for the benefit of others.

The burden for the lost gives you pain. You go to bed with the burden on you. You wake and arise the next morning with the burden on you. Why do you suffer under this burden? Because it is the burden that Jesus bore. “I came to seek and to save that which was lost,”⁸ is the mission of God. He gives that same mission to us. However the heavy burden becomes light when we become yoked with Jesus and all His Power.⁹

Kenotic Love

He says, “Now get out there and seek and save those which are lost.” You cannot do the actual saving, but you have the keys to the kingdom in your hands, and you can participate in God’s saving actions. That is the sacrificial walk, and it is built around *agape*. You can begin to think how *agape* and *kenosis* are linked. When you are expressing *agape*, the *kenosis* is your pilgrimage. In this love, you have a person sacrificing self for the welfare of the other person (see Chart 7.1).

There is another kind of love, *phileo* love. *Phileo* is friendship love. You do something good for a person, and that person completes the cycle by reciprocating (see Chart 7.2). The cycles are act and response.

This kind of love can be found even in the workplace. When you report to work in the morning, you say, “Hey, there, how are you. Did you have a good weekend? Did you

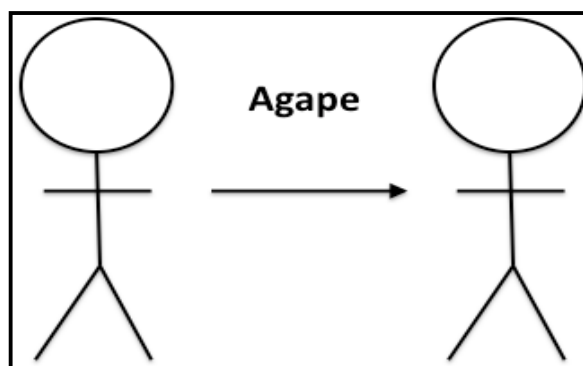


Chart 7.1

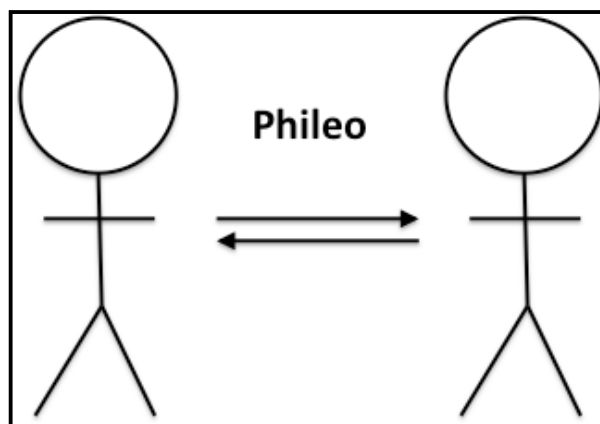


Chart 7.2

enjoy that outing we had the other night?” and they say, “Yes, I did. Did you? How are your children?” You see that is friendship.

What do you do when you go in and say, “Hi! How are you doing?” And he just frowns at you, does not even speak, or you open the door for somebody, and he just walks on through and does not even acknowledge your act. That is not *phileo*. Friendship love is where one person acts in favor, and the other person responds in kind. It is continuous and mutual.

Phileo, as in Philadelphia, is brotherly love. Now *phileo* is not *agape*. What is *agape*? It is unconditional and self sacrificial. *Agape* does not demand a response. When we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.¹⁰ Now if you take out one vector from *phileo*, then

⁷ Mark 8:34.

⁸ Luke 19:10.

⁹ Matthew 11:29-30.

¹⁰ Romans 5:8.

phileo ceases to exist, and the only thing left that could possibly occur and still be called love is *agape*.

When the reciprocal action is missing, but you keep doing sacrificial good unto another, that is *agape* (see Chart 7.1). But when they do respond, and we certainly want them to respond, then we have either *phileo* or bilateral *agape*.

Bilateral *agape* looks like *phileo*, but both vectors are *agape* because reciprocity is not demanded. When Jesus said that He would no longer call us servants, but friends, He was referring to bilateral *agape*. Our vector is sacrificial obedience. His vector is total sacrifice. Both vectors expect nothing in return. However, when there is reciprocity, then you have “divine” friendship—bilateral *agape*.

The third kind of love is *eros*. *Eros* is loving yourself through another person (see Chart 7.3). You use that person. This is an upside-down *kenosis* in which you are climbing. What makes a good rung? another Christian. Step on him, climb on up. One person is using another person for his own advantage. That is the climb. That is sacrificing the other person for yourself.

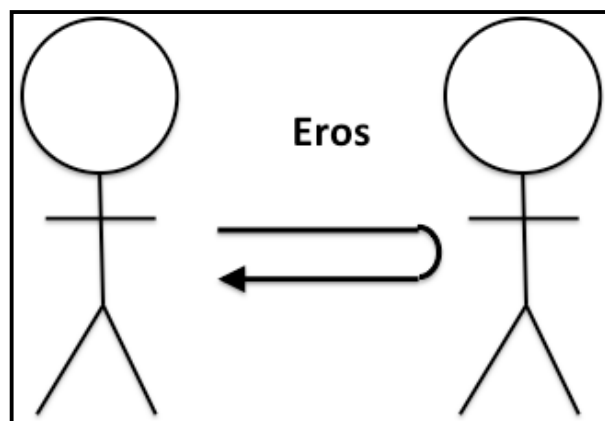


Chart 7.3

Agape love is sacrificing self for the other person, and that is required by *kenosis* and holiness. *Eros* love is your sacrificing someone else for yourself. *Phileo* is something we

want while we are going through *agape*, but we may not get it. We may have to go through our whole life without it.

Eros is an upside-down *kenosis*, *agape* is *kenosis*, and *phileo* is a blessing that you hope to receive along the way, but you may not.

Mary: Whenever Christ asked, “Peter, do you *agape* me?”¹¹ And Peter replied, “Lord, I *phileo* you.” Did it take him until the day of Pentecost to get to the point he could say, “I *agape* you?”

V: Yes, because *agape* is sacrificial. We need the Spirit’s empowerment to do so.

The Lord sacrificed for Peter, but Peter denied being His friend or even knowing the Lord? Staying true to his friend is reciprocity. When the Lord said, “Do you even *phileo* me?” Peter was embarrassed.

Please see how love applies in holiness. Sin is selfishness, self-drive, self-control, self-centeredness, get it for self. That is not holiness, and if it is not holiness, then it is sin. No matter how pretty the picture is that you paint, it is sin if you are not being spent by God. Holiness means that God spends you the way He wants to spend you.

Let us just say that you are God’s money. There you are, you present yourself as an offering to the Lord, and He says, “I think I am going to spend this money, my resources, by allowing him to be burned at the stake to promote my witness.” Are you ready to be burned? What if He says, “These are my resources, and I need someone to go into Indonesia and face the trials in Indonesia right now where Christians are being killed.” If God is Boss, He can say, “Okay, I choose to spend you in Indonesia. You will die there for your faith, to show your love for Me, but I am going to reward you in eternity beyond your wildest dreams.”

¹¹ John 21:15-17.

Can He spend you? If He can spend you anyway He wants to, you are holy not only ontologically but also in your will. If you are busy spending yourself, you are involved in *eros*, the upside down *kenosis*. This is hard stuff. He wants you to present yourself as a living sacrifice. He is calling you. He is calling us, every one of us: “Will you be my slave? I have paid for you, I have an investment in you. I have given you all of the gifts. Your life, the very breath that you have right now is a gift from Me. You are mine. Can I use you?” What will you answer?

Holiness in our behavior is critical for us. The sin of commission is primary in our thoughts of sin, but we could be committing the sin of omission, which is when you fail to obey the Lord in His sending and spending of you as He sees fit. The sin of omission is a major problem in the church. I take that back; it used to be. Today we have the sin of commission on the upswing with lottery tickets, pornography, homosexuality, abortion, adultery, and divorce. A generation or two ago it was the sin of omission that was the major problem.

Words That Mean Sin

Now I am going to discuss the many words that God uses to describe sin. There are other words that describe sin, and some are used in the Bible, but these frequently used words are the ones I am giving you.

1. Sin: *adikia*

Reference	Meaning
Romans 1:18; Hebrews 10:20	Injustice; to violate the law and justice. Unrighteousness

Romans

1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

That underlined word unrighteousness is *adikia*. When it means injustice, it indicates that you are holding the truth in injustice, i.e. you know the truth while doing injustice to that truth. To hold the truth in unrighteousness is to hold it in injustice. You are not acting justly, but you are holding the word, the truth, to your bosom but acting contrary to it.

2. Sin: *hamartia*

Reference	Meaning
1 John 5:16	Sin (wander from the path), miss the mark.

Hamartia is the most common word for sin. Most of the time it is translated as the three-letter word sin. It means to wander from the path or miss the mark.

1 John

5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin [which is] not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Four times in that one verse *hamartia* is used. This is to wander from the path. You need to see that missing the mark or wandering from the path is the one most of us are going to be involved in because you are trying to stay on the path. You love the Lord, and you are trying to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Him. Wherever He goes, you are right there. But there is deception that comes along, and as you are following the Lord, very intently focused on where He is going, a carrot will come by and distract you. You take one step off path, and you have missed the mark or wandered from the path. That is *hamartia*. So then you come to your senses, you repent, and you get back on the path. But deception will come along again and pull you off the path when you are not alert. That is why you need to get your sleep, take care of your bodies, do those things that keep you alert, and be ready

because your spirit is inseparable from your body. Your soul, your body, and your spirit are all connected and interrelated. If you get down or get sick, you can do some stupid things.

3. Sin: *anomia*

Reference	Meaning
Romans 6:19	Lawlessness; violate law; iniquity

Whenever you see a Greek word that begins with an “a,” that prefix is used to reverse the meaning. If you have a word that means law, and you put an “a” in front of it, that means anti-law or lawlessness. *Nomos* is law; *anomia* is lawlessness. In the first word in our list *adikia*, *dikia* is justice, *adikia* is injustice. That is the reversal, the “a” of privation. Thus, *anomia* means lawlessness, and it is basically to violate the law. Anti-christ is the man of lawlessness.

Romans

6:19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Doing your own thing by following your flesh is just the opposite of holiness. It is iniquity unto iniquity or lawlessness unto lawlessness (*anomia* unto *anomia*).

4. Sin: *apistia*

Reference	Meaning
Romans 3:3	Unbelief; unfaith, malignant unbelief.

Apistia is unbelief, and this again has the “a” of reversal. *Pistis* is faith, so *apistia* is unfaith. This is a malignant kind of unbelief. It is not the kind where you do not understand something, and you have doubts. This is when you understand something, and you

reject it. It is malicious, evil, and opposes God’s Truth.

Romans

3:3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

Everyone of you have experienced the situation in which you have shown somebody or taught or preached from the pulpit about what God has said, and somebody says, “Well, I do not believe that.” Does their unbelief make God’s Word go away? It does not. It is still there. Their unbelief is malignant. It affects them, not the Word.

5. Sin: *asebeia*

Sin	Reference
2 Timothy 2:16	Ungodliness; irreverent; and impious toward God

I do not know the root of this word. I do not know if the “a” is the “a” of privation or not, but this word is ungodliness. It is irreverent, and impious toward God.

Let me give you an example of impiety. Let us say you have your hat on, and you are fixing to pray to God. It is piety to remove the hat. Impiety is to leave it on and kick back.

Esther refused to approach the king unless he invited her, and then she approached with great fear and respect. We are not talking about God in Esther’s case; we are talking about an earthly king. There needs to be that kind of reverence for God. God is God. When you go to Him, you are going to the King of kings. Your approach should not be taken lightly. Using the Lord’s name in vain is another example of irreverence.

2 Timothy

2:16 But shun profane [and] vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

6. Sin: *aselgeia*

Reference	Meaning
Jude 4	Licentiousness; debauchery; sensuality. Opposite of continence; unbridled lust; lasciviousness

Once again I do not know whether this is an “a” of privation or not. I am not familiar with *selgeia*. *Aselgeia* means licentiousness, debauchery, sensuality. It is the opposite of continence. It is unbridled lust or lasciviousness. Continence means to restrain yourself, i.e. not allow yourself to do the things you might want to do.

Jude

1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lasciviousness is *aselgeia*, “turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness” or debauchery, unbridled lust. License also falls into this category.

7. Sin: *epithumía*

Reference	Meaning
James 1:14	Lust or inordinate desire for the forbidden.

Thumía comes from the word *thumos* that means to breathe heavily, like panting. *Epithumía* is when you breathe heavily “over” a thing. It means to have lust or inordinate desire for the forbidden. Adultery, homosexuality, material possessions, career, and all temporal things could be objects of lust.

James

1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

That word lust is *epithumía*.

8. Sin: *echthra*

Reference	Meaning
Romans 8:7; James 4:4	enmity; hostility; hatred

Echthra is the word for enmity that means hostility or hostile feelings and also hatred.

Last week we talked about carnality and how that looks when you are obeying the lust of the flesh. It has the look of lostness. You remember the lost man has a lock between his mind and his body. He is subservient to the flesh, i.e. carnal.

Romans

8:7 Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

James

4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

That is why when Peter was urging Christ not to go to Jerusalem, the Lord said, “Get thee behind me, Satan. You do not esteem the things that be of God but the things that be of man.”¹² That is being a friend of the world.

9. Sin: *kakía*

Reference	Meaning
1 Peter 2:16	Malice; ill will; desire to injure; evil character or disposition

Kakía is translated most times as malice. It is ill will or desire to injure. It is an evil character or disposition. This sin is found in gossip and slander.

1 Peter

2:16 As free, and not using [your] liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

¹² Matthew 16:23.

Use your freedom to be a servant, not to be in *kakia*, or malice.

10. Sin: *parabasis*

Reference	Meaning
Romans 4:15	Transgression; overstep bounds of ratified law

Parabasis is transgression, to overstep the bounds of ratified law. Let us say that you know the path that God is describing and the established bounds. Leaving the path is *parabasis*, to step outside of the established bounds. Or if you are inside of a behavior pattern, and you know that you are not supposed to move outside of it, then if you go across the line, that is *parabasis*, that is transgression, to cross the line, to go outside of the bounds.

Romans

4:15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, [there is] no transgression.

Why we still have the Law is because we need to know the boundary. When you are carnal you need to know when you cross the bounds. That is when the Law says, “Hey, you are outside the bounds!” That you crossed that boundary is what the Law tells you. There is more Law in the Gospel than there is in the Old Testament because you are liable to cross the bounds with your next thought. 1 John 1 tells us that if we say that we have no sin, we are liars.

11. Sin: *poneria*

Reference	Meaning
1 Corinthians 5:8	Wickedness, maliciousness; evil purposes and desires from depravity

Poneria, this word means wickedness, maliciousness, evil purposes and desires from depravity.

When I was taking Greek, I only learned two words for sin, *poneria* and *hamartia*. The

way I would remember *poneria* is that I thought of it as a pony. Get on the pony and ride into sin. A person who is going to be involved in sin gallops to his sin.

1 Corinthians

5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened [bread] of sincerity and truth.

The difference here between *kakia* which is malice, evil character, and a desire to injure and *poneria* which is wickedness, malice, evil purposes, and depraved desires is that *kakia* would be a stepping stone toward *poneria*, depravity. *Poneria* would result from a spiraling down into sin. You sink down, down into depravity as described in Romans 1. You become so depraved that you have *kakia* for those who have not sunk down into sin with you. That is what I think He means when He says, “Turn you over to the depraved mind.”¹³

1 Corinthians

5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened [bread] of sincerity and truth.

In this one passage you have two words: (1) *Kakia* which is the leaven of “malice,” and (2) *poneria*, wickedness. There is progression right there in the one verse.

Here are eleven different words that God uses for sin. It is a very extensive list. You preachers, everybody in your congregation is involved in one of these words including yourself. Everybody reading this book has a problem with one of these words.

What makes us aware we are sinners?

- 1 Awareness is in God’s presence. Isaiah 6:5; Luke 5:1-11.
2. By hearing the Gospel and the Law. Romans 3:20 and 23.

¹³ Roman 1:28.

3. Our guilt is truly known in forgiveness.

Once you have been forgiven, then you can begin to say, "What a wretch I was." Until that happens you cannot know how

guilty you are. Basically this is recognizing what you have been forgiven from.

Appendix C is a handout about sin given by the professor to his class.

Questions for Chapter 7

1. Illustrate and explain *agape* (love).
2. Illustrate and explain *phileo*.
3. Illustrate and explain *eros*.
4. Illustrate and explain bilateral *agape*.
5. What makes us aware that we are sinners?
6. List the Greek words for sin, giving the general meaning of each.

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Chapter 8

TRIANGLE OF CHRISTIAN PIETY

1 Corinthians 13 describes the triangle of piety. Dr. John Kiwiet, my major professor, taught me this theological model. As an aside, Dr. Kiwiet is responsible for moving me into doing theology with graphical models.

1. Love is essential. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

1 Corinthians

13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become [as] sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

13:2 And though I have [the gift of] prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

13:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed [the poor], and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

- a. Faith without love is nothing. 13:1-2
- b. Works without love is nothing. 13:3

God says clearly that love is essential. The love being discussed here is the *agape* kind of love that is sacrificial. We looked at that kind of love in the last lesson, and we said that it was a definition basically of the *kenosis*. The *kenosis* is the sacrifice, the self-denial, the going down, and that is basically what *agape* love is. It is a unilateral sacrifice for the welfare of others, not for your own welfare. As welfare for the other person, *Agape* love is essential to make faith and good works profitable. Faith and good works, though good things, need *agape* in order to be profitable to the one who had the faith and does the good works.

2. Love is effectual. 13:4-7

1 Corinthians

13:4 Charity suffereth long, [and] is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

- a. Pride is denied by love. 13:4
- b. Evil is resisted and truth is accepted by love. 13:5-6
- c. Love enables endurance. 13:7

I want you to see something about truth's being accepted (2b). Many times truth is hard to accept. We deny it, and we fight against it. We do a lot of mental tricks to put it down or separate ourselves from it. Love, however, is sacrificial, and when you have that *kenotic* pilgrimage with the idea of self-sacrificing, it makes you much more easily accepting of the truth because you do not have an axe to grind, and you are not trying to create your own truth.

Love, is sacrificial. It is a selflessness, and when you are selfless, you can accept the truth even when it cuts, even if it goes against your pet things. The truth can be received because of love. It helps me to know that love has an actual part in the acceptance of truth (faith).

3. Love is eternal. 13:8-13.

1 Corinthians

13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall fail; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall vanish away.

13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these [is] charity

- a. Knowledge and prophecy are partial. 13:8-10
- b. A child's knowledge and words serve as an illustration of the temporary nature of knowledge and prophecy. 13:11
- c. Temporal knowledge is mediate knowledge, whereas eschatological knowledge will be immediate. 13:12
- d. The present piety is faith, hope, and love. 13:13

I want to go back to subpart 3.c. which is mediate versus immediate knowledge. If you had mediate knowledge of me, it would be through a medium. That medium could be my writings or my speakings or such things. Immediate knowledge is without a medium. It is knowledge that is touching. It is even closer than first hand.

We have mediate knowledge of God right now, and that mediate knowledge comes through Scripture and testimonies and that sort of thing. There is going to come a time when we will see Him in the same way that He sees us. He sees us immediately. There is no medium through which He sees us. We see Him through a glass darkly, and that glass darkly is because there is a medium involved. We have help, aids, to see Him, but even when we see Him, it is not an immediate seeing.

Partly what we have in the marriage relationship is an immediate knowledge between a man and a woman because there is a one-flesh relationship. That is an immediate knowledge. But for the most part the only way you can know another person is through a means, and that means, or medium, would be through his/her words, through his/her actions, through a variety of things. You can get a glimpse of somebody, but you cannot see his or her heart.

Joe: Would knowing somebody through reading his or her book be mediate knowledge?

V: Yes, that knowing of the author would be mediate knowledge.

Henry: But for me to sit here and look at you, and you look at me, that is immediate.

V: Yes, but it is immediate at the physical level. That is not as immediate as we are going to have in the end times. The immediate we are going to have in the end times is going to even surpass the one-flesh relationship between the husband and the wife. It will be at the spiritual level.

Mary: Our knowledge of Christ is mediate?

V: Mostly. But there is the encounter that we have. Over in the illumination part of Revelation, we have the conviction and the understanding. In that conviction part there is an immediate encounter, but that immediate encounter is only partial because it comes in the understanding.

In the eschaton, there is going to be an immediate knowing that is going to surpass even the spiritual encounter that you have with Jesus today. We will know just as we are known,¹ and that points to an exciting time in your future life. You know how you hunger and thirst after God? You are coming to a time when that hunger and thirst will be met. You cannot even imagine, but try to think along these lines because you are going to know Him in the same way He knows you now.

Ted: The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in my life right now, is that immediate? I am saved; I have eternal life now.

V: Your knowledge is immediate but partial. You recognize His voice because you do know Him. But your knowledge is not yet complete. You will not know Him as He knows you until we come to the eschaton. You know how right now you have fellowship with God that just thrills you so much that you

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:12.

can hardly wait until the next time? When we get to the eschaton, that thrill is going to be surpassed, and it is going to be continuous.

Paul: I believe that is what you were talking about earlier about the marriage. That spiritual marriage goes all the way to the end where we are the bride of Christ.

V: Yes, and the one-flesh concept will change to the one-spirit idea. I am in Him, and He is in me, and I am going to know Him as He knows me.

PRESENT PIETY

Present piety is composed of faith, hope, and love. The piety in the eschaton will be love only. But right now we have to deal with faith and hope as well. All three elements of piety must be balanced in our lives (see Chart 8.1).

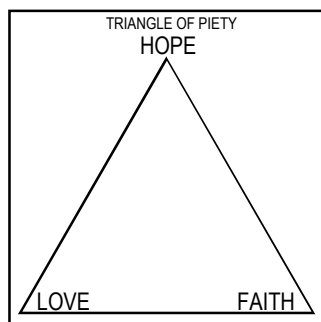


Chart 8.1

Piety is a good, doctrinal word, but we have attached a lot of baggage to it over the centuries. The most notable baggage is that to be pious now means a self-righteous approach to Christianity. That is not what piety means. Piety is your approach to your Christian pilgrimage. Piety includes the *kenosis*, love, transcendence, and holiness the moral quality. All of these things enter into piety. Piety would be the larger umbrella term for the **character** of your pilgrimage, your peculiar approach to Christianity.

Piety is described in the last verse of 1 Corinthians 13 which says that now there are faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love because it is eternal. Faith and hope drop away, but right now they are present, and they are essential for a good doctrine of piety and a good way to do your pilgrimage.

What you need to see is what these words mean and how the Lord did His piety and how we do our piety. Each Christian is different. You have a piety that is peculiar to you, and if you are going to have good relationships with the peculiar people in your church, then you need to be able to see that there is a righteous normalcy about that peculiarity. We are not all alike. We make up the body of Christ, and there are a lot of differences in us, and each of us is peculiar in our own way.

The solution to achieving fellowship is not to throw the peculiar one out, nor is it to conform. It is to rejoice in that peculiarity, and to let that person begin to bring those aspects into the corporate piety. Each church has a corporate piety.

Faith

The first element of piety is faith. Faith has to do with a knowledge. You have to know something in order to believe it. Our understanding of faith is to believe something. We have to know it. Knowledge is the beginning of faith. So, I am going to attach it to the piety triangle (see Chart 8.1.1).

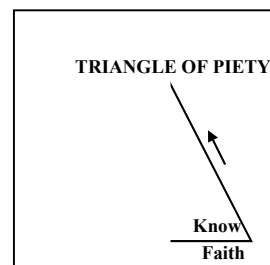


Chart 8.1.1

Hope

Now we move to hope, and hoping is the doing or the obedience part of the pilgrimage (see Chart 8.1.2). You have to know something in

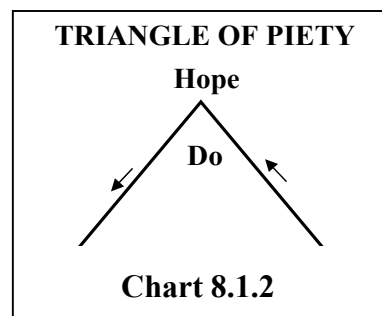
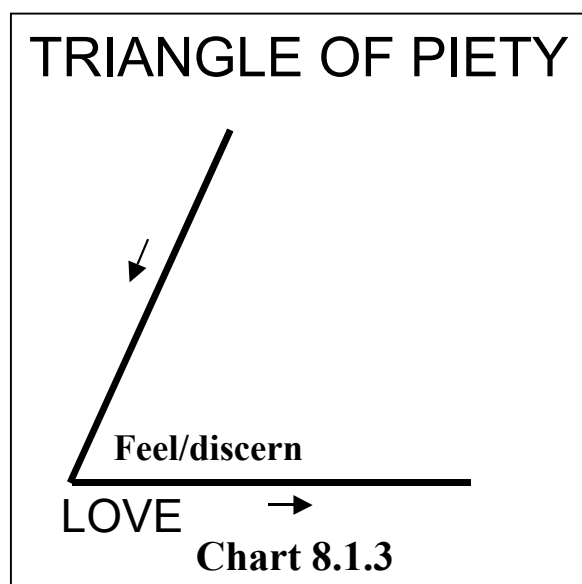


Chart 8.1.2

order to do it. You know first, then you do it, and then you feel as a result.

Love

Feel is not a bad word if it is not the basis of your theology. Feeling and discerning is the interpretation of love in the triangle of piety. This love is not the “do” kind of love. It is the “result” of the do. Resultant love completes the cycle (see Chart 8.1.3).



You start on the knowledge side of the Triangle of Piety by knowing the truth. Next, you do the truth that you know. Lastly, God confirms the truth through an expanded discernment that He gives you out of His confirming and affirming love (see Chart 8.2).

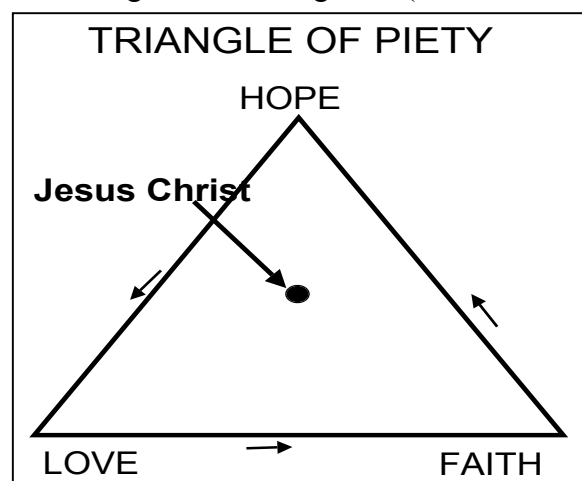


Chart 8.2

Then you cycle around again, and you know more truth. You do that which you know, and God confirms you and gives you additional discernment which enables additional knowledge.

You can read the same Scripture as a child, and you read with some minuscule understanding, but you do that part which you know, and it is confirmed in you. Then God will give you more feeling of discernment. The next cycle on the same verse, you know more about it. You begin to implement new knowledge, and there is more confirmation and discernment given to you. You cycle around in the piety triangle (spiraling up in Christian growth), and soon you can see the *kenosis* when many people cannot see it even when it is described to them in the book of Philippians. Why? because they are not doing that which they know.

BALANCED PIETY

The foregoing describes the doctrine of piety, and if you were to look at the piety of Jesus Christ, He would be in the very center of this triangle, completely balanced (see Chart 8.2). He knows the mind of God. He does the will of God. God confirms in Him what He is doing, and He cycles through again and again and again. There is balance in His life with all three parts not skewed out of balance, but in perfect balance so that He is doing exactly what He knows. He is not doing just part of what He knows, but doing all of what He knows, and feeling confirmed by the Father and the Spirit to give Him additional information, additional charges, additional things to do.

When you do the truth that you know, you will feel confirmed and given confirmation and discernment by God. Christian piety is a growth cycle that we are to achieve by rotating through all three corners of piety.

You need to see that we should begin at faith and proceed *counter clockwise* in the

direction of hope. You start with the Bible, something beyond you. When you know and believe a truth in the Bible, then you are responsible to do that truth, to shape your life around that truth. That is a counter-clockwise move on this piety model.

You can change the direction on this same piety model, but you become liberal. If you start with love, then you are a liberal. If you start with what you feel, then you have a feeling hermeneutic, and you are back into Schleiermacher, and you do not have any objective standard truth. Even if you start with faith and go to love, your actions will result from what feels good. Then you will be operating out of feelings, and how you see the Word will be shaped according to your prejudices. The result will be that you will cycle through that Word again building prejudice upon prejudice.

We see this all the time in liberals and sometimes in ourselves. They have the right triangle, but the wrong direction. You need to see now that if you start with the Word of God, and study it, *know* it, and *do* it, God will confirm it in you and give you understanding and *discernment* so that you can grow. As long as you *do* what truth you know, God will give you growth.

Here is what we do as a Baptist denomination. We know, we know, we study, go to Bible studies, and we get all this knowledge, and we parade it around, but what do we do? We go to another Bible study to get some more knowledge. We skip all of the doing part and jump over to the love corner, and say, “Oh, did you get the blessing?” “Oh, I got the blessing.” Then we go to the next Bible study and get some more blessing. We bounce back and forth like a ping-pong ball, and we never “do” a thing that we have known. Instead, we do only what feels good. Once you leave off the “do,” you have a perversion in your piety, and you come under condemna-

tion because if you know the truth and do not do it, to you it is sin.²

On the top level of Chart 8.3, you have faith and hope, but you have no love. Then the Bible indicates that your works have no value (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

On the second level you have hope and love, but you do not have any faith. This is not pleasing to God. “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”³

On the bottom level there is faith and love without hope. On this one there is a whole pile of problems. If hope is missing, you cannot be a friend of Jesus (John 15:14). There is no happiness (John 13:17). You have a false love if you do not have the obedience (John 14:15, 21, and 23). If you do not have the doing, then all that you can give Him is all of this present-day lip-service love. Your faith is dead (James 2:20). If you have all of the wonderful things under faith and love (you can memorize the whole Bible and sincerely rejoice in your salvation), but if you do not put the “do” to it, your piety is worthless. It is dead faith. All of this lip service is worthless without the actual doing. There must be the doing part to complete this triangle of piety.

FAITH	HOPE	LOVE	
☒	☒	☐	No value to God (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)
☐	☒	☒	Not pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6)
☒	☐	☒	No friend to Jesus (John 15:14) No happiness (John 13:17) False love (John 14:15, 21, 23) Dead faith (James 2:20)

Chart 8.3

Carl: Let me give you a good example of what you are talking about—our youth group had a foreign exchange student from China. He knew the Bible to the point of memorizing

² James 4:17.

³ Hebrews 11:6.

the book of Mark, but he hated it and thought it to be an evil textbook.

V: He is cold, but many of our church members are lukewarm because they do not do the Scriptures (see Revelation 3:15-16).

There is the promise in John 15 that Jesus will let us be His friends, and it goes something like this: You are no longer servants of mine because you have done everything that I have told you to do, and now I call you friends (John 15:15). Friendship with Jesus is an important thing, and that is what I want you to have. Friendship with Jesus must go beyond our lip service Christianity!

John

15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

In this life you have the opportunity to be called a friend by Jesus, but it depends on your obeying Him. To be His friend requires that you be His servant-friend. You can be a servant only, and you can be a servant-friend, but you cannot be a friend only. Thus when He calls you servant, you are on the way to friendship. When He calls you friend, you are also His servant. Obedience is not only the key to being called a friend, but also it is the key to **knowing** what Jesus knows from the Father. You see obedience is the catalyst, to completing the cycle. When you actually do what God has told you to do, there is the confirmation, giving you additional knowledge and insight into the mind of Christ, and no longer are you doing things for which you do not know the reason.

When you see a commandment in the Bible, and it has what you ought to do and what you ought not to do, the beginning of discipleship is obeying that commandment even though you may not understand the reason behind it. But as you begin to obey, His mind will come to you, and He will begin to tell you what His plan is. He only does that

to friends. But you have to start off as a bondservant and obey regardless of understanding.

You do what you know. As long as you know it, you must do it. And as you do that, the completion of the cycle will come around, and He will give you additional knowledge and understanding, and that will expand your ability to get to a new level even in the same Scripture. He is going to give you additional Scriptures, and you are going to begin to grow exponentially. If you know a verse and you do that verse, He will give you additional understanding of that one verse. Pretty soon the mind of Christ begins to consume you. Pretty soon you begin to think like He does, and the *Missio Dei* becomes your mission because you are His friend. He says, "I came to seek and to save that which is lost."⁴ You too will be seeking the saving of those who are lost because you are His friend.

It is important that our Christian Piety be completed. It needs to be balanced. The bad news is this: every one of us is peculiar. We are not as balanced as Jesus was. You know how a tire bumps along when it gets out of balance? Well, every one of us is bumping along. But if we are all bumping along together, pretty soon the whole begins to smooth out. You get all four tires out of balance, then they are all bumping the same way, and it gets very rough. But some of the time they bump in opposite ways, and the ride smooths out because balance is achieved via opposing out-of-balances.

APOSTOLIC EXAMPLES OF PIETY

Now I want to show you the three kinds of Christian piety exemplified by the three apostles who are good examples for understanding "out of balance." These guys are out of balance, but they are closer to balance than we

⁴ Luke 19:10

are. This serves to give us understanding as to what is out of balance.

Paul

The first model is that of Paul. Paul is in the faith/know corner, the beginning point. We are going to get to the top of the suspended cliff that is called perfection (see Chart 8.4). Our Pauline Christian piety is based on knowledge. Knowledge brings conviction. You know something, *i.e.* you read the Bible, and it is like a dagger in the heart. This is the Pauline piety. You read—you get the dagger in the heart, the conviction (see the downward arrows on the chart). When you are convicted, you respond to remove that problem in your life (the line that moves back up to a new level on the dashed line leading to perfection). That response which is enabled by God's grace then gives you a move up the piety chain. You are going all the way up to the top, to the end, to

perfection. At each interim point you attain a respite of rest and satisfaction, but then you get another conviction (the downward arrow) that is demanding another response. Pauline piety is a series of convictions and responses, which all begin with knowledge.

The conviction occurs when you read something in the Bible or you hear a testimony, and you say, "Oh, my, that is not like me. I am not doing that part." There is a dagger in the heart, and you say, "Okay, I need to change and start doing that part." Maybe it is witnessing or doing Bible reading or prayer or whatever—but conviction and response result. Iterations of conviction and response form the process of sanctification.

Pauline sanctification that is built around conviction and response became the holiness movement. This piety is one in which you are responding to the dagger in the heart, over and over. The sword of the Spirit cuts into you,

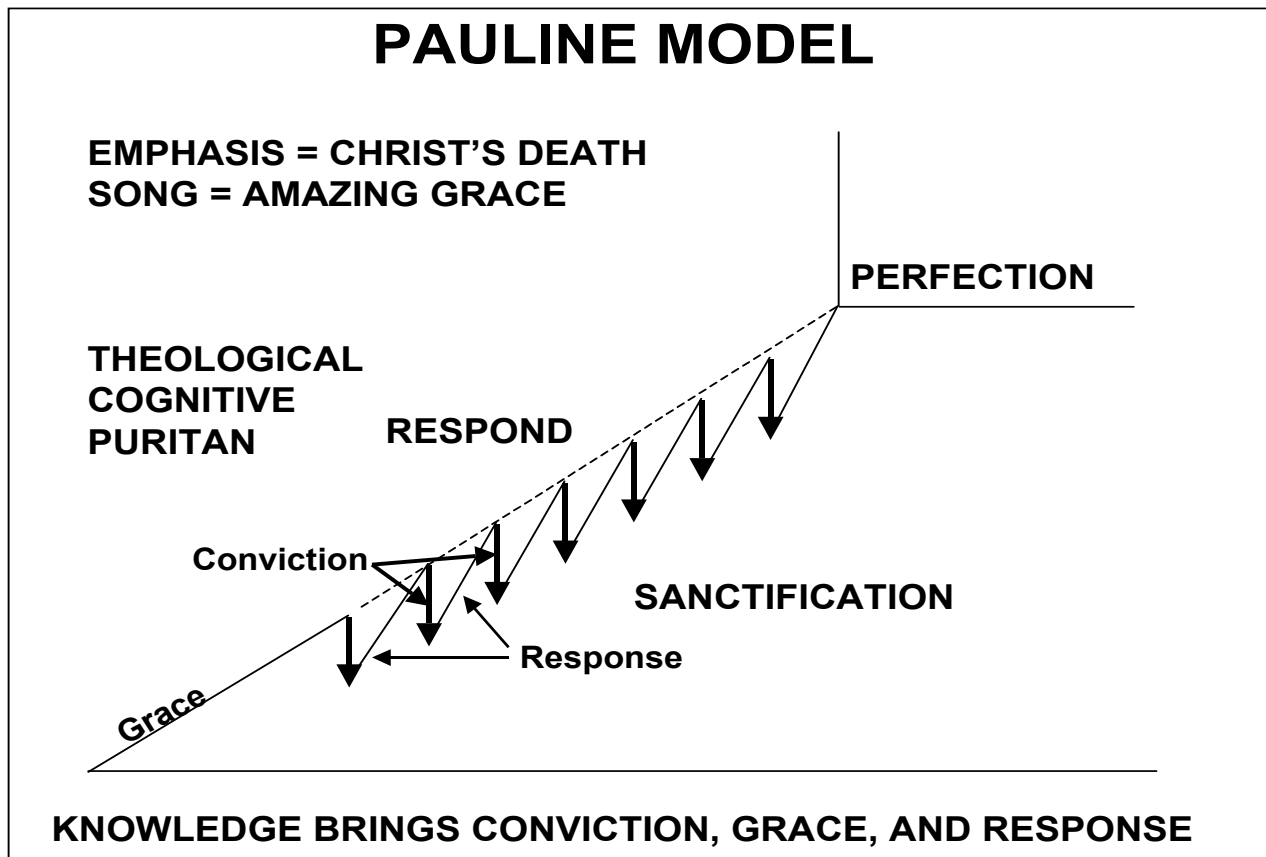


Chart 8.4

and you change to get rid of that conviction. You may have a short period of comfort, but then, bang, here comes that dagger in the heart again. You have another problem, and you respond to that one. After each response, you feel like you are alive now. And then it is not very long until you get hit again with another problem, and you have to clean that up.

Everyone of us who are in the Pauline model are all the time getting a dagger in the heart, and all the time responding to get some relief. You will never get out of this cycle of piety until you die.

You need to see that it begins with knowing something. That “something” is the Word of God. It comes mainly through studying the Scriptures, but it can come also through a proclamation or through a testimony.

Many times this kind of person is one that can be convicted just on a testimony. Somebody can say, “I have been reading the Bible one hour each day.” The Pauline Christian may think, “Well, I have not been reading the Bible that much.” The next thing you know there is a change, and that Pauline person will then begin to read the Bible one hour each day as a response to that conviction.

A song that goes with the Pauline model is *Amazing Grace*, which contains that famous phrase, “A wretch like me.” That critical self-perception is displayed in the downward moves. These downward moves are convictions of the Holy Spirit, and you suddenly see yourself as being a wretch. You respond upwardly in reaction and get rid of that terrible conviction, and then you are a wretch again with the coming on of the next conviction. It continues over and over and over again. That song then begins to play out to us what it feels like to be in the Pauline model. This is a cognitive model based around knowing.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Pauline Model.

Strengths

1. Studious.
2. Scripture knowledge. Their studies of the Bible are extensive. They know the Scripture.
3. Problem solvers. Their knowledge equips them with life’s solutions.
4. Pure lifestyles. They are always under conviction, and thus cleaning up their own personal lives. Long ago they called this the puritan model.
5. Good teachers. Their expansive knowledge equips them with the substance of teaching.
6. Miracles happen around them. Miracles follow faith. The faith model puts the Pauline Christian in the center of miraculous happenings.
7. Wisdom is a Pauline characteristic. Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. These saints fear God’s rejection, and they are always striving to please Him.

Weaknesses

1. Tend to be content with knowledge alone. The Pauline saint can plainly see the growing gap between his knowledge and that of other saints.
2. Tend toward intellectual pride. Because they know much more than others they can be easily susceptible to pride.
3. Tend to not soil their hands. The Pauline saint will tend to do the thinking and directing others doing the work.
4. Tend to study problems too long. The Pauline saint will be uncomfortable with anything that he cannot wrap his mind around completely.
5. Tend to be rebaptized and to rededicate often. The recurring convictions will tend to convince them that they are not saved. They can confuse conviction with lack of salvation.
6. Elitists. Pride is definitely a problem with the Pauline saints. They can easily exclude

the common saints and begin to form cliques of “worthy” companions thinking that everybody else is wrong or does not know enough.

7. Tend to be self-centered. Their lives revolve around “their” convictions.

Peter

The Petrine model is pictured in Chart 8.5. Under the Petrine model, we start with a large mountain. A person is walking along in life, and then he changes directions and starts walking up this mountain. There is a series of changing directions. These reversals of direction are the repentances. You are heading in one direction, and then the Lord turns you, and tells you to go in a different direction.

Don’t be confused. The upward movement in the piety models has to do with difficulty and spiritual growth. The upward movement in the upside down *kenosis* has to

do with gains in status, material, pleasure, and ease.

The Petrine piety is one in which your life starts in a direction. You are moving in a straight path until God turns you toward heaven (repentance is each turn on Chart 8.5), and then you walk until the Lord turns you again. It is continuous changes of direction, but you never change direction on your own. You are always trudging along with the idea of getting up the mountain: “I am going to get to the top. Victory is at the top!” You are going to achieve this climb, but you never direct your own path. God acting on your will does all of these changes of direction.

Joe: Well that is a good thing, is it not?

V: Yes! All the pieties are good. The Pauline piety is a good model, but it is Paul’s model. This one is Peter’s model, and some of you are under the Petrine doctrine of piety

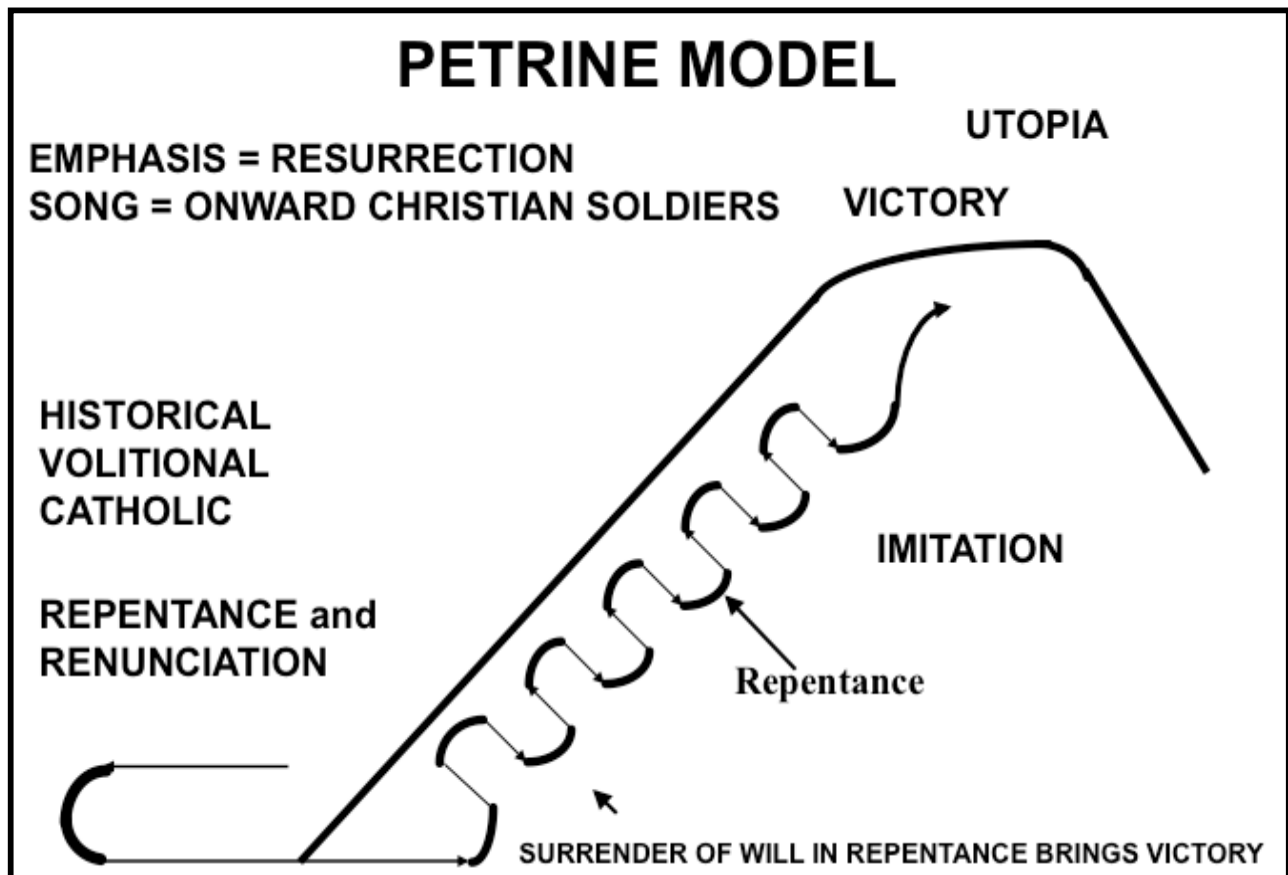


Chart 8.5

even though you may not know it.

Joe: Is it possible to have a little of all of them?

V: Yes, you want to have a balance of all three, but none of us have that perfect balance. We are all bumping along like tires out of balance because there is a dominance in our lives. You will recognize what that dominance is in this lesson, and you should begin to adjust by moving into the areas of weakness.

The Petrine model is the one in which the person is striving to follow the Lord. The Lord is going, and you discern which direction He is going, then you go in that direction until there is a turn of your path by God. It is not an “I think I will turn.” There is something that is overwhelming that turns you. Once you turn, you are dedicated to the death to follow that path until God turns you again. You are continually turning, but trudging on the straight and narrow until God actually changes your direction.

Henry: You do not see that in Paul’s life at all?

V: Yes, there is some of this in all of them, but they are out of balance. I want you to see that this is Peter, and it emphasizes action. In the Pauline model, there is inaction until knowledge expands. Knowledge brings conviction, and then there is an action.

In Petrine piety there is continuous action. It does not matter what you know. You are going forward! You have your cross, you are in self-denial mode, and you are going forward. Sometimes you are going in the wrong direction because you do not know the right direction.

Peter whipped the sword out and whacked the guy’s ear off, and Jesus criticized the act, and put the ear back on!⁵ Jesus changed the direction Peter was going in. Peter was ready to whack the guy’s head off. That is the

Petrine model. He is going to do something. He is the one that dove into the water and swam to shore. He walked on the water. He is the one that says, “You are not going to wash my feet,” until Jesus said, “Well, I will have nothing to do with you.” “Well, wash all of me then!”

Petrine songs are *Onward Christian Soldiers* and *Victory in Jesus*. Any time you are dealing with a militaristic theme or a victory theme, you are in the Petrine model. If you are preaching a Scripture that is Petrine in nature, then you ought to choose the songs that fit that Petrine model.

You Petrines never stop. You are all the time walking. The Petrine model does not depend upon knowledge. Once you launch out, it is on a minuscule amount of knowledge, and you will walk for the rest of eternity on that minuscule knowledge until God comes along and says, “You are going the wrong direction. Turn.” Some of us, however, are hard to get turned (laughter by several students).

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Petrine model.

Strengths

1. Petrine people get things done. These saints are the doers in the church. When they see the need for something to be done, they just do it.
2. They are not hypocritical. Their beliefs and their actions match. What you see is what you get. They do what they know to do.
3. They are friends with Christ when they are correct. Christ calls those who obey Him friends. When the Petrine saint’s actions line up with the Lord’s commandments, the saint puts himself in line to be a friend to Christ.
4. They are world changers. It is the “doer” who impacts the world. Martin Luther was a Petrine type.

⁵ Matthew 26:51-52.

5. They have a lively faith. Faith without works is dead (James 2:20). The Petrine saint focuses on works. When those works are the results of beliefs that are true, then life is given to their faith.

Weaknesses

1. Burnout. Since the Petrine saint will do the work, the others will not only let him, but will call on him because they can count on an easy "Yes, I will do it."
2. Impatient. The Petrine saint does not understand inactivity: "Go to seminary? Not me; I am going to be out ministering."
3. They make work out of play. You go to play a baseball game or something, and the Petrine guy will say, "We need to clean up this field! We need to pull the weeds and all that before we can play baseball."
4. They make a lot of mistakes. The doers are always the ones that make mistakes.
5. They have liberal tendencies. Usually they are not doing out of a theological base. They are doing because that seems to be the right thing to do. The Petrine Christian does not put in much time studying.
6. They are legalists. This saint wants a code, a concrete list of things to do so they can get about doing them so that they can check them off.
7. Tend towards church idolatry. Petrine piety is high church. The general piety of Roman Catholicism is Petrine.
8. They are lonely. Most saints do not want to work all the time, so they tend to avoid this saint. The exception occurs when the

Petrine saint is carnal (self-indulgent) and wants to play all the time. Others will join him for short periods of time. The scenario will be like a tag team then in which one from another piety model will play with the Petrine carnal saint, get tired of playing, leave and be replaced with a fresh player.

John

The third model of piety is Johannine. We have a cliff-like place at the top, and this is union with the Lord where you are going to be brought into His bosom (see Chart 8.6). There is a line, but it is a tendency line, not an actual line in which you are going to walk. You are on this line, and you fall in helplessness. God then lifts you up. Then you fall again, and God lifts you back up to the line. This series of falls or mortifications or self-crucifyings begins a response by God to begin to lift you up through a renewal to a higher plane of life.

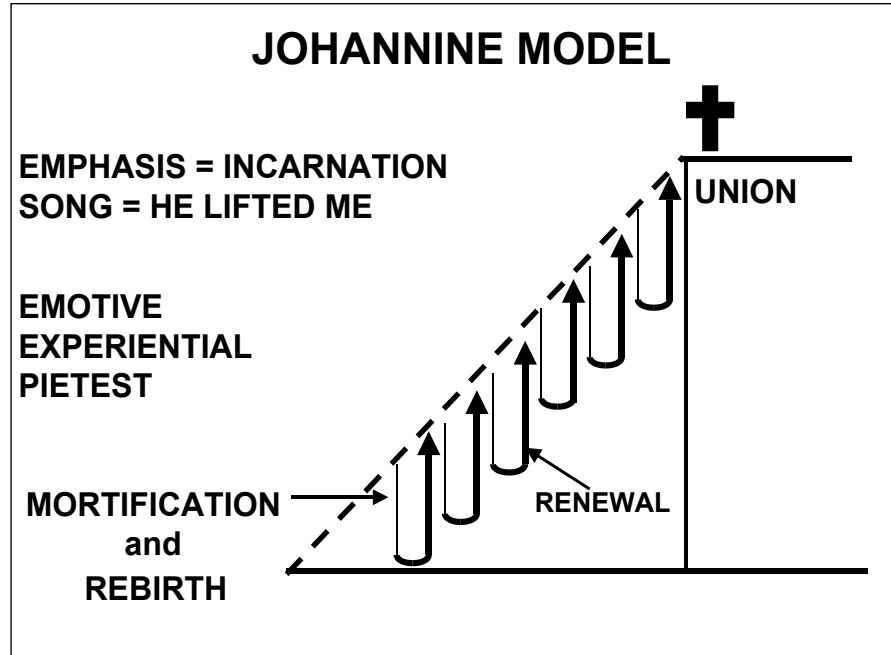


Chart 8.6

You say, "I cannot do this," and you cannot. Only God can do this, and it is like falling back into the arms of the Lord, and He lifts

you up to a higher plane, gives you a quality of life that is higher than where you were when you fell. There is a series of falls and being lifted up. This is the Johannine model.

The song is *He Lifted Me*. Under this model, God does it all. All you have to do is fall, let go. You have heard “Let go and let God.” That is the Johannine model of piety. When you relax and fall into His hands, then He does it all. He changes you and lifts you up to a higher plane. You see this model does not have a lot of doing; it is very passive. God does all the doing in it.

If you blend this model with the Petrine model, then God is actually the one that is carrying the cross as you are trudging along. He is giving you the strength to carry the cross. You begin to blend all three of these together, and you have a good, holistic, balanced piety.

Strengths and weaknesses of the Johannine model.

Strengths

1. **Patience.** These people are quite patient in contrast to the impatient Petrine saint, because their focus is on the person rather than the task. The development of the person doing a task is more important to them than the task being done perfectly. They are nurturers, encouragers, exhorters, and comforters. For the most part, they fill support positions rather than leadership positions because they are willing to do the less desirable, mundane, behind-the-scenes ministries. They make excellent child-care workers, children’s ministers, hospital and homebound care givers, hostesses, etc. Their goal is to meet needs rather than to be in the limelight.
2. **Peacemakers.** Relationships and personal experience are prime for the Johannine. They are very discerning because they are people focused. They strive for reconciliation and harmony in relationships and in

their environment. They are the arbiters when issues arise, seeking to help each party understand the other’s perspective. They strive for harmony in their own relationships and are quick to say, “I’m sorry.”

3. **Generous.** These people give, give, and give. Love and feelings generate giving. They give of their time, energy, emotions, and material goods because their focus is on the person.
4. **Sympathetic/Empathetic.** Johannines care how you feel. Feelings are at the center of their piety. If you are feeling wounded and persecuted, they don’t just say “get over it” or quote Scripture to you. They identify with your pain and seek to encourage and exhort. Likewise, they rejoice and celebrate with you when good things happen. They are sensitive and easily offended, and are probably the least understood and least appreciated of the three models.
5. **Comforters.** Again, Johannines empathize with you during troubling times. They “share” your burden and seek ways to cheer and encourage you through the circumstances. They are the cheerleader types who are always assuring you that things will get better.
6. **Merciful.** These people are rescuers because they are so keenly aware of the Lord’s mercy to them. Just as the Lord rescues them and lifts them up, they desire to be merciful to others.
7. **Worship.** Johannines make worship services interesting. This is one area in which they seem to be the leaders in the church. Charismatics tend to be in this model. Johannines are emotion/feeling driven, and music appeals to the emotions. What they hear impacts them much more than the other two models. They are moved by music that paints a picture, personal testimonies, and sermons that speak of God’s love. They also need to hear “Thank you”

and “I’m sorry” because that motivates them to keep going.

Weaknesses

1. Emotionalism. When depending on feelings, the emotions become supreme because they generate feelings.
2. No assurance of salvation. Since salvation depends upon feeling saved, when that feeling is lost, so is salvation. The person fluctuates along with his feelings. Just remember, this model is based on feeling.
3. “Missed a blessing.” There is introversion: what blessing is in it for me? Petrine is what can I do? Pauline is what can I know? This person will always let you know that you missed a blessing when you miss a service.
4. Easily led astray. They tend to accept what is taught by those in authority (teacher/clergy). So, if perverted doctrine is being espoused they buy into it. Example: God doesn’t want you to suffer. However, the truth is that sacrifice does not always feel good, but it is always required by the *kenosis*.
5. They tend to hinder the Lord’s work. The “doing” and the “knowing” are pushed aside by the “feelers, who are sidetracked by someone who “needs” them. They also get sidetracked by details. It is not a works-based piety.
6. Intolerant. The feelings-based people are usually intolerant of others who do not raise their hands upon cue or do not do as they do in their excitement.
7. Peacemaking to the extreme.

You can see here that one of the strengths becomes a weakness in these guys. That strength is that they are peacemakers. They tend to bring people together by excluding what separates, but, on the other hand, if it is an emotional-based theology that unites the church, they will demand lock-step passive theology just like they have in themselves especially when it is feeling oriented: “You

did not feel that? Then there is something wrong with you.”

Joe: If you preach cut and dried theology, it is, “You are too hardcore, you are too”

V: Yes, and most Johannines cannot hear hard theology. The Johannines tend not to be in seminary unless they are in the music school.

The other two types of saints have a difficult time understanding Johannines. Peter would understand the *kenosis*. He would jump right on that. “Yeah, I’ll carry the cross. Where is it?”

Jill: Do you see progression in someone’s life though, a succession of these pieties? A new Christian starting out Johannine, but as they grow they You see a lot of seniors over here being Pauline now, but when they started out, they were the Petrine, went on missions and did a lot of other things, but now they

V: That is a good point especially in this age where existentialism is pervasive. Everywhere you go you are being inundated with that feelings-based philosophy. When a feelings-based philosopher is converted, he is going to be a feelings-based theologian, and that is a Johannine piety.

We must have all three pieties in the church. You are going to have natural Johannines in your church, and that is not a bad thing.

Carl: I am trying to analyze our Sunday school systems and our programs. I suppose that when we stick a bunch of Johannines together, and we keep them together throughout their life in Sunday school they will never get Petrine and Pauline characteristics unless we mix them up.

V: That is a good point. We are going to address the issue of mixing pieties, but it is important for us, as theologians, to begin to

add variety to our own lives so that we move into those other corners of the triangle.

Johannine Weaknesses (Continued)

8. They have a passive Christian walk. The Johannine saint will play Christian music, goose-bump music, throughout the day and think they are really getting close to God. They tend to think that if you get some more goose bumps, and you begin to swoon, then you are there, close to God.
9. They lack understanding. Knowledge and understanding are intuited or “felt.”
10. They are showoffs. Whatever gives them a good feeling draws them. They like to express how they feel by an outward show of their emotions. These are the ones that will flop down on the floor and thrash around. They will show you how spiritual they are.
11. They are otherworldly floaters. They just float around listening to music and weeping, laughing, and rejoicing.

Carl: They have a tendency towards liberalism?

V: Yes, they have a tendency toward liberalism. The thing about liberalism is that it comes from a feelings-based theology. Otherworldly floaters are so heavenly minded they are of no earthly good.

Let me give you an illustration of the three pieties. I went to preach a weeklong revival, and when I pulled into the parking lot, I discovered that they had the Campers On Mission there who were going to build a recreation hall and an education wing on the church.

When I drove in and looked at these people, I could pick them out quite easily. On the hood of a pickup truck they had the blueprints all laid out. A group of men were standing around it with their coffee. They were talking and nodding and planning what needed to be done. They were Pauline saints, looking at the blue prints.

Another group, a short distance away, was pulling lumber off a truck, stacking it and just running around as busy as could be because they were Petrine saints. In another direction was another group, and they were sitting around a fire singing away—three distinct groups.

They were acting like what they are. They do not even know it. Those that are singing are thinking, “All these others are spiritually dead because they are not over here singing and weeping and hugging and all that is going on in their group. The guys stacking the wood are wondering what is wrong with everybody; “We have to get this wood stacked.” Those on the hood of that pickup were studying and thinking because they must get it right. They were thinking: “We have to figure out what the first step is. We might take the wrong step.”

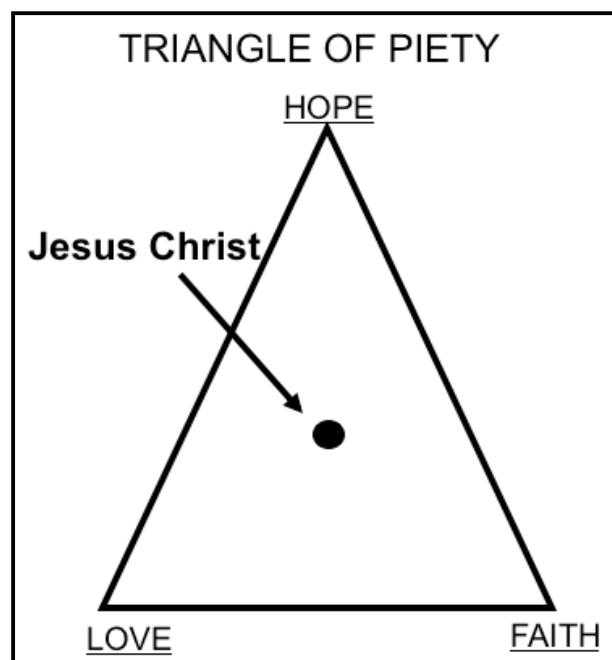
I looked at these groups and thought, “If I try to tell them what I know, none of them would believe me.” But it is a fact; you go into a church to do a project, and you will have those who study it, those who are out there hammering away, and those that are singing and carrying on. You will see it because all of us tend to fall into one of these three pieties.

I would have the hardest time with those who would be singing. I can really get with those on the blueprints because I need to know what to do. I used to be a Petrine doer. I have become Pauline. As a doer, it was “Time is wasting. Let’s go do it, the world is coming to an end.”

Check this scenario: At Wednesday night dinner at church, a lady spills her tray on the floor. Some will immediately go to work cleaning up the spill (Petrine). Others will begin to console the victim (Johannine). Others will check into why the lady had the spill and warn others (Pauline).

Desired Piety

Now let me show you Jesus on this triangle. He is in the middle, perfectly balanced. He has equal amounts of everything in His life, and He is our model, and we are supposed to strive for balance (see chart 8.6). However, we get out of balance with mostly faith (knowledge), or mostly hope (doing), or mostly love (feeling). I used to be mostly hope or do, but over the years I have begun to move into the faith direction. Sometimes I tend to move back up when I see urgency. If I read the Scripture like the Great White Throne or something like that, it spurs me to action, and then I am driving others to do likewise. It is “Come on. I am not going to let you stop, I am going to drag you out with me.” That is when I become Petrine in my piety, but I just have the hardest time with those in the feel or love corner.

**Chart 8.7**

Sybil: Your wife is Johannine?

V: Yes, she has helped me achieve some balance in my life. She is my walking cane to help me limp along. However some of you will be up in the hope/do corner where you are

a doer, but a doer also with feelings as a secondary orientation and with faith coming last. There are some that will be mostly in the love/feelings corner with a little bit of doing based upon your feelings. That is a liberal tendency, and you have to keep that in check. No matter where you are in this triangle, you need to try to get balance in your life in all three pieties.

I realize where I am, and I know where my weaknesses are. I try to move into my area of discomfort that is in the Johannine corner.

I have pushed you to learn the names of all your classmates. That Johannine effort is part of what I am trying to do to make sure my class is not all Pauline or 90% Pauline and a little bit Petrine. I am trying to add some balance to this class so that I do a job that is more like the one the Lord would do, but I have to go into my areas of weakness and discomfort in order to accomplish that.

You are going to have to do the same thing. You have to know where you reside and then move purposefully into your weak pieties. Sometimes I will let people lead my class in singing; sometimes I will turn my class over to someone else and let them give testimony or something in order to achieve unity or fellowship for the purpose of balance. It is important that we move into those areas where we are weak.

Joe: You are saying move into the areas where we are weak, so if I believe that I am strong in Pauline piety, would I want to move away from Pauline? Would I want to get my hands dirty?

V: You will not “want” to move, but that is exactly what I am saying you “should” do. You have to move into the areas in which you are weak. Let us just say that you are mostly in the Pauline corner like a present-day *Gnostic*. We have a lot of these. A *Gnostic* does not do anything—they just know something. They do not have to be feelings ori-

ented. In order to achieve balance, a present-day *Gnostic* needs to do something, move into that area that is beyond the knowing. You are going to get your hands dirty. You have to go down there and pick up that lumber. You cannot just sit up there and point at a nice clean blueprint. You also need to go over and do some singing, too.

That singing part is very difficult for me, but I have to do those different things. What I want you to do is move into your area of discomfort in order to bring more balance to your piety. But I also want you to see that you have peculiar people in your church. You have all three kinds, and all three have value to add to the corporate piety. The mix will bring balance. Normally, if there is equal amount of each kind with no one dominant, you will have a balanced corporate piety.

Joe: What about the kind who have the knowledge, and they are out doing the work, but they wear their feelings on their sleeves?

V: Basically that person has started in the love/feeling corner. Anyone wearing their feelings on their sleeves is a Johannine type.

I want you to see the value of the individual imbalances and the need for corporate balance so that you do not have to be like the person sitting next to you. You can be who

you are. You need to strive, however, for some balance in your Christian piety. You are never going to get there, but strive for it. Go out for those other areas. Try to join the people in the other types and try to experience what they are experiencing. But do not demand conformity across the board in your church. God made the people there, and they have value to add to the corporate piety. Do not try to change them, but you can begin to show them through the Pauline teaching that there is a need for them to venture out also. The Johannines think they are the most venturesome, but they are not because they will not stay with something that does not feel good. Petrines will try anything if they think they are moving towards a goal. The Paulines won't try anything new without a motivating conviction.

Mary: The pastor can use these pieties also. He can use those characteristics when selecting teachers, when selecting committee members, when selecting worship leaders.

V: Amen! This is good. It is important that you begin to recognize the individual pieties of your people. Eventually, you may begin to see the connection of pieties with the spiritual gifts.

Questions for Chapter 8

1. Draw the triangle of piety, labeling the corners with the biblical terms and with their meanings.
2. Complete the following chart.

FAITH	HOPE	LOVE	
☒	☒	☐	_____
☐	☒	☒	_____
☒	☐	☒	_____

3. Draw the Pauline model.

4. List the strengths and weaknesses of the Pauline model.

Strengths	Weaknesses

5. Draw the Petrine model.

6. List the strengths and weaknesses of the Petrine model.

Strengths	Weaknesses

7. Draw the Johannine model.

8. List the strengths and weaknesses of the Johannine model.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Chapter 9

ATONEMENT: THE WORK OF CHRIST

Think with me for a minute about why there were sacrifices in the Old Testament. Sin brought death, and the blood of the animal was shed for the sinner's sin. So we have a *trade*: the blood of one for the sin of another? Next, we have *forgiveness* because there is no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood.

Ted: The sacrifice was a *covering* of sin.

Paul: The sacrifice showed God *gratitude*.

Jill: It *foreshadows* things to come.

Carl: The blood sacrifice was the only accepted *atonement* for sin.

V: Those are all very good factors.

WHAT DOES THE OLD TESTAMENT TEACH ABOUT ATONEMENT?

1. Sacrifice of animals is required for sin. *The problem that surfaced in Israel was in the abuse of sacrifice by substituting it for right living.*
2. Suffering servant passages spoke of redemption because the suffering was vicarious, sacrificial, and substitutionary.

Let's look at the foreshadowing idea. If the propensity of the Old Testament saints was toward using the sacrifice as a substitute for right living, what is the difference between them and us?

Ted: We treat grace the same way they used their sacrifices?

V: Yes, we substitute grace for right living.

Jill: We take our good and say we are following God.

V: Yes, and that is not a proper obedience. We either do not know or

disregard the right will of God. But what about across the spectrum of the New Testament church?

Jill: Blood sacrifices of bulls and goats were kind of like paying with a credit card. Jesus Christ shed His blood to pay off our credit card balance due.

Ted: Paul said, "What! shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?"¹ He said, "Of course not. No!" Grace was not to be used as a substitute for obedience.

Carl: The New Testament church has that perfect sacrifice, but yet we abuse it saying, "Once saved always saved." We sure do not live like we ought.

V: You guys are all correct. When we come to view the cross and what Jesus has done, it is important for us to see that we tend to follow the same path as our Old Testament brethren. We hold ourselves in such high esteem that all we do is focus on our new birth (what Jesus has done for us). We rejoice and praise the Lord and live like hell.

Joe: We make fun of the Catholic faith and how they prepay for their indulgences to sin. We say, "Jesus has prepaid for ours, so let us indulge ourselves."

V: They have to prepay for each of their planned sins. We get a total prepayment from the git-go, and then we can do anything we want to. That is an abuse of grace, and we are steeped in this folly, and yet we are blind to its wrongness. We see Jeremiah and Isaiah talking about the abuse of the sacrifice and the people living in a very paganistic way. We can see their problem clearly. Well, what about us? Why can't we see ourselves in all of this?

Tom: Does Hebrew 10:26 relate to this?

¹ Romans 6:1-2.

Hebrews

10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

V: This Scripture tells us that if we abuse the sacrifice, we are abusing Jesus and what He did. There will be consequences for intentional sin of Christians.

Tom: So how can there be any difference between the Old and New Testaments, when Jesus came to fulfill the Old?

V: That is good, Tom!

Tom: When we get to heaven we are going to pay for our sins?

V: No, all sins have already been paid for. There will be consequences of loss, but Christians cannot pay for sin. Loss of rewards is a lot different understanding than payment of a penalty. Payment comes from something that you have. Loss of rewards is a reduction in receiving something that you were going to get. Thus, unsaved sinners will pay via their second death, the condemnation of their souls.

NEW TESTAMENT THEMES ON ATONEMENT

1. Vicarious: on our behalf.
2. Substitutionary: in our stead.
3. Sacrificial: He gave His Son.
4. Representative: we died with Him.
5. Suffering Servant: purpose of suffering is redemption.
6. Forgiveness of sins: relational reconciliation.
7. Removal of sins: sins are an objective something which are cast away.
8. Payment for sins: justice.
9. Expression of God's love: motivation.
10. Once for all: paid in full.

The line of demarcation between vicarious and substitutionary is thin, but there is a little distinction there. "In our behalf" is like a payment. You reach in your pocket and take out the money, and you say, "Apply this to the account of. . . ." That is vicarious. In our

stead is the idea that it is either He or I who has to pay. God chose Jesus to be both our substitute and the vicarious payment. The distinction is very slight.

Romans

3:25 Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Now in the very first part of this verse, it says, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation." What word is there in your Bible if it is not propitiation?

Joe: Sacrifice of atonement.

Henry: Expiation.

Sybil: Whom God will send to take the punishment.

V: The Greek word is *hilasterion*. The word is translated in a variety of ways. In my Bible it is propitiation. In others it will vary, e.g. sacrifice, atonement, and expiation.

Those various words are coming from the translator's point of view. There is an interpretation given to the work of Christ that has to come through the translation. Please understand that every translation is an interpretation. History is an interpretation. There is no such thing as a facts-only history. To express it means that you have to put it in words, and that set of words will come out of your being, and that is an interpretation. That is where your own personality, understanding, limitations, and prejudices will come into what is written. The same occurs in theology, and the same occurs in the Bible *translations*.

In our doctrine of inspiration that is found in propositional revelation, God gives his interpretation through the words of the writers. We have then four Gospels, and those Gospels have the personalities of four different people. Those distinctions help us then to begin to see what it is that God is trying to say to us that we are so hard of hearing.

Tim: They were written for four different audiences.

V: No, you and I are the audience. The Gospels are written to the entire world. We cannot exclude ourselves based on culture that would mean that certain things do not apply to us. We could reject the idea of slavery: "I am not going to be a slave of God; I am a free man of God." That would result in my doing my own thing and abusing the sacrifice of God. We need to stay away from cultural limitations.

We must keep the context of the Scriptures without abiding under the culture of the people. Cultures change, but the Scriptures do not.

In Romans 3:25 you are going to have well-meaning scholars who are going to use different words: sacrifice, propitiation, expiation, and it depends upon where they are coming from. If you want to get rid of the subjective bias of Scripture translations, you must go back to the actual words that God gave. Those are Hebrew and Greek words, and that is why you have the study of biblical languages in seminary.

Jill: Even if we go to the Greek we are still under the subjectivity of the person teaching us Greek, right?

V: Yes, and along with it, you also have your own subjectivity to account for.

One of the things I have always tried to do in teaching is to give a wide scope of understanding and allow the student to land within these parameters. I give outside parameters, the liberal and the conservative, and then each student pays his nickel and takes his choice and lands right in there where he wants to land. I do not judge you based on whether you agree with me. You can be wrong if you want to (laughter around the room).

Propitiation and Expiation

The two words: propitiation and expiation will highlight the distinction that is found in Leviticus 16:5-10.

Leviticus

16:5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

16:6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which [is] for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

16:7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

16:8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

16:9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer him [for] a sin offering.

16:10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, [and] to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

Now there are three animals.

1. A ram for an offering for the sins of the priestly order.
2. The Lord's goat. That goat is the death goat, and that represents ***propitiation***.
3. The other goat. This goat will have the sins of the congregation placed upon it, and it will be released into the wilderness. That goat represents ***expiation***.

Expiation means the sins are taken away from us in forgiveness. Propitiation means that the Lord is requiring payment for the penalty of our sins.

Present are three ideas, but I really want you to focus now on the two goats: the goat of propitiation and the goat of expiation. Propitiation is done to God, and expiation is done to us. Expiation is when your sins are removed, they are forgiven; they are cast away as far as east is to west. Propitiation is a change, something that changes so that God does not look at you the same way He did before that sacrifice was made. That means, then, that God's view of you has changed.

There is not necessarily in that understanding of propitiation an actual change in God. Just as for the Old Testament saint who offered a sacrifice, there was not necessarily a

change in that Old Testament saint. The change was in how God related to that saint.

In expiation there is a change in you, and God is looking for you to behave differently. There is a subjective emphasis in expiation, and an objective emphasis in propitiation. Propitiation is objective because it does not occur in man; it occurs in how God relates to man. Expiation is subjective because it does occur in man.

What is the difference between the subjective theory of atonement and the objective theory?

The subjective theory

1. It emphasizes a change in man.
2. Expiation is the associated word.
3. Removal or forgiveness of sins.
4. An example is The Moral Influence Theory.

The objective theory

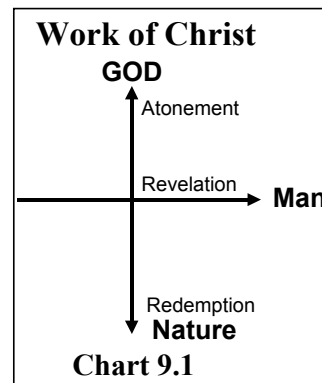
1. The emphasis is on God.
2. Propitiation is the associated word.
3. Payment for sins.
4. An example is The Penal Substitutionary Theory.

In this chapter, I will clarify these different kinds of theories by giving you six theories that will help flesh out your understanding of the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ just cannot be understood with just one theory alone. There are a lot of mistakes being made when you focus on one theory alone or one emphasis over against all of the emphases. Narrowing our study will cut short what the Lord's cross should mean to us.

Prophet, Priest, and King

Concerning the Work of Christ (Chart 9.1), there are three directions. Each direction is associated with one of the three offices of Christ. Thus each office has an associated work or function.

The first vector in Chart 9.1 points up to God. This vector represents the priestly office of Christ whose work is directed towards God.



Please remember the orientations of the priest and prophet? A priest stands with his back to the people and appeals to God on behalf of the people. Each of you has that function.

That is something that you are called to do, to go to God on the behalf of people. Intercessory prayer and sacrifice for others are requirements of *agape* love.

On the other hand, the prophetic orientation is one in which the prophet has his back to God and is facing the people. He goes on behalf of God to the people. He brings the message from God to the people. That is the prophetic orientation, and each of you has that function to do as well.²

The priestly ministry of atonement is what Jesus did. Jesus also did the prophetic ministry of revelation to men, and that

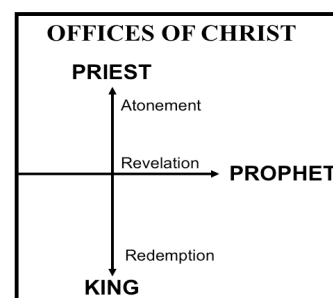


Chart 9.2

And then the downward vector is Jesus' royal ministry of redemption from Satan. Each of us must do all three ministries, too, whether or not we have the associated offices. The

² Function and ministry are the same thing. However office and ministry are not. Office includes ministry, but ministry does not include office.

offices and ministries are displayed on Chart 9.2

These same offices and their ministries, you see, have been passed to the corporate body of Christ. You may not all individually hold the offices, but some of you do. However, all of us are responsible to do the ministries of the offices. Each of you participates in the functions of all the offices. You have those same functions to do. You have to pray intercessorily for your people. You have to preach the Word of God to your people, and you have to lift up your people out of their social dilemmas. These functions could take many different “forms” of ministry, but each function belongs to each of you. Every saint has those three functions, and every church has those three functions and offices. If you let one of those functions go, you are disregarding the example that Jesus set for you as to what you are supposed to do on His behalf.

All ministries require the *kenosis*. Sacrifice, the upward vector, is done in the *kenosis*. The *kenosis* starts with denying yourself. The priestly ministry is a very costly ministry. When Jesus was both priest and victim, He sacrificed Himself. Guess what you have to do? There is *no escape* from this sacrificial cost. The way we escape from it is through rejection, ignorance, deception, or playing games, etc.

I want to give you the full scope of the ministry of Christ, the work of Christ, so that you will know it, and appreciate it for what it is. It is bigger than our ability to fully grasp. And even when we scope it out like we are about to do, it is still bigger than that. We just cannot do it justice. We can study and write it all out, develop all the dimensions and all the examples, but we still come short of what He did. It is a tremendous work that He has done.

The horizontal vector on the chart goes out to fellow man. Notice that there is an arrowhead on this going outward. You are in

the middle, on the cross just like Jesus was on the cross. On the cross there is the priestly ministry, the prophetic ministry, and the royal ministry. Jesus accomplished this, and you also are to accomplish it. We are to function as priest, prophet, and king.

The *downward* vector is the kingly ministry. It is based on power, and it has to do with your stewardship over things. The *horizontal* vector is informational to your fellowman—preach the Gospel to everyone. The *upward* vector is that sacrificial and costly dimension.

Stewardship comes in the vertical-down vector. If you have a network, you have a responsibility to be a good steward over that network. If you have riches, a long life, a healthy body, a special talent, or a spiritual gift, you have the responsibility to be a good steward over all these things. You see, God gives you all of these things, and your royal ministry is to be a good steward over those things, i.e. to make them profitable for the Lord.

You are boss over things. Many times, though, things become our bosses. They dictate to us how we are to live our lives. For example, the rich young man that came to Jesus asking what shall he do to inherit eternal life, and the Lord said, “Go sell all that you have, give it to the poor, and come follow me.”³ He went away sad because he was a slave to his things. You can be enslaved to your things, and that is to reverse that arrow so that the arrow pointing downward begins to point upward and the things become your boss. And instead of being a king, you become a slave to things.

We are going to look at the variety of relational doctrines through this relational chart. I want to explore and see if you can begin to place them. If you were going to put the word sacrifice on the chart, where would it go?

Joe: Priestly.

³ Mark 10:17-22.

V: Yes, priestly, up at the top. If you were going to put the word preaching, where would it go?

Class (in unison): Prophetic.

V: Yes. If you were going to put the word stewardship on there, where would it go?

Class (in unison): Kingly.

V: Yes. Now, relate the piety models that we talked about last week.

Joe: Prophetic would be Pauline.

V: No, in the Pauline there is the idea of worthlessness, “like a wretch like me.”⁴ We are trying to see the subtle distinctions via “emphases.” If he has this idea of seeing himself as guilty, a wretch, and that is that downward movement (on the piety chart), and he responds in a purifying way. That purifying way is examining and looking at the atonement sacrifice for him and responding in kind. I would put that more in the priestly category because there is that downward move. He is an unworthy wretch, he needs help, he needs a worthy sacrifice, and he would respond to that sacrifice.

Even though all the models of piety and all the functions of ministry can clearly be seen in each of the apostles, the priestly “emphasis” is the one that goes with Paul. His emphasis on the Word goes to prophetic, and his emphasis on love goes to kingly, but his persecution of the saints goes to his wretchedness and need for cleansing. And that is where he lived.

The Johannine saint does not do anything because he has no power. He gets lifted up. Is that not a power-base model in which God does it all? Then that is looking at the kingly role of Jesus. I am going to put John down on the vertical-down vector because he views Jesus as the King who lifts him up. It is a power perception. The Lord uses His power to lift John up.

⁴ *Amazing Grace.*

The prophetic one is the horizontal, and that is where Peter lived his life—in the horizontal. Peter was always acting and being corrected. These actions were in deed and word. In deeds he was always the first to act. In words he preached the first sermon. In word and deed, Peter was the prophetic emphasis.

See how I came at this analysis. The work of theology is not easy. Practice, however, will reduce the difficulty.

Now relate the timeline: past, present, and future to the ministry chart.

Joe: Prophetic is past, kingly is present, atonement is future.

V: No.

Mary: I am guessing but here is what I think. Prophetic is present; priestly is past, and kingly is future.

V: No. Paul looks at his wretchedness. So, the cross becomes all-important to him. He focuses on the **past sacrifice**. John needs continuous lifting up. Thus, the power of the Lord to help him fight his battles is important to him. He focuses on the **present power**. Peter is going on a continuous path that is looking for a word of direction. Instructions from God are important to him. Thus he focuses on the **prophetic Word for the future**.

Now, every one of us has a “primary” way of looking at the cross. Your way of looking at the cross is going to shape your behavior pattern and incline you toward the kind of piety that you will adopt. Your Christian pilgrimage will reflect how you view the cross, and your approach to other people will reflect it as well. How you treat others and how you live your life will depend largely on whether you have an objective or subjective view of atonement.

Let me give you another exercise. Relate the ministry model to love, justice, and the human-divine element.

Tom: The atonement was justice. The prophetic would be the human-divine element.

V: You are partially correct. These are tricky. **Justice** is the easiest of these three to grasp. It is the payment for sins, i.e. the **priestly** ministry of sin sacrifice (vertical-up).

Love (*agape*) is mainly sacrificial. Thus it also emphasizes the **priestly** ministry. John 3:16 declares that love is sacrificial.

Please note that we are dealing with emphases in our analysis. All vectors are included in these words. For example, in love there is the personal sacrifice (priestly), the warning accompanied with the good news of the Gospel (prophetic), and the use of things for the betterment of the Kingdom of God (kingly). Kingly is not the love of things—downward. It is the use of things in the loving redemption of men. Love is part of all ministry vectors, but its emphasis is in the priestly sacrifice. The definition of *agape* is the unilateral sacrifice for the benefit of another person.

The **human-divine** classification is tricky. In Jesus' person He brings together the human and the divine, and that *reconciliation* ministry is to do in His actions what He is in His person. His actions, then, are to bring you and God together into a human and divine union. The human and divine gives us more understanding of what took place. Thus reconciliation (all four vectors) is the human-divine element. Chart 9.3 is a relational chart that in totality shows the reconciliation (of man with God, with other men, with things, and with self).

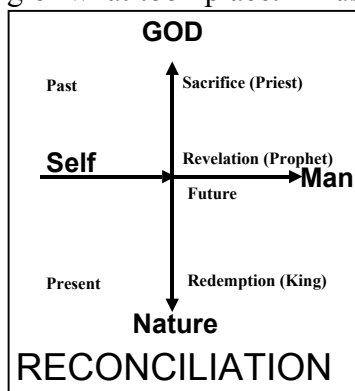


Chart 9.3

In the proclamation of Acts 2:22-41, Jesus is now ascended and sitting at the right-hand of God. I want you to see this future aspect. Your preaching cannot just be at the priestly sacrifice. Your preaching cannot just stop at the kingly rule. Your preaching must extend to the future judgment. When you take it out to the judgment, then the sins mean something to the people that you are preaching to.

Protestants preach a resurrected Christ. All of our crosses are empty because Jesus is the resurrected Lord. That resurrected Christ is going to judge every sin and every person. When you are preaching, scope out the entire work of Christ. The future dimension is extremely important.

Let us just imagine that we are sitting here after having participated in that crucifixion. We are Jews and we understand the meaning of sacrifice, and we have participated in the sacrifices in the past. In the days of atonement, we sacrificed the two goats and the ram. We have done that every year of our entire lives so we know something about sacrifice.

Furthermore, let's imagine that we also have been deceived into taking that abusive understanding of sacrifice (it does not matter how you live because the sacrifice takes care of your sins) through the sermons that announce, "It is a good thing that happened. We have been made right with God."

Class, please hear where I am coming from! If you just isolate the **priestly** dimension of the work of God, then you will pervert your peoples' view of Christianity.

What about the **royal** dimension? You say, "He is resurrected," and they think, "Our sacrifice is resurrected, and He is the King. We have called Him the son of David. He is the promised King. We have a King!" Where is the repentance there?

But if you bring in that future dimension and pronounce it like this: "That King who is sitting at the right hand of God is the One **you** crucified!" All of a sudden there is an ac-

countability established, and you think, “Uh oh, what is He going to say? I yelled, ‘Crucify Him, crucify Him!’ What is He going to say to me?”

You see, there is an accountability that comes up in your preaching when you take on a full scope of the work of Christ. There will be conviction in the hearts of your hearers because you are preaching the whole work.

There are a lot of models that you can use, and this one on reconciliation is an important one. Where would you put baptism on this model?

Joe: Priestly atonement?

V: Baptism is not a one-vector doctrine. It symbolizes death, burial, resurrection, and new life. So on the chart, death and burial are **priestly**, resurrection is **royal**, and the walk of a new life is **prophetic**.

What about the Lord’s Supper? The broken body and the blood is priestly. The enabled communion with God is kingly. The warning contained in it is prophetic.

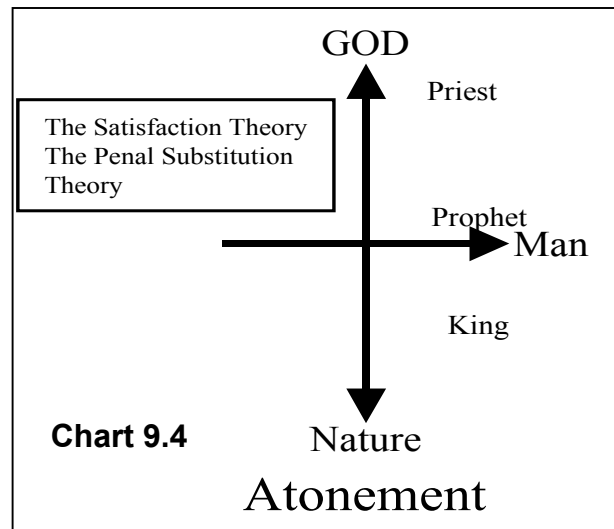
We have not done the Doctrine of Salvation yet, but it can also be analyzed with this model. I am desirous that you all begin to do theology by analyzing all doctrines, sermons, hymns, pieties, relationships, and teachings. I am providing these models as mere tools for you to use to plow much deeper than you ever imagined.

WORK OF CHRIST MODELS

Be able to draw the model on the work of Christ and list one theory of atonement for each of the vectors (the arrows).

Priestly Vector

First we have the vertical-up vector (the priestly office) for which I will give you two theories (see Chart 9.4).



1. Satisfaction Theory.

This is an objective theory proposed by Anselm (ca. AD 1200). His theory goes like this: When man disobeyed God, God’s honor was offended. This offense demands satisfaction, but since God’s honor is infinite, then the satisfaction had to be infinite, and only God can make infinite satisfaction. But since the offense was made by man only man can make the satisfaction. We are in a dilemma now. We have infinite satisfaction required, and it has to be made by man. We cannot make that kind of satisfaction. So, God became a man.⁵

This objective form of the work of Christ means now that the change occurs in God’s way of relating to us. Under this theory the change occurs in how God looks at man.

However, the danger of the objective form is a tendency to abuse the sacrifice. When we abuse the sacrifice, we do not behave properly. We take the payment and shout hallelujah and sing praises to God, and then we go out and do all manner of wickedness. We compartmentalize our lives.

⁵ The title of Anselm’s book is *Cur Deus Homo*, which means *Why God Became Man*?

2. The Penal Substitution Theory.

This is also an objective theory proposed by the Reformers. It goes like this: a crime was committed, and because of the Law's prescription, punishment must be made. This is basically a legal theory.

Calvin was a lawyer, and his penal substitution theory is a law concept that parallels our modern-day saying which declares that because you did the crime, you must do the time. This theory required death for the sinner. Jesus substituted His own death in our place. The objective theory is a good theory of the atonement, but if this were the only thing you look at, an objective theory, you would be prone to be abusive of the sacrifice of Jesus.

These are two theories for the upward vector. You have Anselm for the first one, and the Reformers with the second one. You have offense of honor on the first one, and you have the crime on the second one. You have satisfaction on the first one, and you have punishment on the second one.

Joe: Concerning this first theory there was a comment before you went into the penal substitution theory. You said something about objective and changing God.

V: When you are dealing with Christ's work of atonement, you have an objective theory and a subjective theory. In an objective theory your subjectivity is divorced from the work of Christ, and the work of Christ works on God the Father so that He looks at you differently. He sees the blood of Jesus covering you. The change is not in you under the objective theory. You continue as before, but God sees you as being cleansed from sin. The danger is abuse of sacrifice via the substitution of sacrifice for right living.

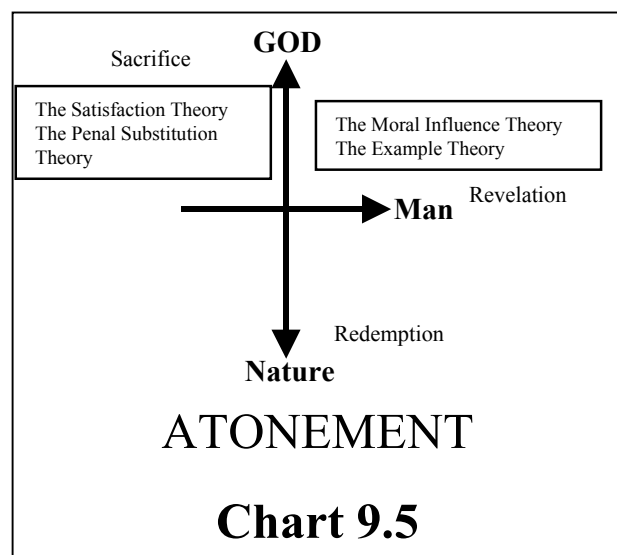
A subjective theory is that nothing is done to God. Something is done to you. You behave differently, and that is what the Lord sees, a different you. That is subjective theory.

Joe: There are dangers in this stuff?

V: You bet! Salvation that is totally objective creates in us a propensity for compartmentalizing our lives and living the way we want to live. That is called the abuse of the sacrifice and an overemphasis on grace. That abuse of sacrifice is what Jeremiah and Isaiah were preaching about to the Jews. God is interested in more than His sacrifice. He demands that you live right after getting right. This is the sermon being preached to the Jews who had an objective view of the sacrifice.

Prophetic Vector

The horizontal vector (the prophetic office) is the subjective view. We will now look at two subjective theories (see chart 9.5).



1. The Moral Influence Theory.

Abelard developed the Moral Influence Theory. He was a contemporary of Anselm. You have Anselm on the one side doing the objective theory, and you have Abelard, his compatriot, doing the subjective theory.

Joe: Does the subjective and objective parts tie in with liberalism and fundamentalism?

V: Yes, they do. Everything in God's theology is interrelated and interconnected

and in harmony. If it does not harmonize and does not all hook up, then you have something wrong in your systematic theology, and you should start tearing it down and rebuilding.

The Moral Influence Theory is that God demonstrated His love for man by giving His Son in sacrifice. Based on such a demonstration of love, man is then moved and influenced to begin to live morally. Please see that the moral influence then is also very appropriate and very descriptive. When seeing the sacrifice of Jesus, what Jesus did for you, your heart should swell with love, and that should influence you to begin to live differently.

Can you see that this is a subjective theory of atonement? If you take this theory alone, you would have a *pelagian* view of salvation, which is saving yourself because this is not a payment concept. This is a moral influence, a salvation by works.

The Moral Influence Theory is a very liberal and works-oriented approach, but there is some important reality in it that I want you to hang onto. Without it, you would go into a total objective form of the work of Christ, and that gives you complete license then to live the way you want to live because you already possess the keys into heaven.

If you throw out the objective and hold only to the subjective form, then you will be pretending that you are a new creature. The subjective-only people are liberals who are trying to live moral lives. They see the love that God gave and expressed by giving His only begotten Son as a death sacrifice for them, and their hearts swell with return love, and they begin to behave morally. You see this in churches now. People go to church, and they hear the Christ story, and they think, "I need to live right. I need to be in church, I need to quit stealing, I need to quit doing all those bad things I have been doing." That is a

reforming effort, a works salvation. It is not a new creation. It is totally subjective, totally under the will of the subject.

2. The Example Theory.

Socinus is a Sixteenth Century Counter Reformation developer of the Example Theory, another subjective theory. In this model we observe what kind of work Jesus did so that we can do the same thing.

It is certainly important that we follow the Lord's example, and this model contains that valid issue.

However, if you take this model alone, then an absurdity arises. Take for example a quadriplegic in a wheel chair and an Olympic sprinter who won the gold medal. Supposedly, the Olympian could demonstrate to the quadriplegic how to sprint by sprinting in front of him back and forth. Under this model after observing the Olympian's sprinting, the quadriplegic is supposed to be able to get up out of that wheel chair and sprint just like the Olympian's example. The fallacy is that you have to heal this guy before he can sprint.

When you take a totally subjective model and exclude the objective forms, then the divine accomplishment is missing, and that leaves salvation in your own hands. In the moral influence there is the response of love swelling up in your heart, and you begin to change your life because of this love.

In the example theory you are supposed to be able to do what Jesus did just because you can see what He did. Both of these subjective theories leave off the empowerment process that comes from the objective form, and that is why we Protestants usually over emphasize the objective form and under emphasize the subjective form. The liberals do just the opposite. They emphasize the subjective, and leave off the dynamic change of the new birth and the empowerment that comes with what God did.

Ted: The opposite of that would be that you would heal the quadriplegic, and then tell him to go sprint without teaching him how to sprint.

V: Yes, that would be the pure objective form to the exclusion of the example and moral influence.

Kingly Vector

The vertical-down vector (the Royal Office) is a return to the objective view (see Chart 9.6).

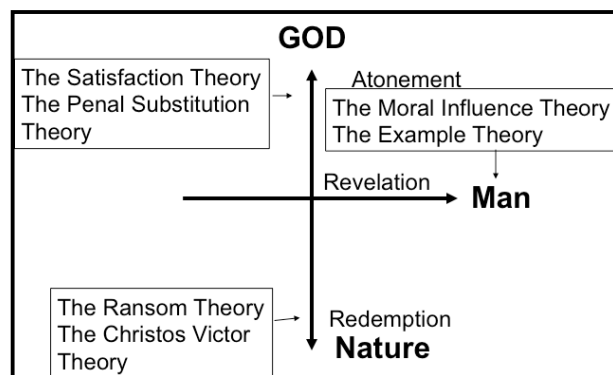


Chart 9.6

1. The Ransom Theory.

The Ransom Theory is usually called the Classical Theory of the Latin theologians of the Third Century. In this theory Jesus paid a ransom to rescue us from our sin bondage (Mark 10:45).

Anytime you are dealing with the downward royal vector, the idea is redemption, and redemption means to lift up out of a hole (see Chart 9.7). Every one of us was in a hole before we were saved. That hole was so deep and the sides so steep that it was impossible to get out of it on our own. At death the bottom was going to open up, and zoom you were going right into the lake of fire. We were all in that situation. What Jesus did was reach down into that hole and pick you up and put you on solid ground. Then He said, "I want

you to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow me."⁶

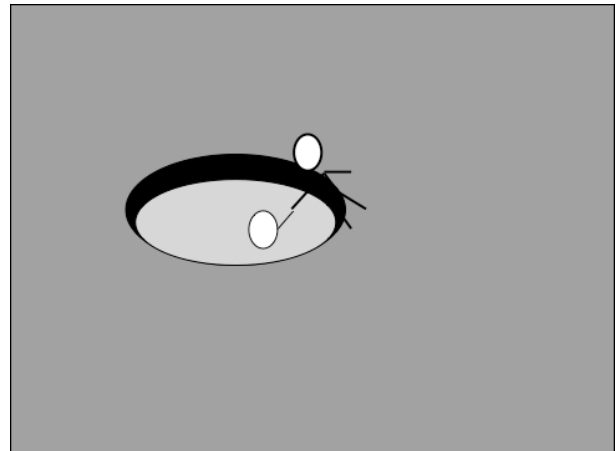


Chart 9.7

Most of us jump back into the hole because we are comfortable down there, safe and secure, and besides everybody else is down there having a good time. After salvation, life in the hole does not take us to hell. Life in the hole is our becoming re-entangled again in sin. He tells us to not do that. He says, "I have given you your freedom, do not be re-entangled with the affairs of the world"⁷

We become enslaved to things, and the expectations of others become the ruling points of our lives rather than what the Lord wants us to do. We have our own view of what Christianity is which has nothing to do with *kenosis*. It has to do with the good life and the nice career, power, nice clean clothes, money, and stuff like that. That is the common view of the good Christian life. Well, that life is lived in the hole.

The ransom theory can be subjective and it can be objective. It becomes then a matter of perspective, but I tend to think of it as being objective. Any time you are on one of the vertical vectors, I tend to categorize it as objective because vertical emphasizes divinity. However, I have heard other people say

⁶ Matthew 16:24.

⁷ Galatians 5:1.

that it was subjective. I think that they are wrong because it would put salvation in our own hands. This is the position of the philosophical Progressives in politics.⁸

I think that the wise man would say that the Ransom Theory is objective because God did this redemption. He paid an objective price.

Who did God pay the price to? There is a debate now between whether He paid it to the devil or to Himself or whether it is just the *kenotic* cost of doing the business of ministry.

The cost was the life of His Son. His life was the ransom, and that life was paid in order to get you out of the hole. Now, you are still saved even though you have jumped back into the hole. That in-the-hole salvation means that it is an objective form of salvation that is being abused.

Ransom salvation is ontological. You are saved in your personhood, but your function (behavior) does not measure up. It is a perversion (following the traditions of man or churchianity). You need to hear where I am coming from because the *kenosis* is the only kind of behavior that is approved by God. Anything other than that is terrible, filthy rags. What many of us call our normal, good Christianity is a bunch of junk compared to what the Lord requires.

If you are on the solid ground, and you have given over to your will, and your will is not to obey, then you will live in the hole and become like most Christians, i.e. re-entangled in worldly affairs.

Making that choice while standing on that solid ground is the subjective element to this theory. The choice is either obey God or jump back into the hole after your ransom has been paid.

Every one of you has jumped back into the hole at one time or another. Mercifully, He has lifted me out again *upon repentance*.

The danger, however, is that a stronghold may set in that will cause you to avoid repentance. God will not lift you out again without true repentance. Pulling you out of the hole is the Kingly work of Christ, and He does it all. He gets you out. He reached down in power and ransom, and you reached up via repentance and belief. You are then lifted up and put on solid ground. The common Christian will think that this is kind of scary and lonely up here: "I think I will just get back into the hole with the majority of the church."

The *kenotic* pilgrimage occurs outside of the hole. The only thing you can do to stay out of the hole—deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus.

Joe: So then if you are in the hole and your pastor is in the hole, the teachers are in the hole . . .

V: . . . the majority of us are in the hole. We have changed the meaning of discipleship to fit life in the hole. We have eliminated all mentions of the *kenosis* and the requirements for a disciple, and declared that we are all disciples and that the hole is holy. That, my friends, is where we are in today's Christianity. Is it because of ignorance brought on by forgetting the doctrine of the *kenosis*? Is it because of our love for the world while disregarding that the world is the hole? We have been brainwashed to think that the hole is as good as you can get.

Joe: Because everybody else is in the hole, we tend to think that life in the hole is normal.

V: Right. In this way we compartmentalize our salvation away from our lives.

God warns us, "Do not be re-entangled with the affairs of the world."⁹ Then He gives the parable of the sower. Some seed is sown among the thorns, and the thorns grow up and

⁸ This is discussed in Book 9 on philosophy.

⁹ Galatians 5:1.

choke out the fruit. It does not mean the seed was bad.¹⁰

Staying on solid ground is hard to do. It is *kenosis*. There can be no shortcuts, no kicking back and riding through life on the wide, smooth, easy road. It is tears and suffering and sacrifice. Going back to the chart, it is sacrifice, proclamation, and good stewardship. Anything short of those three vectors has nothing to do with the *kenosis*. Jesus did all three.

There is no such thing as *kenosis* without sacrifice. There is no such thing as a *kenosis* without proclamation. There is no such thing as *kenosis* without being a good steward of your time, your energy, and your talents. You examine yourself, all that you have, and all that God has invested in you. You examine yourself in order to invest your life following the Lord in an adventure that is going to bring great profit to His kingdom. If you do not do that, you are not doing the *kenosis*.

If you focus just on the objective work of Christ, and leave off the subjective realm, the prophetic realm, that part that has the accountability dimension to it, then you do not have fellowship with Christ in His suffering. You could have priestly sacrifice like some of these monks in the news that set themselves on fire. What good did that do? Burning up God's investment is not profitable. My friends, it is difficult staying on solid ground.

Joe: There are all kinds of holes all around us.

V: Yes!! You can take about one step and there will be a brand new hole. You look in there, and there are all of your Christian friends down in that hole. They are calling, "Come on in! You are missing a blessing! Don't you want to be spiritual? If you want to be a good saint, be like us."¹¹

It is important that we teach the truth, the unadulterated truth, and none of this real easy-going worldly Christianity, all this fun churchy stuff. All that kind of ear tickling will send people to hell. You are accountable to God. Discipleship will allow you to know the truth, and it will set you free, but you are accountable for that freedom. You must bring this same message to your people.¹²

There is no freedom in the hole. You cannot walk, you hit the side, bang. You cannot jump out. You can jump as high as you can, but you cannot get out.

When you hear the words "ransom" or "redeemed," you ought to always think of being pulled out of the hole. This image should clear it up for you forever. It ought to be automatic for you to have the mental picture of being pulled out of the hole when you hear the word redemption.

2. *Christus Victor Theory.*

The Twentieth Century writer Gustav Aul n produced the *Christus Victor* theory. This second theory for the redemption or royal vector is that Jesus had the power to defeat Satan and rescue His creatures. You see power connects with this kingly vector, and it connects with the power to lift up. The difference between the ransom and the *Christus Victor* is that the latter uses power to lift you up. The ransom theory says that you are going to be lifted up at the cost of Jesus' life.

Joe: All of these theories have truth in them!

V: Absolutely!

Ted: If it were too pure of an objective or too pure of a subjective, it would be like abusing the sacrifice.

V: Right! It is to sell the sacrifice short on the subjective. It is to over emphasize the sacrifice in the objective theory. Both, when

¹⁰ Matthew 13:7.

¹¹ This phenomenon is described in the doctrine of sanctification in Book 4 on Hebrews.

¹² John 8:31-32.

taken alone, are abusive because they result in inappropriate Christianity.

Paul: In particular to this ransom theory and *Christus Victor* theory, one tends to emphasize the humanity and the other emphasizes the deity?

V: Yes, the *Christus Victor* theory emphasizes the deity of Christ, and the Ransom theory emphasizes His humanity.

I have given you two theories for each of the three offices that the Lord has, and your ministry, piety, and approach to life are going to reflect how you view the Lord. So if you view Him as priest, and you take an objective form, then you get your salvation and put it as an object in your pocket, and think, "I have it. Now, I can go follow my dreams." You think you are all right. That is an abuse of the objective view.

On the subjective view, you observe what the Lord did, and then you try to either imitate that, or you respond out of gratitude and love. That means then that you are trying to create your salvation. That, too, is an abuse.

There are two theories in each vector, and there is just a slight shade of difference between those two theories, but yet each one reflects a truth that is not shown in the other one.

Remember, I just gave you two theories for each vector, but there are many more. The atonement is just too big to fully explore, but think of what happens if you leave off a vector. If you just take the priestly and prophetic and leave off kingly, then you have a problem with stewardship. What if you take the prophetic and leave off the other two? You will then have a worse problem, a mere *kerygmatic* Christianity. Omission of a vector is where our current Christianity resides. We do not have a full view of the atonement and its subsequent requirements of faith and works upon us.

Current-day evangelists tend toward the objective models. What I want for "our"

evangelism is a full-scoped salvation. If we can add the subjective or horizontal dimension, it will bring converts not only to be new creatures but also to be new life-ers, a people who are accepting of the new life that comes out of that salvation.

A. H. Strong is one of the old theologians. You can normally get the straight up and down from him. In his *Systematic Theology*, he says that the theory of atonement is an ethical theory. He divides the theory into two parts. First, what is the object of Christ's death in terms of holiness, and second, how could Christ justly die? The ethical principle demands that sin be punished. The ethical demand is built into our natures. Like God, we believe that sin should be punished. Atonement is, therefore, a satisfaction of the ethical demand of God's nature that by the substitution of Christ's sufferings the penalty is paid. Substitution is not of law; it is of grace. The righteousness of law is maintained because the penalty is paid. Because Christ was a man, he could pay the penalty. As a man, Christ came under the penalty. Though innocent, He voluntarily took Adam's (and our) sins upon Himself. He paid the just requirements of our sin debt.¹³

Strong's theory is a good one, but it is just one! If you leave out the others, which he has done, then you have just a little, tiny look at something that is bigger than the human mind is capable of handling. This one by Strong is an objective form that is justice-penalty payment. Basically it is the satisfaction theory and penal substitution reworded into ethical language.

If you get our larger model from the charts in your mind, then these things, these vectors and all of the offices of Christ, the idea of redemption, the idea of the walk, the future dimension, the idea of justice and penalty being paid up with the priestly aspect,

¹³ This information was obtained from Augustus H. Strong. *Systematic Theology: A Compendium, Three Volumes In One* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1907). pp 750-771.

all of that is going to be in your mind. Please know this atonement model and all its vectors. It will stand you in good stead.

Carl: I guess my tendency being from East Texas would be to preach a message in each one of those areas.

V: However you do it, just do it. You have to teach your people the whole doctrine. Get that cross in your mind. Then, no matter what the dimension is, when you are in the counseling situation, and somebody is talking about a wretch and penalty, and all this kind

of stuff, you know where they are coming from. It is the vertical up, the Pauline. You can begin to connect all the parts of systematic theology. All I can do is put it in you, and then God can bring it out of you when the need arises. You will become effective ministers, and your ministry will be consistent, integrated, holistic, and wonderful, and people will change because of what you are doing. Do not give up hope. Hang in there with me.

Questions for Chapter 9

1. What does the Old Testament teach about atonement?
2. What is the difference between the subjective theory of atonement and the objective theory?
3. Draw the model on the work of Christ and list at least one theory of atonement for each of the vectors (the arrows).

Chapter 10

DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

Since the very mission of Jesus is to save lost men, this doctrine is at the very core of systematic theology.

WHAT ARE THE ONE WAY, TWO SIDES, AND THREE TENSES OF SALVATION?

1. *One way: Jesus. John 14:6*

John

14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Jesus is our only way to salvation. He is life. If you have Him, then you have life. If you do not have Him, then you are still spiritually dead (1 John 5:11-13).

2. *Two sides: God's side and man's side. John 3:16*

John

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

God did the giving, and we do the receiving. However, believing is essential to receiving.

3. *Three tenses: past, Ephesians 2:8-10; present, Philippians 2:12; and future, Romans 13:11 and 1 Peter 1:9.*

Ephesians (*past tense*)

2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:

2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The past tense of salvation has to do with the new birth. All Christians experience a new birth that is a one-time event in the Christian's past.

Philippians (*present tense*)

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

Once a person is born again, then he walks in newness of life. This life of the Christian is a present experience.

Romans (*future tense*)

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

1 Peter (*future tense*)

1:9 Receiving the end of your faith, [even] the salvation of [your] souls.

The Christian looks forward to the future because salvation includes the glorious resurrection to be with Jesus in heaven for eternity.

In God's Doctrine of Salvation we have past, present, and future. Everybody who has been born again can look back at that new birth experience as a past event. It is something that has happened to you in the past. You not only count on that, but also most of us live in that past. We are continually saying, Yes, I am saved. Then we live in the present as if we are not saved. We are heading for a future that is going to be one of rebuke rather than one of glorification. If we have this kind of salvation, then there is not going to be a full maturing of your salvation.

You should do something with the salvation that you have. The gift of God is salvation, and that gift is not for you just to have. It is also for you to use. If you will use

it, you will be working out your salvation in the present. When you come to that future time of salvation for your souls, you will hear the good words, “Well done.” There will be an accompaniment also with you of people that you have ministered to and who have been brought into the kingdom because of your ministry or the ministry of those you have worked with and discipled and brought along.

So, to be fully scoped, salvation begins in the past, and it goes all the way to your death. Salvation is a pilgrimage that has a beginning point and an ending point. However this ending point, this future part, is really another beginning so that when you walk through the curtain of death, you will be walking into that life that is beyond description, the eschatological kind of life where you are going to be glorified and have the glorified body and the very same kinds of things that the Lord Jesus has, and you will know Him as He is. It will not be looking at Him through a glass darkly.¹

We must begin to develop in the doctrine of salvation. It covers a wide scope of time. The point in the past has already happened. We are now immersed in the present walk. How we develop in the present walk will determine much of our future. Heaven comes with the new birth. But our rewards and status in heaven derive from our present walk.

Several years ago when I was on the streets of Atlanta handing out tracts and witnessing, I met a man, and asked him, “If you were to die today, would you go to heaven?” He said, “Oh, yes, I would.” I said, “Well, would you tell me why you say that?” He began to talk to me theologically, and back then I did not know theology. I was just a plain and simple type guy that believed you were saved or you were not. You know, it was like a toggle switch. You have it or you do not, and if not, I can help you get it. He

began to talk to me, and the more he talked the more convinced I was that he was not saved. Well, it turned out this guy was a theologian from up north, but he began to say some things like, “I am being saved.” For me the new birth was the measure of salvation. When he said, “I am being saved,” I could not understand that. I went to preaching to him trying to get him saved because if he did not have it, and he was trying to get it, I could show him the way.

Anyway, afterwards I came to seminary, and then I began to understand more of what that guy was saying. It was not that he was not saved, it was that he knew more about what salvation meant than I did. He was talking about the present-tense salvation, and my narrow vision was squeezed down into only that past event.

That past event is where most of us Baptists live. We say, “Are you saved?” We do not really deal with where a person is on his pilgrimage. The quality of salvation and the growth experience and the progression on to maturity, *kenosis*, and ministry, we do not deal with. Ministry is for the ministers. It is not for us! We are just the pew people.

These three tenses are extremely important. When we have a perverted view of salvation that is only in the past, it means that basically your view is toward where you were. As you are walking through life, you are walking while facing backwards because you are looking at a past event. I want you to think in terms of a future event. Then you will walk facing towards your future rather than looking at your past and walking backwards.

You have no idea of what God has in store for you—the ministry that He wants for you and the purpose for which He has given you gifts. All of these things are neglected if you are looking only at the past. What I have begun to call salvation that is lived in the past is “dot” salvation. It is actually a dot in time.

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:12.

Your Christian life is a horizontal line, a historical continuum that begins at your new birth and goes to your death. That is a process, a linear view of salvation. If you convert your salvation into a dot, then there is going to be no ministry, no understanding that you have expectations on your life that have been placed there by God. There is an accountability that you have, but you cannot see it if you are a dot kind of salvation Christian. Only in a linear mode can you have that kind of understanding of what is expected of you.

Some of us will do a dot, dot, dot, kind of Christianity. We are the real whizbangs. We get out and do a dot along the way, no quantum leaps, just dot, dot, dot. We are ourselves in between each dot. We get pious, then we are ourselves, then we get pious, and then we are ourselves, etc. That is no good either because you see that is still a punctiliar view of salvation. You must have a linear kind of salvation; one that is so wide in scope that it amazes you with what God is doing just with you. He has, then, a purpose in your life. You need to find that purpose, get on that path, and run the race that He has put in place.

I have been describing perversions. Many of us will do these repetitive dots while acquiring knowledge. We will fill in between the dots and say, "Okay, we need to study the Bible." We will study the Bible, we know all about the Bible, and we can quote the Bible. But what good are we if we are not doing something? Faith without works is dead.² We must do something with our knowledge. When you are doing ministry you get linear. When you just know something, you are punctiliar, just a dot. If you are just living in the past, you have a dot kind of Christianity. If you are just getting knowledge in the present, you are practicing a dot Christianity.

² James 2:17.

Some may want to give the model some dashes. That would be the kind of thing where you do a little something, and then quit, get normal, come under conviction again, and do something, quit, get normal again.

Joe: The person who banks everything in the past, puts it in his pocket and walks on, has never started the *kenotic* pilgrimage and is not a disciple. Right?

V: Right. The only way you can be a disciple is the Lord's way. First, deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus.³

Henry: Is that person saved?

V: Punctiliarly he is. Linearly he is not, and that is what we are getting to now. Let me tell you all something. We debate this all the time: Can you lose your salvation? You cannot lose your dot, but you can lose your line. It is important that you understand. There is a lot at risk here, and if you do not teach your people, they can lose a great deal. Guess who is at fault? You!

WHAT IS MAN'S RESPONSE IN THE INITIAL EVENT OF SALVATION?

1. *Hearing.*

You have to hear it. There has to be understanding in the hearing or else you have noise, an uncertain sound. If you mumble something to somebody, and they cannot hear the words, they do not have the understanding. There must be a hearing with understanding. In the New Testament when the object of hearing is in the accusative case, it means that the hearing was with understanding. When the Lord said something that the people heard and understood, the object of what they heard is in the accusative case in

³ Matthew 16:24.

Greek. If it is not in the accusative case, they heard it without understanding.

Remember how God said things from heaven, and the disciples heard it in the accusative case, and they heard what God said. The people standing around said it was thundering because they did not hear with understanding. The first thing that has to be done is the hearing with understanding.

2. Repentance.

To repent is the word, *metanoia*. It means basically to change the mind after knowing. You can know something without repenting. You can know without changing your mind. But repentance means that when you know something is wrong, you will agree that it is wrong and discontinue doing it. You will say, "Because God says this is wrong, I must not continue doing it." That is repentance.

Repentance is a change of mind based on information coming in that you know and understand. It is a change of mind based on understanding. This change of mind will produce a change of behavior.

Now *Metamelomai* is the remorse, the feelings, the emotional content. Sometimes people take that as a sign of repentance. It is not at all necessarily a sign of repentance. For example, a thief steals something and goes home and rejoices. He goes out the next day and steals something, but gets caught. He is tearful, and says, "Oh, I should not have done this. I knew I should not have done it." That is not repentance. That is remorse for getting caught. If the feelings issue into repentance, that is good. Otherwise, it is nothing more than grief.

Let us say you have this situation. The same thief goes out and steals, comes in and rejoices. The next day he goes out and steals, and comes back and finds a tract taped to his door. He reads it, and it says that stealing is a sin. He says, "God says that what I am doing

is a sin." When the feelings of remorse and guilt come, it is not remorse at getting caught and having to go to jail. It is remorse because he has disappointed God. That remorse is a change of mind, *metanoia*,⁴ which began with hearing, understanding, and then feelings of remorse.

There is a difference in the way the feelings or the emotions are evaluated. A true *metamelomai* that has repentance linked to it can happen with no one in the room but you and the Lord, and that is when it is a true repentance. But if it is on the basis of getting caught, or any of that other kind of stuff involving temporal penalties, or disappointing people, that is remorse, and it may have nothing to do with repentance. We need to separate those things.

A lot of preachers have said that the proof of repentance was weeping and really showing repentance. They are taking the emotions as a sign of repentance. Most of the time they are, but you cannot bank on it. You must separate *metamelomai* from *metanoia*. There are some people whose repentance is a simple, rational change of mind. "God said it, and I do not understand why, but that is the way it is. I am going to change and obey God's Word." That is true repentance. *Metanoia* is the change of mind and its resultant behavior.

There is a difference in knowing and repentance. When you know the truth without obeying, there is a need for repentance. Repentance is when you know the truth, and you decide that the truth is what you are going to do. You have repented from your self-directed life into a life directed by the Lord.

Repentance can be in the *aorist* tense that is punctiliar, or it can be present tense that is linear. When you have linear repentance specified by the present tense of the commandment, it means to deepen and broaden

⁴ *Meta* is after/with, *noeo* is to know.

your repentance all the way through life. Other times when it says repent in the *aorist* tense, it means to stop going in the direction you are in, and just turn around and start going in another direction. That is punctiliar repentance.

Both tenses of repent are in the Bible, and both are in commandment form. When you see repent in the present tense which is linear, that means you are supposed to grow and continue in your repentance so that it gets broader and deeper, and then you can cry like the Apostle Paul “what a wretch I am.” We sing that song, and that is supposed to be a song for maturity. The further out you get in your pilgrimage, the more depth and the more substance there is in your repentance. In its width, repentance means that some of the innocent things you now do may become sins. With maturity you may have to refrain from things that could cause others to stumble.

After hearing and repentance comes faith.

3. Faith

Faith is belief. We don’t have a verb in English for faith. In Greek there is a faith verb which takes an object: you faith something. Faith is a noun, too. We have faith as a noun in English, but we do not have the verb. You cannot faith something. We have changed it to believe, and that is a fairly close word I think. Thus, you can believe something.

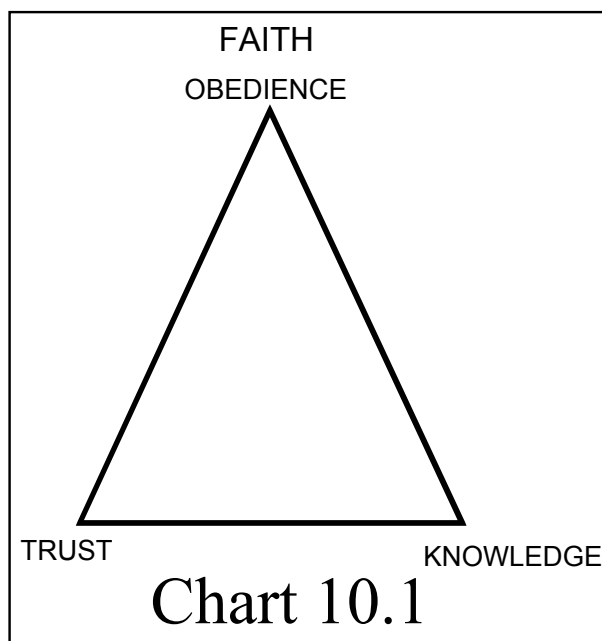
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE FAITH?

Faith is a believing in or on. It includes trust and commitment that issue into works. Without corresponding works, faith is dead.⁵

When I was studying Luther’s definition of faith, I used the acrostic KOT: **K**NOWLEDGE, **O**BEDIENCE AND **T**RUST. I saw that

true faith, then, is the triangle of true piety. Knowledge goes on the right hand corner as Pauline, obedience is at the top, the Petrine, and trust is Johannine, the lifting up and falling into the arms of God. It is a full, balanced piety. Christian faith is a balanced piety, which represents all three corners of the triangle the way Jesus did His pilgrimage (see Chart 10.1).

The Lord’s pilgrimage was one of faith. Ours is to be one of faith, and so it would then



be a balanced kind of piety. If you get out of balance, you have the knowledge and no obedience or trust, then you are in the dot salvation, a past tense kind of thing. If you have obedience only, it is a linear pilgrimage of a salvation by works. If you have trust alone, then your salvation is only emotive and without foundation. If you have all of it, the knowledge, the obedience, and the trust, then you have a true linear adoption of Christianity. With the sacrifice of your life in the *kenotic* pilgrimage, you will be pleasing to the Lord, and there will be the exaltation after bottoming out in your journey.

V: Joe, you have had my course on Hebrews. Would you read the first three

⁵ James 2:17.

verses of Hebrews 2 and wax eloquent for about a minute?

Joe: Hebrews

Hebrews

2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let [them] slip.

2:2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard [him];

Joe cont'd.: I think what Dr. Vinson is alluding to and what I have been teaching is the analogy of salvation as a flowing river. The key phrase there, "let them slip," puts us in mind of a river of God's purpose that is flowing by. Once you get into God's river up to your neck where you cannot stand, you are going to flow in God's purpose. But we, being the humans that we are, are going to step out onto the shore from time to time. When that happens, God's opportunity is going to pass us by or slip by, and the end result of that would be lost rewards.

Joe cont'd.: You can get back into God's river, you can get back into his purpose for your life, but you have lost rewards. The hard part of staying in the river, and trust me on this: Christians who know nothing of the *kenosis* will be on the bank trying to throw you a rope because they think you are drowning or suffering because of sin in your life.

V: That is a good description of God's river of salvation. A very severe threat to you occurs in the words: "How are we going to escape if we neglect such a great salvation." This warning is to you, not to those lost people out there. This warning is written to the church. Hebrews is a book on discipleship. If you are going to neglect what God

has given to you, and you are going to just concentrate on your dot or series of dots or maybe a series of dashes, then you are neglecting your salvation. Let me tell you, "You are not going to escape!" Your people are not going to escape, and if your people do not escape, and if they are guilty because they do not know, then you are guilty for not teaching them.

Every one of us must get linear, we have to get on that *kenotic* pilgrimage, and if we do not do that, we are not going to escape. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?"⁶ The Lord bought this salvation for you, He paid for it with His life, and that is a great price. God paid that high price, and He put it in your hands. What are you going to do with it? If you neglect it, and there are many who do, do not be fooled into thinking that you are going to escape. You need to have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and if you do not follow that truth and sacrifice your temporal life to it, you are not going to have that eschatological "great" life that God has purchased for you. He is ready to hand it to you, but you have to run the race to get there.

Neglecting sanctification (the line after the dot, the process) is neglecting your salvation. We can generate all kinds of ways to do this. We can come up with excuses, e.g., I am not called to do that. Or we can follow the crowd, *i.e.* nobody else is doing that, or everybody is doing it. Or we can convert it into religiosity, we can convert it into churchianity; we can convert it into emotionalism; we can convert it into just good citizenship; we can convert it into ecology; we can convert it into just about anything like the new *Gnosticism* which is a new trick of today to neglect such a great salvation. The new *Gnosticism* declares that knowledge is salvific. Knowledge is not salvific. Knowl-

⁶ Hebrews 2:3.

edge is condemning if you do not do what you know.⁷

Basically, what I have been addressing is not the casual attitude, but a perverted focus. But then, what about those that are casual?

Paul: Adopting punctiliar salvation devalues the Lord's sacrifice.

Carl: Our whole mind set, everything we have ever done and everything we have ever taught is the dot. We push people to that point, that dot, and then we drop them right there. My altar calls are to just make a choice, make a decision.

V: That decision can gain them the dot, but they can still lose the whole linear thing. They still go to heaven, but they lose much of the glorification.

We have to hear God. In the book of Revelation it says over and over again, "He that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." It takes ears that you can hear with.

We have a lot blocking out our hearing. With our prejudices and our fleshly desires, we sometimes cannot hear the Word of God when it goes against what it is that we love so dearly. There are many Christians who say that abortion, divorce, and homosexuality are sins until their child is involved in one of them, and then magically, that abomination is not a sin any more.

SALVATION

Chart 10.2 of the Doctrine of Salvation has the Trinity involved: the Father on the vertical up left side, the Son as the angle up line, and the Holy Spirit in all of the vectors

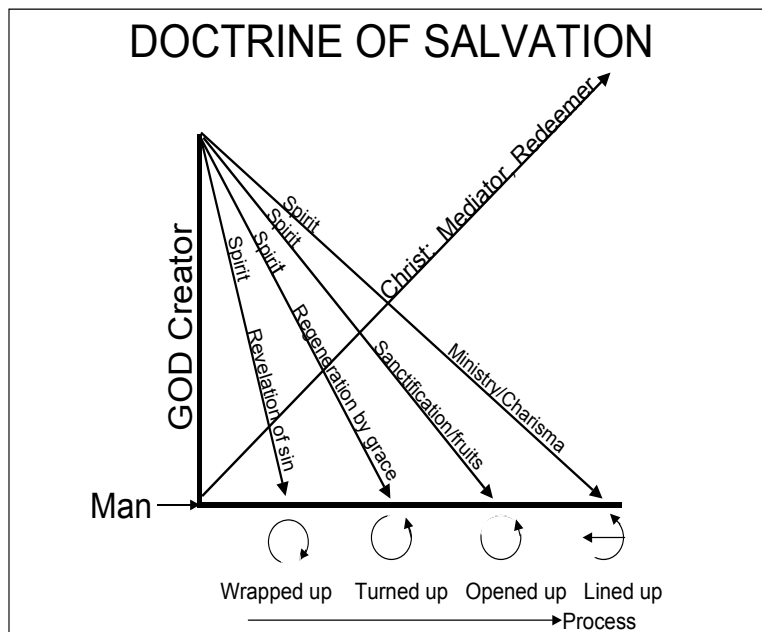


Chart 10.2

coming down. The lower horizontal line is man. All above the man line is the God part.

First, man is all wrapped up. He is pointed downward with his back up to God, and he cannot see or hear God when He is trying to reveal sin. When that person hears, then there is the spiritual dimension of regeneration, and that means he turns up and receives God's Word.

He hears in the first position, then he receives justification in the second position (punctiliar repentance and faith). On the third stage, the sanctification or the fruit-bearing part, the man begins to open up (linear faith and repentance). There is a new posture in which he is opening up and changing in his whole outlook on life. Not only has he heard the Word, he has received the Word. Now the Word is changing him, and he is beginning to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

The next stage is the ministry in which the *charismas* (spiritual gifts) are used. Since the Holy Spirit and His ministry gifts have come into the man, he can be lined up to minister to others. On Chart 10.2 ministry is a concave

⁷ James 4:17

arrow that is lined up to reflect God back across the horizontal to the people with whom the Christian comes in contact. If he is lined up properly he will give a good reflection of the Lord right back into humankind, and then they too will begin to hear, receive, blossom, bear fruit, and begin to become ministers and reflect back, and the next guy hears, opens up, and begins to change and evolve into a minister. It is a process of multiplication. Now how do we pervert all of this?

Let me show you some perversions. One perversion, and we have all experienced this, is when the third vector is missed, and the person goes from regeneration to ministry. This person is not a fruit bearer. In one of my classes, we heard about a deacon who was a practicing alcoholic. The pastor asked that deacon to step down because he was not a fruit-bearing Christian. The deacon's perversion was to skip sanctification and go all the way out to ministry.

Another perversion would be to skip the second vector. Those people are pretenders, and they are ministering all over the place. They are following a model they have in their minds and not in their hearts. They have not been regenerated by grace.

I got into a big flap in one of my doctoral seminars over this perversion that skipped the regeneration vector. At issue was the minister who was raised in a godly Christian home by a preacher. He never came to a time of rebirth because he never experienced a time when he did not believe in Jesus. He may have heard all about Him because daddy preached Jesus all of his life. So he may figure that he is saved by grace.

In my doctoral seminar, I said, "That person cannot be saved because you have to be first lost in order to be saved." I was a student, and I was speaking to a professor. He had more authority than I did, and so he won the argument. But now I can argue on equal footing.

The illustration that was presented by the professor was that many of the Christian people of Scotland who were raised in the church never had the new birth experience. The professor claimed that those people were saved without a new birth experience.

Hold it! Are they not expected to have a new birth experience? No one can be born again without the new birth experience! No one can be saved without getting saved, and no one can be saved unless they come to know they are lost. One cannot have the linear salvation without experiencing the beginning of the line, which I call the dot.

Another perversion would be to be wrapped up, turned up, opened up, but never do anything. You can see that a lack of personal ministry is the case with most of the Christians in your church. This perversion is of those who stop short of ministry. Everybody that is saved is called to ministry.

Let me give you another perversion. We get created, we are thankful for that. We hear the Word, receive the Word, and get the new birth, and then stop. There are many people like this with no fruit bearing and no ministry.

Every bit of this (pointing to my body) has the human will still in tact. You can stop at any point. Many of you do. Many of you have. And many of you will. There is nothing automatic. If it were automatic, then God would be at fault for our stopping, not us.

Basic perversions arise because either we do not know our doctrine or we don't do what we know. That is why we are the feeding grounds for the cults. I encounter people who stop right at justification (dot salvation). They over emphasize grace and never go any further. It breaks my heart because the ones who are stopping right there are convinced that they are going to be living next door to the Apostle Paul in a mansion at least as big as his, and they will wear crowns and have people swooning at their feet as they walk by.

The Doctrine of Salvation contains progression in its sanctification process which is in between the beginning dot of justification and the ending dot of glorification. God does all the miracle part, and we provide our willingness. **Will** you hear, **will** you receive, **will** you allow God to use you to bear fruit, **will** you minister? If you are willing, **God will** do it all through you.

Salvation is a gift by God through grace, not of works lest man should boast.⁸ It is all by God, and you are the recipient, but you have to be willing. You can subvert God's plan just by being unwilling. You can skip any of the events, stop too soon, or not even get the right start (see Chart 10.2 above).

Justification

What does justification mean?

It is a righteousness that is:

1. Relational: You are put in right relationship with God.
2. Legal: You are legally innocent.
3. Ontological: You are a new creature.
4. Functional: You have a new purpose in life.
5. Declarative: Your righteousness is based on God's declaration.
6. Accepted via faith: You receive it only if you believe it.
7. It is perfect via imputation: The Lord's righteousness is given to you.
8. It is growing via experience: Your righteousness results in righteous works.
9. It is given via forgiveness: Your guilt is taken away by God's forgiveness.
10. It is achieved via redemption: You are lifted up and enabled to walk anew via God's power.
11. It is followed by sanctification: After justification, God will use you for His Glory.
12. It is completed by glorification: Once justified, you will reach Glory.

⁸ Ephesians 2:8-10.

Concerning #7, perfect via imputation means that your righteousness is absolutely perfect. You have a righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Why? Because you have the Lord's righteousness imputed to you. It is not an earned righteousness. It is a given righteousness. It is imputed to you; God puts it into you.

Concerning #2, there a debate in theological circles about the legal concept. At one time, before I studied this further, I thought that justification was totally declarative which is one of the items on this list. Declarative is when you appear before the Lord in your sins, guilty as all get out, and He says, "I declare you innocent. I declare you righteous." That is a declarative position.

The legal position is one in which God's Law is fulfilled by the Lord, and His taking your place on the cross. The legal responsibility then has been fulfilled. If you just go to the declarative, you can diminish the work of the Lord by seeing that the Lord declared you innocent. But that does not really take into account all that the Lord did, and so the legal part needs to be retained in this list, you see.

Ontological righteousness is an actual righteousness in your being. Justification actually affects your being. Your personhood is not only declared righteous but also **made** righteous. Justification results not from your meritorious works. It is up to you, however, to be willing to move on down the line of sanctification to the works part that comes after the dot of justification. But concerning your personhood, your being, regeneration through justification makes you a new creature. Hopefully there will be a growing into maturity with works to match your new creaturehood. You are to work out your salvation.⁹ Some of us work it out. Some of

⁹ Philippians 2:12.

us sleep the rest of the way by playing or pandering to our own fleshly lusts.

Pete: Justification is not dependent on our works. But does sanctification connect with works?

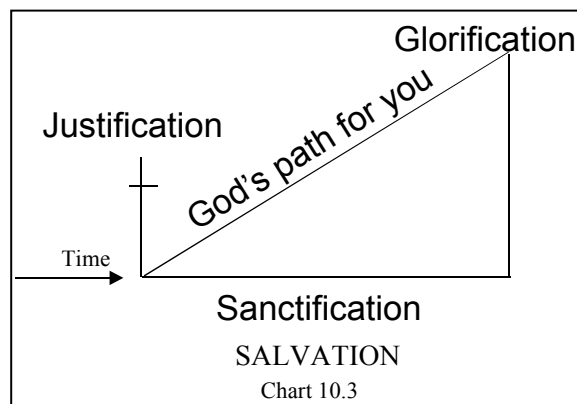
V: Yes. We are excluding works from the dot of justification because justification is by grace through faith with nothing added. It is not by works. It is totally a gift of God, and it is ontological. Once your personhood is changed, then works will hopefully issue out of that change. Even these works are done by God through us if we are but willing. The works of sanctification are a gift from God too. We just provide the will. Then God does the work through us.

A new creature hopefully is going to behave like that new creature is supposed to. Some of us have developed very stiff necks, and our behavior does not follow right along with our new creaturehood. We have to tear down old habits and rebuild new ones, and some of us are too slow at that.

I said all that about justification in order to get started on this new model. Chart 10.3 is the model of salvation that has the past, the present, and the future emphasized. Justification is a vertical line in order to show that it is punctiliar. It is like walking through the door. You are lost on one side and saved on the other side. When the Spirit comes into you to make you a new creature, it is instantaneous, and then you are launched into a new life. Hopefully you are going to be launched upwards on God's path as illustrated in Chart 10.3.¹⁰

Sanctification

Justification launches the newborn Christian on a pilgrimage, and the pilgrimage is the



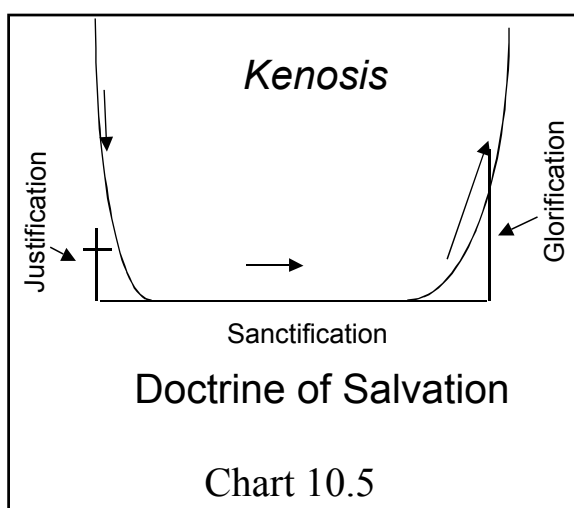
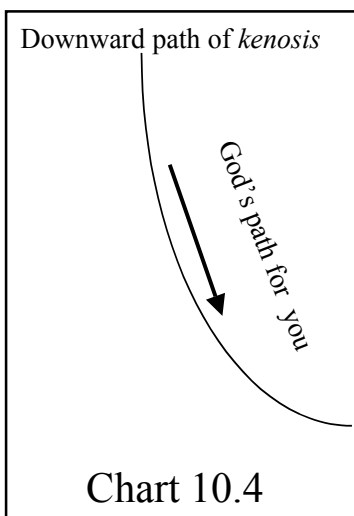
sanctification line (labeled God's Path for you). God lays this line out for you, and it is custom designed just for you. What God lays out for you takes into account what He has invested in you, where you were born, who your parents are, who your neighbors are, what country you were born in, what your spiritual gifts are, and what natural talents were given to you.

You are now supposed to maximize your impact for the kingdom of God. You stir your study of God's Word in with all that God has already given you, and then you can be a good steward, i.e. managing your life. You have only a little bit of life, so manage it to bring back the greatest return on God's investment in you. If you do not bring back that return, you are going to have some problems with God at the point of glorification.

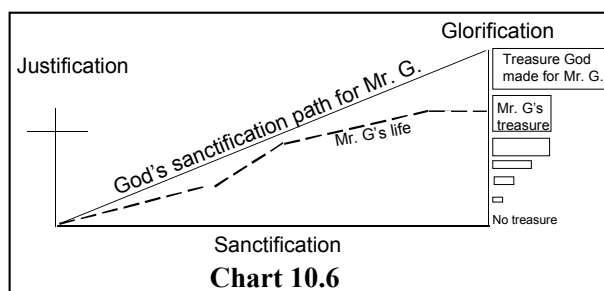
We are going to show you that the management of that return is to get on God's path and stay on it. But you have to die to self in order to get on His path because your natural self wants to get on your own path. Your path is a lot more fun. It has all the rewards during this lifetime instead of in heaven. Everyone who lives the *kenosis* will be celebrating in heaven. They will have their crowns and mansions. Those who live the upside-down *kenosis* will celebrate on earth, but will be naked in heaven. If you have any kind of fear like I have, you need to start figuring out how to at least get some clothes.

¹⁰ God's path for you is shown in this model as an upward climb. This upwardness is just to indicate difficulty. In the *kenosis*, this path is downward which indicates sacrifice. Sacrifice is very difficult.

To get on God's path is very, very difficult, and Chart 10.3 really shows God's path as upward. I think we can relate to that, but remember up is down. The *kenosis* is a downward path (Chart 10.4). Basically if you take the Doctrine of Salvation, and overlay it with the *kenosis*, you have a "U" with a flat bottom (Chart 10.5).



But let us look at Mr. G. (Chart 10.6). He is wandering around below God's path for him while having a good time. His reward will be proportional to where he walked in



relation to God's path for him.

Another guy may be called to sacrifice, like John the Baptist. John the Baptist did not have a home; he did not have any friends, did not have a family, did not have clothes, slept in the desert, ate locusts, bathed in the river, and then called people to repentance. When the day was over he went back into the desert. Where did he sleep? He did not have anything but animal skins, so he slept like an animal in the desert. The Lord said that not a greater man than John has ever been born of woman.¹¹ John the Baptist was a man that had died to himself.

We are also called to die to ourselves in the *kenosis*. The temptations drawing us away are all of the temporal joys of self-indulgence. When you yield to temporal desires, you drop down below the line you are called to be on. That will cost you in eternity. You had better enjoy the fruits of your endeavors here because you will not have those fruits for eternity. Are the pleasures for a short window of time worth the price of an eternity of pleasure and rejoicing? Do not be fooled. Do not allow Satan to tempt you and deceive you into selling your eternity.

Betty: Many people in the church today are naive and all they think about or talk about is that God has made us some promises. They just see the divine side of this doctrine. They do not see what our responsibility is. They see, "In my Father's house are many mansions, and I go prepare a place for you."¹² They think He is talking about everybody. They think you can just do whatever you want, and you will get a mansion anyway. It does not work that way.

V: Most Christians live life for the now, and forget about eternity. They cannot see beyond the curtain. Every promise is considered as one of temporal blessing. Theirs is a temporal vision that is going to pervert their

¹¹ Matthew 11:11.

¹² John 14:2.

Christianity, and it is going to cost them for eternity. It is our job to warn them before it is too late. They are going to go to heaven, but when they get to heaven, they will get no rewards.

Jerry: Like the sons of Zebedee whose mother went to the Suffering Servant Lord to ask Him to let her two sons sit on either side of Him in the Kingdom.¹³

V: That is a good example of a temporal vision. The desire was for climbing up in the upside down *kenosis* to be enthroned in an earthly kingdom.

Your pilgrimage (God's path) is designed to shape you into the image of Christ. Metamorphosis is the only way you can be shaped into the image of Christ, and it contains the necessity of walking the walk of Christ. You have to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Him.¹⁴ He walks the *kenosis*, which is that downward sacrificial walk all the way to the death. You have to die to self, and you may end up dying physically like many of our forefathers had to do. You must follow the Lord in order to be changed into the image of the Lord.

What we tend to do is make a false deal in which we declare that we are being changed into the image of the Lord without the necessity of following Him. When we follow our own desires, the metamorphosis will not take place. You must do what He does, and it is always sacrificial. There is no "me first" attitude.

The Lord declared that with the Gentiles, you have one who lords it over others, but it will not be like that for you. Instead you are going to be the servant of all.¹⁵ Your temporal realm is downward in serving others. You are to give your life in sacrificial service to the people of the world. If you do

not do that, you are not going to be changed into the image of Christ.

The image of Christ is both ontological and behavioral. You are going to be changed into the image of Christ ontologically as a free gift. It is given to you by imputation and the new birth, and it is given at the point of justification, which is the doorway, but what you do with that gift is going to depend upon your will. You have to be willing to say, "Not my will, but thine, Lord."¹⁶ When you do that, you will begin to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow the Lord. Only then will you change into the image of Jesus Christ.

Not until you can weep with a broken heart because of seeing the hurting and deception of humanity, will your metamorphosis be in process. When you see your people in your church who do not know the truth and do not have ears to hear it, you will have agony. You are broken hearted when you go to bed at night. You get up in the morning and you struggle and weep, and you carry that weight with you, and when you have those kinds of tears, then you can reach up and touch those tears. That is the only time you can know the suffering servant side of Jesus because you have to be able to touch His tears to know Him.

What we have done is cut off those agonies. All we want to do is rejoice, clap our hands with a hallelujah and say that, because of our liver quivers and goose bumps, we really know the Lord. We only know half. We have to know the whole Lord, the suffering Messiah, and we must walk in that pilgrimage. When we can do that, we can know the Lord, and when we know the Lord, we will begin to change and become just like Him. Our behavior will change.

Jesus Christ left heaven and descended. He went through the *kenosis* humbled, obedi-

¹³ Matthew 20:20-21.

¹⁴ Matthew 16:24.

¹⁵ Mark 9:35.

¹⁶ Luke 22:42; John 5:30, 6:38.

ent, obedient unto death. He was despised and mocked. He left His heavenly kingdom. His temporal reign was a reign of dying. It was a reign of selflessness. It was a reign of not holding on to His kingly status. It was a reign in which He became sin when He knew no sin. That is the model for us, and the only way that we can get in that model is by following the Lord's will, not ours.

Sanctification will not work by trying to get on some other man's plan. You must get onto God's plan for you. Each of you has God's perfect will expressed in His path for you. You are not going to stroll through God's plan. It is going to wear you out. You are going to holler, "UNCLE," and you are going to say, "Nobody can do this!" And, you are right. Nobody but the Lord can do it, and you have to yield your will to Him in order to let it be done through you. God's path is extremely hard. When we get to heaven, there will not be any of us boasting in our accomplishments. You are going to be looking at the Lord saying, "My Lord did that!" Every success you had will be attributed to Him.

Here are some scriptures on being changed into the image of Jesus: Romans 8:28-30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; John 14 and 15.

Let's look at John 15 for the requirement of obedience: "If a man loves me, he will keep my words. He who says that he loves me and keepeth not my sayings is lying."¹⁷

In this passage there is a progression from servanthood into friendship.

John

15:14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

You get saved, that is, you come through the gateway of justification. You are like a newborn babe. You do not know anything. You can go to church for twenty years and still be a baby in Christ. You need to know some things, but the problem is that you are going to be trained not to do the things that you know. You are going to be trained just to know things, and to know some more things, and to know some more things. But our job is to train our people to do what they know so that they may become servants. They are going to become servants out of simple obedience. The Lord is looking for that person who does not understand all of God's underlying reasons for the command, but who will still obey simply because the Lord said it.

Joe: If we know that our first step in discipleship is a call to obedience to baptism, but if a person does not follow through with that obedience, has there been true repentance?

V: Yes, there was true repentance if the person has been saved. However he is not going to progress into maturity unless he can do the simplest act of obedience, which is baptism, a passive obedience. A passive obedience means that you do not do the doing of it. You just allow it to be done to you. You do not go out and do the thing; you just fall back into the arms of the minister for him to do it.

The very next plateau in obedience is something like church attendance. Following that is reading the Bible, which is followed by witnessing. It is a progressive kind of obedience. But a lot of this is going to be just plain old obedience until you get far enough along to hear the Lord say, "You are my friend. From this point on, I am going to cut you in on the big plan." He says, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my

¹⁷ John 14:21, 1 John 2:4.

Father I have made known unto you.”¹⁸ He cuts you in on His plans, and now all of a sudden you can see all the way to the end. You can see the *kenosis*. You can see past the veil of death and that there is something beyond all of this. The temporal rewards are nothing but lures to rob you of your eternity. But you cannot get the eternal rewards without obeying. Even when you do not understand why, you still obey simply because He commanded. Because of who He is, I am going to do it whether or not I understand why. When you prove that you are worthy of being called a friend, then He says, “Okay, I am going to tell you the plan because you are My friend.”

Joe: I call that, “Color by number.” He gives you blue; that is all you can handle. You keep it faithfully. You see the sky, and you see the water but that is about it. If you are faithful, then He will give you green. You start seeing the grass and the trees, but if you got the whole picture to color at once without the numbers, you would not be able to handle it. But if you are faithful with each color, at some point He will show you the whole picture.

V: And you see, if you never started coloring because you did not know what the picture was going to look like, or you quit too soon because you cannot see the picture, then you will never see the whole picture.

It is extremely important for you to know that when you are on your path, you may not understand. There may be fog and all manner of obstructions and turmoil coming into your life. Just keep on putting one foot in front of the other because Jesus said so. That is all you have to do, and one of these days you will get to a point where He is going to say, “You are doing good. You are my friend. I am going to tell you where we are going.” It is going to blow you away because you have

been cut into the big plan. You have become a friend of the Lord.

GLORIFICATION

Glorification is the end-time events that transition from temporal existence to eternal existence. We know the least about this term because it is beyond time. I am going to recite my own personal understanding here. It is only mine. You do not have to accept it as your own.

At glorification several things are going to happen. First our body will be resurrected and rejoined with our soul and spirit.¹⁹ Second, we will be judged on the basis of our works.²⁰ Third, we will return with the Lord for the millennial reign followed by the Great White Throne Judgment in which the wicked dead will be resurrected to have their works judged.²¹ Fourth, we will then enter eternity with our Lord.²²

Now our status in heaven is going to depend upon our temporal works. Our getting into heaven is not based on our works in any way because heaven comes from our justification, which is by grace through faith, the gift of God. However, our temporal works, which occur in the period of sanctification, are very important. All heavenly rewards will be based on our works. God says that we are to lay up treasure in heaven.²³ We do so by our works.

Thus, I shall talk about the judgment seat of God where your works will be judged, and your rewards will be determined. This is a sermon to the saints about glorification. Many have tried to change this into a judgment of ontology or justification. Instead this sermon drives home the need for us to be “profitable” servants for Jesus.

¹⁸ John 15:15.

¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:52-54.

²⁰ Matthew 25:14-28.

²¹ Revelation 20:11-13.

²² Revelation 21:1-6.

²³ Matthew 6:19-21.

Matthew

25:14 For [the kingdom of heaven is] as a man travelling into a far country, [who] called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

25:15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

25:16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made [them] other five talents.

25:17 And likewise he that [had received] two, he also gained other two.

25:18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

Ephesians 5:14-17 concerns redeeming the time, and that is what we are supposed to do in order to be profitable stewards.

Ephesians

5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord [is].

Note the progression in this Ephesians passage. Imagine a person lying down on a bed asleep. The first thing He says is, "Awake!" That person awakes, fully alert. This symbolizes the new birth. Then He says to this person, "Arise!" That person gets up out of the bed, and he is standing, ready to do something. He has obeyed the first two commands. He has awakened, and he has arisen. Then the Lord says, "Walk." Now He is going to be working, moving out, and so awake, arise, and walk all the way to the end. You are now able to redeem the time.

However, you will not be redeeming the time if you walk the flat line of sanctification. Walk wisely. The wise kind of walk is that

you walk circumspectly. That means looking at self. What are you doing? Are you doing the kind of ministry that your gifts are suited to, or are you trying to imitate some hero that you have seen somewhere else? Are you trying to do something that is not in God's plan for you? Walk circumspectly.

Make your time count profitably for ministry. When they arrest you, use the occasion to preach. When a crisis breaks out in your setting, redeem it! Make some profit out of it. When you are driving and you get lost and you are asking a stranger for direction, redeem that encounter. When you are at a gas station buying gas, you ought to have some tracts—redeem the time.

Then comes the wisdom and understanding of what the will of the Lord is. If you will simply obey, then the Lord will call you friends and reveal to you what His way is. That is the increased understanding part that comes last in the triangle of piety.

There could be a lack of understanding until you are well into your journey. He will say, "Now you have been faithful, let me show you what my plan is and how you fit into it." But He is not going to do that unless you do fit into it. If you do not fit into it because of faithless disobedience, you know when you are going to discover it? Not until the glorification side of salvation!

Matthew 25 is also about using your gifts. These men were given their talents, and they used those talents to bring forth profit. 1 Timothy 4:14-16 refers to using your gifts.

1 Timothy

4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

4:15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing

this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

God has given you at least one gift, and you need to know what it is and not neglect it. Do not just say, “Well, I do not understand all this stuff, so I am not going to fool with it.” That is neglecting the gift. You need to “meditate on these things” as it says, and then throw yourself with reckless abandon into the use of that gift.

If you have been given the gift of evangelism, go out into the streets and share your gospel message with the lost and see what happens. You will be surprised. If you have been given the gift of mercy, reach out and minister and lift somebody up and help them. If you have been given the gift of teaching, get in there and start teaching Sunday school. You cannot use the excuse that you are scared or do not know how to do it. Do not do that. Throw yourself with reckless abandon into ministry (redeeming the time) and let God demonstrate His tremendous power through you.

So we have to redeem the time, and we have to use our gifts. If you can do that, you will bring forth profit. That is what the first two stewards did, the five-talent guy doubled his, and the two-talent guy doubled his. What did the one-talent guy do? He did not bring back any profit because he did not redeem the time nor did he use his gift. He buried his gift.

Verse 18 says, “He had received one and went and digged in the earth and hid his Lord’s money.” You need to notice that he did not lose his talent; he did not sully his Lord’s name. He did not do any of the “bad” things. This is a good man, and he saved and retained every bit that the Lord had given him. That is what he brings back to his Lord. He brings his proof of his servanthood to be judged.

Matthew

25:19 After a long time the lord of those

servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

25:20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

25:21 His lord said unto him, Well done, [thou] good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

25:22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

25:23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Please see the proportionality required of us. If you are told this is your path in life (see Chart 10.6 above), and you vary off of that, you are not going to be measured by the man on another line. You are going to be measured on how you did in regard to your own line because God does not want you to walk another man’s line. He wants you to walk your own line.

If you achieve your line, you will receive the same words as the man who achieved his much higher line. The principle of sanctification is proportionality because to whom much is given, much is required.²⁴ The first man was given much; he must turn in much at the end. If he does not, the second man will be his superior.

Let me tell you that there are some folks that are just like you who will be superior over all of us. They are not given much but they accomplish much. They are on their line. We had a nursery worker in a church in Georgia who touched the lives of hundreds of children including my own children. She did not know how to do much. She could not

²⁴ Luke 12:48.

read or write and do all the fancy stuff. She was not a theologian, but she was there touching those children whenever it was time to be there. She ministered to those children, she helped them overcome their fears, she built character in them, and she built values in them. The people she touched still talk about her today even though she is dead and gone. When I was in that church, I watched that woman, and I watched the “high-rent” folks, and I began telling them, “You had better be nice to that lady. She is going to be your boss in heaven because she is on her line.” Proportionality means that you are measured by what the Lord has given you to do.

The flat-liner in sanctification does not earn proportional profit from his gifts.

Matthew

25:24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25:25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, [there] thou hast [that is] thine.

He brings back what he was given; he does not lose any of it. But he does not bring forth a profit.

Matthew

25:26 His lord answered and said unto him, [Thou] wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

His wickedness is the sin of omission. This passage is not talking about the sin of commission. The sin of commission means that he committed overt sins, and he would bring back less than was given to him. The sin of omission means that he did not commit overt sins. He just did not make his profit. He is clean. He did not go out and do all the bad things. He just failed to do those things he was commanded to do.

Slothful means he did not redeem the time. Redeeming the time is how you make your profit. He is wicked and slothful. Wicked means that he disobeyed through omission. The Lord said, “Thou knowest that I reap where I sow not, and gather where I have not strawed.”²⁵ The Lord’s profits come from His servants’ work.

The minimum profit should at least be some interest on investment.

Matthew

25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and [then] at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

Usury is interest. If you are afraid or unwilling to go out and do the ministry the Lord has called you to do, the very least you can do is help another minister do what he is called to do. If you can do that, it will bring interest to your account. That is at least something to bring to the Lord, which is more than what you were given. Your profit may not be proportional to your gifts, and you may not get that “well done my good and faithful servant,” but you will not get this “wicked and slothful”²⁶ business either. I certainly do not want that part.

God is calling you, just like everybody else, to be right on your line. He is calling you to a *kenotic* pilgrimage that is costly to you but profitable to Him. Being unprofitable in your sanctification pilgrimage will cost you in heaven.

Matthew

25:28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give [it] unto him which hath ten talents.

25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

²⁵ Matthew 25:24.

²⁶ Matthew 25:26.

Now watch this, the five-talent guy is standing there with ten talents. He started out with five, and he earned five more. He is standing there barely able to hold the ten he has, and he wants to give the ten talents back to the Lord. The Lord says, "You are a good servant." Then to the one-talent guy without any profit, the Lord says, "Take that one talent and give it to the ten-talent man. Now that ten-talent man is an eleven-talent man. The Lord may be taking talents from other bad stewards and giving them to the eleven-talent man, too. The good steward is going to have so many talents he will have to get wheelbarrows and pickup trucks just to carry them to his mansions. He is going to have talents all over the place. Every one of us will be judged on our stewardship.

Why did He give the misused talents to the one with ten talents? because much was risked on him. God took a risk and gave him five talents, and the steward came through for God. If He had only given him one talent, and he came through, there was little risk. But when He gives you a lot of talents, you had better come through. There is much risk here.

The Lord risked the universe on twelve men. One failed, but the others came through. Praise God! He is asking you to come through for Him, and if you will and you are given much, you are going to be loaded down with rewards, my friend. You will be staggered at the thought of receiving more when you are trying to give them all back to Him because you are swooning with your love and your praise of Him. You are saying, "I want to give them back to You to glorify You as an expression of my love and gratitude!" But He is saying, "You haven't seen anything yet. I am going to give you even more!"

But now here is this one-talent guy. . .

Matthew

25:28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give [it] unto him which hath ten

talents.

25:29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

The one-talent guy is going to go through heaven with less than he had on earth! You had better start feeling some fear here because he ends up with zero. He had one all through his earthly pilgrimage, but now he has zero to go through eternity with. Not only that but. . .

Matthew

25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Most people want to make this verse into a salvation issue of heaven versus hell, but this is a judgment of a servant and his rewards in heaven. This expression is hyperbole, i.e. when you use an exaggeration in order to heighten the distinction. Hyperbole is like Luke 14:26 where the Lord says, "You have to hate your mother and your father if you are going to be worthy of me." That is hyperbole. That does not mean that you are really supposed to hate your mother and your father. But comparing your love for your parents with that for Jesus the former love would appear as hate. Hyperbole is a language device in order to heighten distinction.

Being in outer darkness and the gnashing of teeth and the weeping are all hyperbole. You are not going to be chatting with the Lord through eternity right at His right hand wherever He goes. There will be millions of people trying to get to Him. You are going to be on the outside just wishing you could get a glimpse of Him over all these tall people that you cannot see over. Hyperbole expresses your final condition as darkness compared to the brilliance of the light close to Jesus. You are going to gnash your teeth for the lost opportunities.

A time of anguish is coming. At the Great White Throne judgment, we are going to shed

the tears and gnash our teeth and feel the weakness in our knees. All of this is going to happen to you, my friend. Please know that what I am trying to do now is put enough fear into you that you are not going to be out there in the outer darkness trying to get up close. Instead I want you to have full rewards and be in the inner circle, and be able to talk to the Lord and the Apostle Paul and all the rest of the good stewards on a regular basis. That is what I want for you, and that is what I want you to want for your people.

There is another passage dealing with stewardship. It involves being saved through fire, 1 Corinthians 3:13 -15.

1 Corinthians

3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

This passage means that when you come out to glorification, your profits from your works are going to be tested. The Lord is going to strike a match (I am using analogical language here), put the fire to your profit, and it will go pffff. It will just flash like gunpowder. You will say, "Well, where did my profits go?" But you will be saved, singed, but saved and smelling like burnt hair. A lot of us will be like that.

Please see that your works may burn up, but you yourself will make it. You will be zero in heaven, but you will be there. If you go through the door of justification, you are going to get to heaven, but the trip there is in your hands, and what you end up with is in your control. It is under your will. Will you deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus? Will you launch out on the *kenotic* pilgrimage going downward and looking to

rewards on the other side, not being diverted by your rewards here?

Next we come to the law of the harvest: Galatians 6:7-9.

Galatians

6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

This passage means then that on the upward sanctification line (see Chart 10.6 above), you sow to the Spirit because it is the Spirit that is guiding your life. But if you walk below that line, you are sowing to the flesh. You are being diverted to the lust of the flesh. You are working for the temporal rewards, and you will receive corruption. The one on the flat line at the bottom comes out with zero; the one on God's path comes out with maximum rewards (See Chart 10.6 above). The Spirit enables you to reach the maximum. The flesh gives you zero. That is the law of the harvest. Do not force rewards into a temporal time frame. Always remember that laying up rewards in heaven means that the rewards come **after** this lifetime.

What Satan is going to try to do is get your eyes off of eternity and on to the now. He will try to get you to stop looking up at Jesus and start looking down at your circumstances like he did with Peter when Peter was walking on the water. If he can do that, he has you right where he wants you. Then you can be a normal Christian, have a nice career, a good job, all the status that you want, the luxuries of the flesh, and all the things that everybody thinks that a Christian is supposed to achieve. However, you will lose it all in eternity. What you have to do is sow to the Spirit and lose your life now. If

you have life now, you will lose it. If you lose your life now, you will have it.

This lesson is difficult to learn but easy to forget. You will leave this chapter knowing this lesson down in your heart all the way to

your toes, and tomorrow you will be right back in the old rat race. So preach it, teach it, and maybe you will become it. If you are willing to try, lift your hand up to Jesus right now and tell Him.

Questions for Chapter 10

1. Draw the doctrine of salvation that shows the Trinity.
2. Draw the doctrine of salvation that shows God's path for you.
3. What are the one way, two sides, and three tenses of salvation?
4. What is man's response to the initial event of salvation?
5. What does it mean to have faith?
6. What does justification mean?

Chapter 11

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MINISTRY

When considering ordinances versus sacraments, which is preferable and why?

ORDINANCES

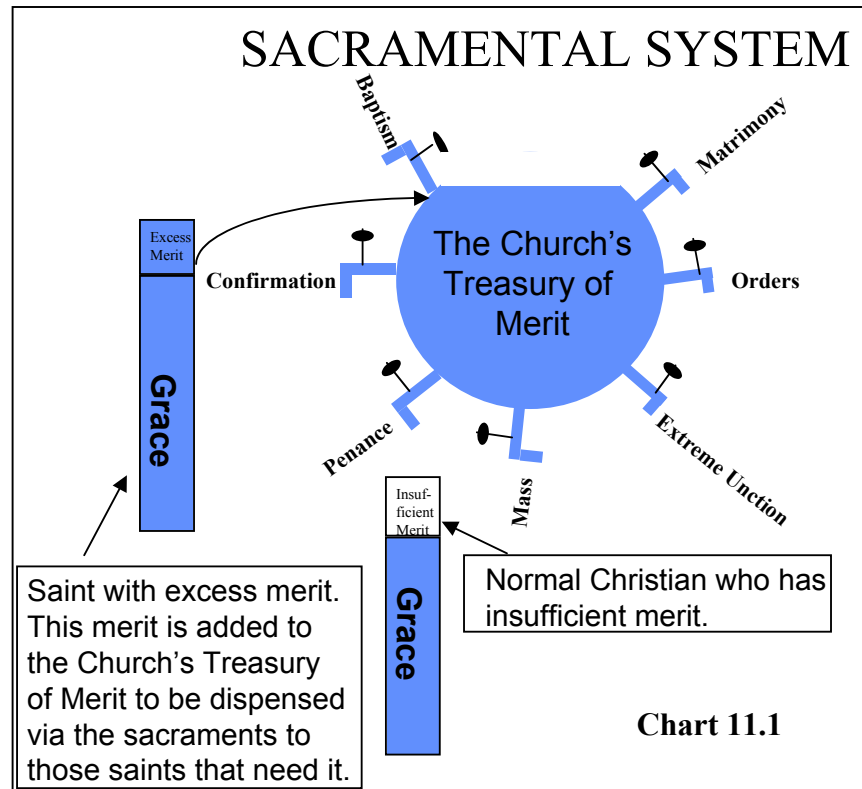
Ordinances are observances commanded by God. There are two: baptism and Lord's Supper.

Sacraments are considered to be salvific because they are seen as conveyers of grace. The term, ordinance is preferable because they do not save us. God saves us without an intermediary.

We are evangelicals; evangelical means "good news." We are good news people. Good news people believe that we do not need to go to some person other than God for our salvation. It comes directly. When you confess your sins to God, He is "faithful and just to forgive you"¹ of those sins. There is no mediation. There is nothing between you and God. He saves you directly. He gives you the new birth directly.

In a sacramental kind of salvation there is something between God and the person, and that something is a priest and a sacrament. Both are required in sacramentalism. In sacramental theology you have grace stored up in a big urn called the Treasury of Merit in the Roman Catholic Church. It takes a certain amount of meritorious grace in a person for him to be saved. If the person is a saint, there will be more grace/merit in that person than is

required for his salvation. That excess grace goes into the Treasury of Merit to be dispensed by the church to the people who lack enough grace for salvation (see Chart 11.1).



The Treasury of Merit has spigots, seven of them, through which grace can be dispensed. Those spigots are called sacraments. Grace will move through the spigot into the candidate who is taking the sacrament, *i.e.* the mass, confession, confirmation, marriage, etc. Sacraments convey grace into the recipient.

Let us take for example a person with insufficient meritorious grace for salvation. He either needs additional grace, or he needs to be purged of the sin that has accumulated in his life. If he does not get the additional grace, he has to go to purgatory. It is named purgatory because it is a purging place to get the excess sin removed. While he is in purgatory, you can send him extra grace. Parents and

¹ 1 John 1:9.

loved ones may do indulgences in order to send grace to the beloved person that is in purgatory so that he does not have to do the whole time in purgatory. The time in purgatory must be just long enough to cover that part of his life that is not already covered by the grace that he earned here on earth via his meritorious works.

Henry: Dr. Vinson, I have a document that I got off the Internet, just released. “No salvation outside of Roman Catholicism says the New Vatican Dictum” which was released as the 36th declaration that she alone has a corner on salvation. All other churches are not churches in the proper sense. They say that a person who receives baptism in a Protestant church gets a little bit of grace. This is only because Roman Catholicism teaches that baptism regenerates and that original sins are forgiven by baptism. However since Roman Catholic salvation is in the installment plan, one must continue to receive the sacraments or lose it. In other words if they do not continue to get their sacraments they will lose what little grace they have accumulated.

V: Their thought goes something like this: as the person goes through life, there is the accumulation of sin, and accumulation of grace through good works. The sin usually exceeds the grace from good works. The extra grace that is needed to balance the scales must come from the sacraments. The scales never get balanced before death unless the person is a saint. A normal person does not have enough grace to go straight to heaven. He either needs extra grace or he has to go to purgatory to get those remnant sins purged off.

Mary: We were taught exactly that kind of sacramentalism in Catholic school. If you have a relative that dies, you go to church, you light candles, you pay to have masses said for them in order to send them grace to reduce their time and suffering in purgatory. I still get requests like that in the mail from my relatives.

V: Yes, sacramentalism is easy to spot. However, please be aware that Roman Catholic theology uses many words that are very acceptable to evangelicals, but the meaning behind them is based on their sacramental system. You can easily think that there is nothing wrong with these guys because they seem to be just like we are. They say and we say that we are saved by grace. Hey, they are talking my language and yours, too. But, where do they get their grace? from the spigot. They have an intermediary (a priest) and a sacrament. A sacrament requires an ordained priest to be valid. We get deeper into this in the Church History course.

The questions for the Catholic are, “How do you know when you have done enough works? Have you got enough grace?” Those are the critical issues because Roman Catholicism is a works-based system, and any time you enter a works-based system, the one thing that you do not know is whether you have done **enough** works.

The Catholics have set up a test for the canonization of saints. The candidate for sainthood must be able to work a miracle while he is alive and work another one after he is dead. If he can do that, then he has enough grace not only to save himself but enough to give some into the Treasury of Merit. Those miracle-working saints are the only ones that have enough grace to go directly to heaven. Everybody else will be coming up on the short end of the works-based system. This shortcoming ties them perpetually to obtaining grace from the church in order to reduce the severity of suffering and the amount of time that the Christian must endure in purgatory.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

We are going to look at the Holy Spirit, and how the Holy Spirit is involved in the Christian life. Justification, sanctification and glorification, the whole span of salvation, are parts of the Christian life. There is not one

little bit of salvation in which the Holy Spirit is not involved, and without Him there is no Christian life. The first place that the Spirit touches us is on our being.

Ontology

He deals with your ontology (your being) in at least four ways.

1. The new birth. John 3:3.

When you go through the door of justification, you experience a new birth, and when you are new born, you are different from what you were before you went through that door. That new birth brings a new character, a new personality, a new something in you. The Holy Spirit is the agency and the power of God through which the new birth is accomplished.

- a. A new fellowship accompanies the new birth, and it is bi-directional. It is vertical up, and it is horizontal (see Chart 11.2). The vertical up means that you have a new fellowship with God, and on the horizontal basis, you have a new fellowship with each other.

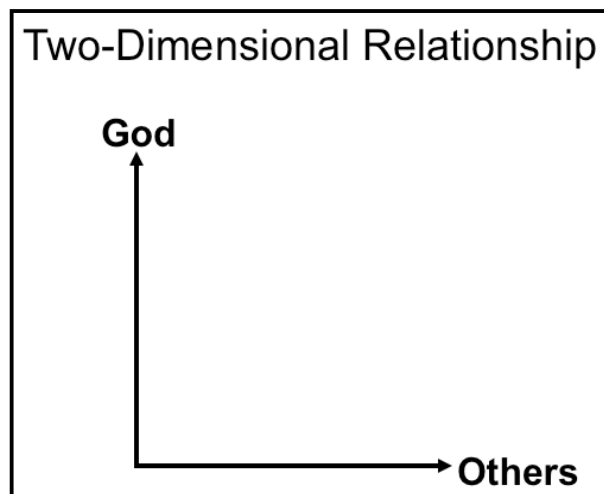


Chart 11.2

- b. There is also a sonship with the new birth. You are made a child of God. That new birth was into a new family.

2. Justification also brings an indwelling of the Spirit. Ephesians 1:14.

When you experience the new birth, the Holy Spirit comes into you, sets up shop, starts moving furniture around, redecorating, painting, changing things around, throwing out a bunch of junk. Some of you probably had to have a big dump truck out there to haul off a lot of it (much laughter in the class).

3. God seals the new born. Ephesians 1:13.

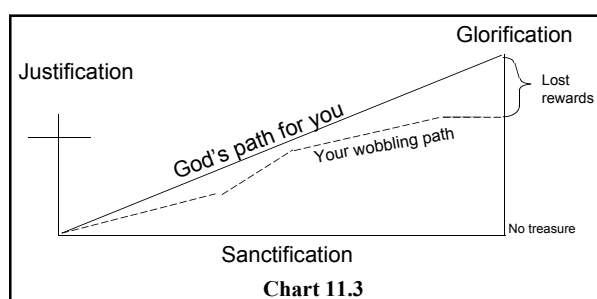
When the Lord comes to birth you, and the Holy Spirit comes into you and changes your being, there is a seal, "Property of God" that is put on you. You are a new creature. That is why you cannot lose your salvation. Your behavior can reduce your sanctification and your glorification because behavior is your contribution, but when it comes to your new creature-hood, the sealing of your personhood, the "Property of God Almighty" seal, your behavior does not impact that. That is an ontologically sealed change. It does not matter what happens to you afterwards, that seal is going to remain there. Nobody can break it. You are eternally changed and owned because you have been purchased with the perfect purchase price.

Never confuse the security that is found in justification with the insecurity that is found in sanctification. Dot salvation can generate flippancy about your pilgrimage. But when we see salvation as our journey, we should fear the costs of losing our rewards. So how do I keep you from becoming insecure? By dealing with the sealing on your ontology, and that secures you forever. You are going to go to heaven because if you are God's property sealed by the Holy Spirit as God's earnest, you are going to go to heaven.

But I do not want to overly secure you so that your behavior is not respectful, and you have no fear of God during your pilgrimage. Therefore I must help you to recognize that you can lose all of those rewards that are

stored up for you by misbehaving. That misbehaving is loss of salvation in your sanctification period, not loss in your justification. Loss occurs by coming up short in your sanctification.

Remember now, there is God's intended path for you, but if you wobble below it, you come short of God's goal for you by the amount of your wobble (see Chart 11.3). That loss of the corresponding rewards is loss of a part of salvation, but it is not the whole salvation. It is loss of rewards.

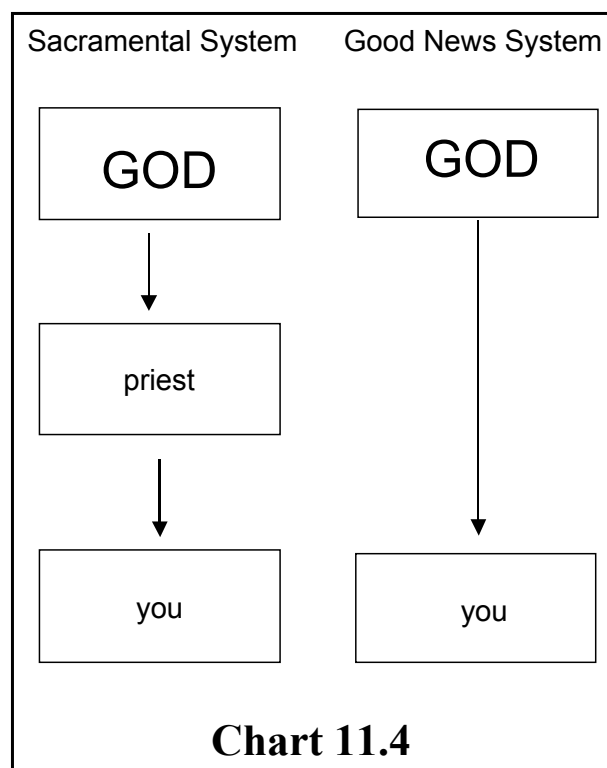


There are saved people who do the atrocious things. And if you look at behavior to determine justification, every one of you would be deemed lost at some period in your Christian life. If sin becomes a persistent lifestyle, then my educated guess is that the person was never saved. But to speculate on justification based on behavior is tough. I really do not like to do that, but I can warn sinners and question their salvation. The question will allow the Spirit to dig in and penetrate.

Wanda: Almost twenty years ago, I was engaged to a Catholic. I started going to the Catholic class so I could convert, and when that priest told me that I would have to confess my sins to him, I said, "I confess to no man but to God." When he told me that I was going to hell, I broke the relationship. Having been saved already, if I had married the man I was engaged to, what would have happened to me?

V: You would be scraping the bottom in your sanctification because you would have spent your life obeying a priest or the church

or their traditions. You would not have been following God and obeying Him. The Priest made a sacramental statement that you would have to confess to him. That puts the priest between God and you (see Chart 11.4). The Good News People, evangelicals, believe that there is nobody between us and God. That is the good news. God saves you, and you do not have to jump through hoops of any church or any priest or anything like that because God does it.



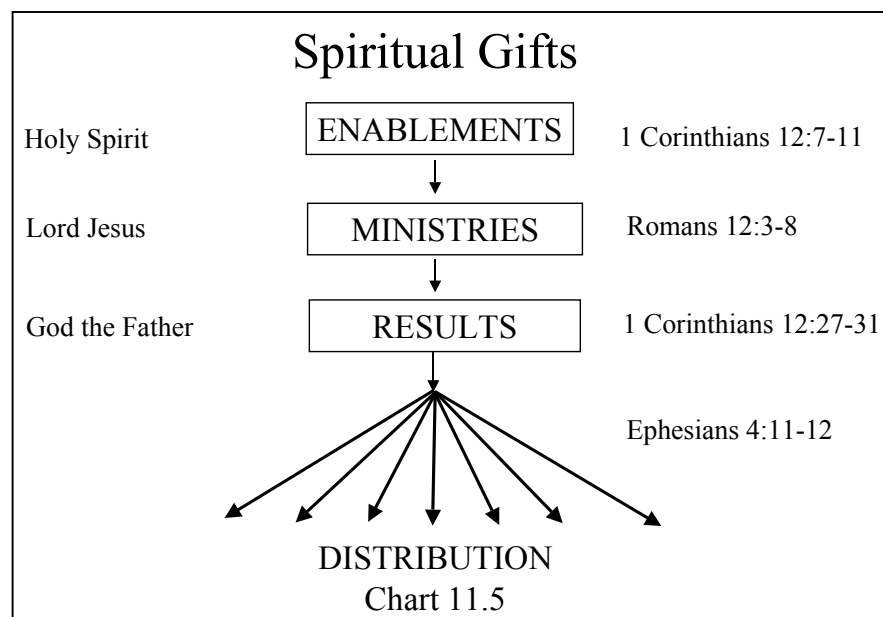
4. God gives us spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:1-6.

In this passage in 1 Corinthians, God is linking the spiritual gifts to the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is in charge of part, the Lord is in charge of part, and God the Father is in charge of part. You have enablements; they feed into ministries, and out of the ministries come results. Those three parts link together in a system.

Enablements are the Holy Spirit's part as described in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 (see Chart 11.5). The Lord is in charge of ministries,

Romans 12:3-8. He says, “Deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow me.”² If you follow Him, He will make you a fisher of men.³ Ministry is a work that you are going to be doing. All of the ministries are under the purview of your Lord, and they require you to do things. The enablements are in your ontology where the Holy Spirit comes into you and brings new enablements to you. You are going to use the enablements in ministries, and the Lord is going to tell you what your ministries are. When you do those ministries, God the Father is going to give the results, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31.

Romans 12:3-8 describes the various ministries that the Lord Jesus calls us to do. Sometimes results will be a redistribution of gifted people, Ephesians 4:11-12, sometimes the results will be newly saved people, and sometimes there are also new gifts given. God is in charge of the results. The spiritual gifts are enablements, ministries, and results (See Chart 11.5.)



If we go to 1 Corinthians 14, we see that ministry is to be the supreme desire concerning spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians

14:1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual [gifts], but rather that ye may prophesy.

Ministry is our main thing. Everybody who gets born again, gets gifts. But that is not the main thing because you can have a ton of gifts but come up zero at the end because it is not what you have that counts, it is what you **do** with what you have that counts.

A. Enablements

You need to see this very simple truth: enablements are not something that you do. When the church tries to convert enablements into ministries, then you get all this foolishness that goes on within uneducated Christendom.

God points out clear distinction between enablement and ministry.

1 Corinthians

14:2 For he that speaketh in an [unknown] tongue. . .

Tongues is an enablement. To speak in an unknown tongue profits only the speaker. To profit others the enablement needs to be applied in ministry—prophecy.

. . . speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth [him]; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

14:3 But he that prophesieth . . .

Prophecy is a ministry that uses tongues.

. . . he that prophesieth speaketh unto men [to] edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

14:4 He that speaketh in an [unknown] tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

14:5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater [is] he that prophesieth than he that speaketh

with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

You need to see here that the ministry is what is counting. Ministry is the part that “you” do. You see God the Spirit endowed you with enablements. God the Father gives the results. What is your part? Ministry under the Lordship of God the Son is your part. If you do not do your part, there will not be any results.

B. Ministry

You can have all the spiritual enablement gifts but still be a zero because profitability depends upon submitting your will to your Lord and doing your assigned ministry. Will you deny yourself, pick up your cross and follow Jesus?⁴ You cannot follow Jesus and go and do your own thing. The very first condition for discipleship is self-denial.

God is in charge of distributing the gifted people. Ephesians 4:11-13.

Ephesians

4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

If you do your ministry, God will give these results and then distribute them into the various churches. If you keep doing your ministry, there are going to be some more results to be spread all around.

C. Results

The results given by God include all categories.

⁴ Matthew 16:24.

1 Corinthians

12:28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

12:29 [Are] all apostles? [are] all prophets? [are] all teachers? [are] all workers of miracles?

12:30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

Notice in this passage that God produces offices, enablements, and ministries to name a few. He is going to recycle those results and produce more new results to recycle. The people bearing the new gifts are going to identify their enablements and do their ministries. The results are going to follow. That is how Christianity spreads. That is also why we have a problem in our churches because we have one minister behind the pulpit, and a congregation full of spectators. The church is a sleeping giant.

Jo: Why does the Baptist Church have such a problem with women in ministry?

V: Because they do not understand God's plan of ministry. There are enablements for women, there are ministries for women, and there are going to be results for women. If you keep God's order in place, the church will prosper and the world will benefit. God's way is His way, and there is no room for negotiation. If we start demanding that He compromise with us, then we are our own god, and God the Father becomes our fetch and tote servant. In this case we would really like to replace His Words with our own and write us a brand-new Bible.

Ministry is outward. It is from you. It costs you something to do ministry. The very minimum it is going to cost you is self denial, which means you do not get to do what you want to do. The second thing is that you have to go where you do not want to go. Jesus says, "Pick up your cross and follow me." The third thing it is going to cost you is your life and all

your career aspirations and all of the good things you want for yourself and your family. Your greatest challenge is to follow Jesus, and then He will tell you what to do.

Ministry is the critical area. The reason it is critical is that it depends upon us, and every one of us brings a certain amount of baggage into our Christian pilgrimages. We think that the pastor is the only one that can do real ministry because he is a trained professional. You justify your shirking of ministry with this kind of excuse: "You would not allow somebody who is not a brain surgeon to operate on your brain. So you are not going to let a layman do ministry." Bunk! Every Christian must be raised up into ministry. If you pastors fail to do that, you are perverting God's ministry.

Pete: Are you saying that everybody is called to certain positions in the church?

V: No, I am not talking about offices. I am talking about ministries. Everybody participates in ministry. If you are saved, you are a minister. An office is not required for ministry.

Betty: They do not believe that in our church!

Jerry: I see a lot of problems in our churches. They take the ministries and put them in an office. But we are talking about ministry and not offices. When we refer only to the offices, we cut the ministries out.

V: The ministry is not a private possession of the office.

Steve: Instead of rushing after titles, we need to follow God's order and be about ministry.

V: Amen! Spiritual gifts are to be used by everyone so that God can produce results. We are talking about ministries by every Christian, not just ministries by office holders.

Beth: Some families must bring their child to the church for salvation instead of sharing

Christ in their own home and bringing that child to salvation. My pastor or myself continuously have to lead the members' children to salvation. The parents cannot even minister to their own families.

Jack: One of the things that tends to limit ministry is that churches want people to come instead of sending people out into the world. Matthew 28:19 says, "Go ye therefore into all the world."

V: When you link ministry absolutely to the office, what other alternative do you have? If the officers of the church stay in the church, and you are going to minister to the people, you have to get the people into the church to be ministered to. The members' job under that model is to recruit not to minister. But if you are under God's model, every saved person is to follow Jesus into ministry.

Who does Jesus call to minister? those who are following Him.

We have done the ontology, the being part. The Holy Spirit is involved in your being, and that being is what we have been talking about with four points, the fourth item being that discussion on spiritual gifts. Connected with your being was that part that the Holy Spirit brought into you when you were born again.

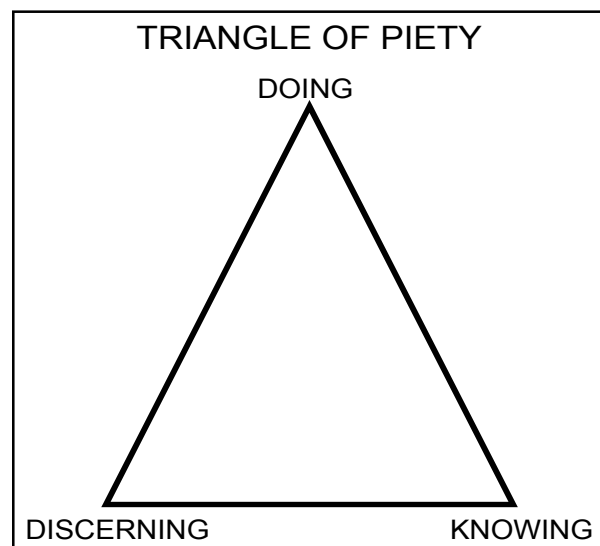


Chart 11.6

Now we are going to deal with three more things that the Holy Spirit is involved in, and that is this triangle (Chart 11.6).

Function: Triangle Of Piety Revisited

Knowing

This triangle has to do with knowing, doing, and discerning. First we examine the knowing and how the Holy Spirit is involved by giving you understanding.

Remember that the Doctrine of Revelation was composed of manifestation, inspiration, and illumination. The Holy Spirit did all of that, and especially pertaining to the Christian life is the illumination part. Illumination has the two functions, i.e. He gives you understanding, and then He gives you conviction which comes with that understanding.

Within the Doctrine of Salvation, the Christian life is the part that extends from the new birth to death. That period of time comprises the time of sanctification, and in sanctification is the triangle of piety.

Now we are going to examine how the triangle spirals up or spirals down. There is such a thing in Christianity as a spiraling down. The very first part of the triangle dealing with spiraling is knowledge. Refer to Matthew 16:13-16, where Jesus said, "Who do men say that I am?" Then He said, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter responded and said, "Thou art the Christ."

Matthew

16:17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [it] unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Peter was given understanding in his knowledge, not through merit, not through study, but as a gift.

Conviction is the second part of illumination, John 16:7-8. The Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

John

16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

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

When you sin, it is the Holy Spirit that convicts you of it. But when you do right, it is the Holy Spirit who says, "You are right on." You get two convictions from the Holy Spirit, one of sin and one of righteousness. Both are in the realm of knowing. So under illumination is understanding and conviction, and both are at the "know" corner.

Doing

Now we will look at the "DOING" part of the triangle of piety that is in your sanctification pilgrimage.

1. The meat of the Word, John 4:34.

Jesus said that His meat was doing the will of the Father.⁵ Guess what your meat is? "Doing" the will of the Father. You need to understand that *knowing* the Word is milk,⁶ *doing* the Word is meat. You can know a ton, but it has little value unless you do it. Piety requires that you take that next step of doing it. That doing is the meat of the Word.

2. The fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-24.

Baptism is a passive obedience because you allow it to be done to you. Bearing the fruit of the Spirit is also a passive obedience. You do not say, "I think I am going to put on some good old fruit of the Spirit." It comes out of you after being produced in you by the Holy Spirit. It is coming out of you because you are allowing it. You are passively obeying. Now the meat of the Word is that doing part, an aggressive or an active obedience as

over against bearing the fruit of the Spirit, which is a passive obedience.

3. Ministry, John 9:4 and James 1:22ff.

Ministry is God's spending you. Holiness means to be set aside for God's use. You are in His treasury, and He says, "Okay, I am going to spend this person for My purpose, and I will get My desired result. I will spend this other person over here, and I will get that result. My spending is designed to profit My Kingdom. These are My resources, and I am going to use them to bring in profit."

If you are going to be involved in ministry, you must be a holy person, set aside for God's use, and then allow Him to spend you. That is where ministry hits the wall because every one of us has our own concept of ministry. We think that we have to do this, this, this, and this instead of denying ourselves, picking up our crosses and following Jesus.

Things That Detract From Active Ministry.

1. Carnal ministries

You pastors may say, "Okay, if I do project A, we will get so many converts, and my church will then be the best church in the county. Then I will be elected as the moderator of the association. Thus I commit to do Project A and pray, Lord, come bless this ministry." Instead of following along behind Him, carrying our crosses, denying ourselves, and hearing Him, we tend to adopt carnal ministries.

Tim: So a part of the triangle of piety is the *kenotic* lifestyle.

V: Yes, it must be *kenotic*, or else it will be carnal.

Also doing is both active and passive. You are passive on the fruit bearing and the following. You are just trudging along. Then He says, "Do that over there." That is when it becomes very aggressive and active. You jump on that thing and do it with all the gusto

⁵ John 4:34.

⁶ 1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-14.

that you have in you. As soon as you get it done, you grab your cross, get back in line and trudge along, saying, "Here am I Lord, send me!" just like Isaiah did (Isaiah 6:8).

2. Misplaced comma.

The misplaced comma in the KJV has created a huge problem because it has contributed to a passive laity without active ministries.

Ephesians

4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (AV)

You can see in verse 12 that the misplaced comma is right after saints: "For the perfecting of the saints (comma)." The translators put a comma there so that the official ministers would be doing the work of the ministry and perfecting the saints. That comma creates passive saints because the saints are excluded from ministry. The comma infers that only the officers are called to ministry.

If you have a comma in your Bible in Ephesians 4:12 following the phrase, "For the perfecting of the saints," circle it because that is the misplaced comma. The original manuscripts did not have any punctuation in them. Your translators inserted the punctuation and broke these long drawn out sentences into shorter segments. They added periods, question marks, and commas as well as chapter and verse numbers.

The Anglican Church in England provided the KJV. The translators were the professional priests on the King's payroll. If you start letting ministry be done by ordinary saints, what is going to happen to their pay? If I am a professional and want to keep my pay, I have to hold the ministry. That is what the comma does, and that is why it is in there.

We are dealing with things that detract from active ministry by all Christians. One is the misplaced comma in the King James

Version. I do not care which version you have now, the comma in the King James Version has shaped the culture that you are in. You have to break that culture, break that comma loose. Every Christian is a minister, and you must do ministry. If you do not, then your sanctification is going to come up short.

3. Titular Orientation.

We should be **functionally** oriented instead of titular. The title comes when it is a dedicated service after it is proven that the person is absolutely endowed and called by God to do that kind of ministry. The primacy of function does not eliminate offices. Lay ministry and office ministry should thrive together.

4. Self-interest.

Another factor which promotes inactivity is self-interest, Romans 16:17-18 and Philip-
pians 3:19.

Romans

16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

16:18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Philippians

3:19 Whose end [is] destruction, whose God [is their] belly, and [whose] glory [is] in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Some Christians are so self-interested and self-serving that their focus is their belly. They are carnal. Mark that person and avoid him because you must maintain fellowship with the Lord. Does light have fellowship with darkness? Once you start serving your belly, you are not going to practice self-denial, cross bearing, fellowship on a *kenotic* pilgrimage. You will be serving yourself because you are on the climb. Your vocation will become whatever pays **you** best.

5. Lack of Hearing

Another detractor of active ministry is dull hearing, Hebrews 5:11-14.

Hebrews

5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

5:13 For every one that useth milk [is] unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Your ears are hooked to your feet. If your feet do not move, you cannot hear

You can have all manner of reprobation and apostasy within Christendom. Why? You are dull of hearing, and you cannot distinguish good and evil (verse 14).

Feeling (Discerning)

If you know it, and you do it, God will give you additional discernment, John 7:17. Jesus declares that if you will do His will, you will know whether a doctrine is right or wrong. That is a promise. Take that promise and flip it over. If you do not do His will, you will not know whether a doctrine is right or wrong. There can be penalty here as well. Blessing and penalty are the two edges of the sword.

If you know something and fail to do it, your discernment will become lessened. If you know something and do it, your discernment will sharpen. If you will begin to do that which you know to do, your understanding will heighten, your knowledge will increase, your doing will become steeper (Chart 11.3), your discernment will grow, and your under-

standing will grow. This is called the spiral up.

Spiraling up depends upon this one main thing—your will. If your will is submissive, and you do what you know, your discernment will go up and your knowledge will increase (see chart 11.7).

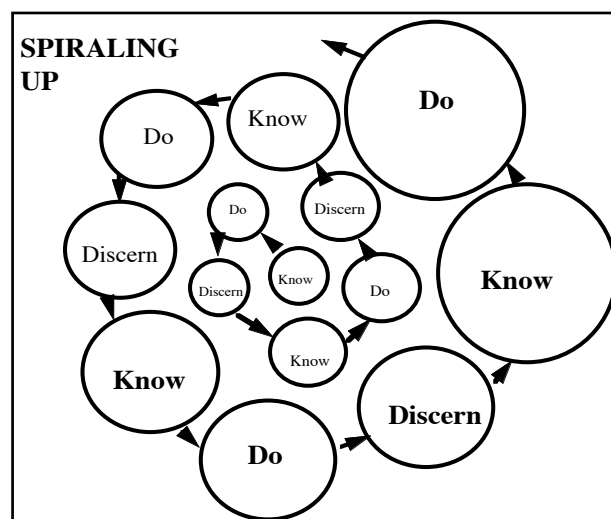


Chart 11.7

When you do a verse that you know, your discernment will grow as a result, and that verse will take on new meaning. When you do it, the verse will grow bigger and bigger and bigger. That one verse can become an ocean.

However someone with a stiff neck may read the Bible, and say, “I am not called to do that, I am not going to do that! I am not gifted. I do not believe that. That makes me uncomfortable.” Discernment goes down. His knowledge becomes less discerning with each disobedience. He spirals down towards a total lack of discernment in which good becomes bad and vice versa (Romans 1).

Tim: We are eaten up with this. He says, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” A lot of people say, “Well, I am not called to evangelism because I do not have the gift of evangelism.”

V: Then, they are not following Jesus, and they are spiraling down, down, down. Guess what? They are taking a bunch of folks with them.

Pete: Would you define piety?

V: You put together the three: Faith, Hope, and Love. That is Christian piety. It is the character and method for conducting our pilgrimage of sanctification.

We started with the being of personhood as defined in justification. After the person is justified, then he gets into this sanctification process with its triangle of piety. Faith connects with knowledge, hope connects up with doing, and love connects up with discerning or feeling. This is all within the sanctification part of the Doctrine of Salvation.

Bob: So we could label the triangle as sanctification in regarding to the Doctrine of Salvation.

V: Yes, and that is why I put it between justification and glorification, because that is the place of sanctification process.

Another reference for discernment is 1 John 1:5-7. If you follow Jesus, you will be in His light. God promises to give you discernment if you do the “doing” part. That is promise #1. Promise #2 is that if you are in your self-denying, cross-bearing fellowship, you will be in His light. The closer you are standing to Him, the more brilliant the light is. You can see right and wrong very clearly when you are standing right behind Him. But if you drift on back, it gets darker and darker.

Closeness and the light it brings require that you deny yourself more and more and more and more. The temptations are going to be that you indulge yourself, become self-centered, and do those things that are interesting to you. Temporal rewards will divert you from the light.

WHAT IS DISCIPLESHIP?

Discipleship is related to *kenotic* disciplines, such as:

1. Learning. Learning will increase until you know the mind of Christ.
2. Following: The follower of Christ knows the Shepherd’s voice and willingly follows Him.
3. Repentance. Repentance is a deepening and broadening aspect for the maturing disciple.
4. Spirit filled/led by the Spirit. Spirit filled is not an ecstatic experience. It is an action—you are led by the Spirit. Being Spirit filled or led means that you can be spent as God sees fit. Complete obedience is being Spirit filled.

If you convert the idea of being Spirit filled into an idea of ecstasy, then you become existentialist, and it becomes a subjective area in which you are defining Spirit-filledness by your own subjective standards. Forget about that! What you must do is allow the Lord to spend you. You are His slave. He can tell His slave to do this thing or that thing, whatever He wants. It is your job to obey. That is it! But if you are demanding to change the definition into some kind of ecstasy or emotional feeling or something like that, you are going to pervert the idea of discipleship.

5. Suffering and struggling in sanctification accompany *kenotic* sacrifice.
6. Faith, hope, and love in balance is to be sought after in Christian piety.
7. Assurance is a growing conviction for every phase of salvation.
8. Perseverance. A real disciple will persevere in his journey.

Discipleship and discipline come off the same root. Discipline is of the self, and those under authority. You discipline yourself and your children. Please note that self-discipline begins with self-denial. Self-denial is the very first requirement for following the Lord. “You

cannot be my disciple unless you first deny yourself.”⁷ Those words came out of our Lord’s own mouth. You cannot be a disciple without self-discipline.

We have been looking at the doctrine of sanctification, the triangle of piety within sanctification, and where the Spirit is involved in all of this. You cannot get in the door of justification without the Spirit. You cannot do the walk of sanctification without the Spirit, and you are not going to be glorified without the Spirit. The Spirit is involved in all of salvation. He gets involved in your knowing. He is involved in your doing. He is involved in giving you your discernment. All of the motivation that is in you comes from the Holy Spirit.

In summary, the doorway to salvation is justification. Justification has to do with ontology, your being, the new birth of your personhood. Connected with your new being are the spiritual gifts. The spiritual gifts are to help you in the triangle of piety that is to be used in your sanctification growth. So, we have wisdom and knowledge and other enablements. You use your enablements to do ministries like serve, prophesy, evangelize, etc. and when you know and do, guess what? The Spirit is going to give you additional capability for understanding. You cycle around, and the next thing you know your understanding is growing. The more you are doing, the more new discernment you gain. You are spiraling up. Those are all works of the Holy Spirit.

But the reversal of the coin is true as well. If you are stiff necked, you will spiral down. How far down? It is my position that you can go all the way to reprobation. In Romans 1 it says that you can become an abomination to God and take favor and pleasure in bringing others after you.⁸ That is because you refuse

to do what you know to do. That is stiff-necked rebellion. We are not playing games here with God. If you sow to the flesh, you will reap corruption.⁹

Kenosis Revisited

Now let us put sanctification into context. The context is the *kenosis* (see Chart 11.8).¹⁰ Sanctification means that you must be sacrificial, self-denying, going down all the way to the death. Exaltation is for the eschaton, not here and now! Once you move to exaltation here for temporal rewards, then you are in self-interest. You become a mercenary Christian on the upside down *kenosis*.

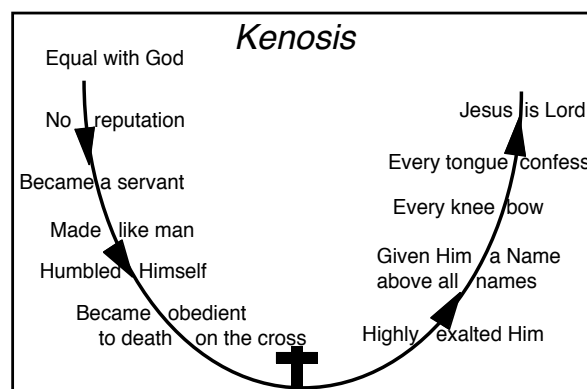


Chart 11.8

The upside down *kenosis* is Satan’s model¹¹ (see Chart 11.9). That is the model that is dangled before us, and he uses all of the culture that we have and all that we have been taught to think that this pseudo-*kenosis* is the proper pilgrimage for us.

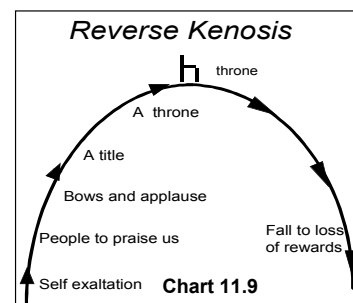


Chart 11.9

⁷ Matthew 16:24.

⁸ Romans 1:28-32

⁹ Galatians 6:8.

¹⁰ Philippians 2:5-11.

¹¹ Isaiah 14:13-15.

Because we do not like to hear that self-denying sacrificial part of the *kenosis* we do not do what Jesus wants us to do. We start our spiral down. The spiral down is an upward climb towards temporal rewards. Thus our sacrifice will be after our resurrection in the eschaton. Brethren, I do not want to spend my eternity with no rewards. I will take my temporal down to receive an eschatological exaltation.

Everyone must choose between two sacrifices and two exaltations. Each pair occurs in both time and eternity. Sacrifice must be made in time in order to have reward in eternity. If sacrifice is delayed, then gain can be had in time, but loss (sacrifice) will occur in eternity.

Let me describe some pseudo-*kenotic* models that some of you may have experienced along with me. We start down, and we are diverted or tempted. A carrot comes along and gets our attention, and we start after it on a climb upward. We come to our senses and repent and start downward again (see Chart 11.10). And then here comes another carrot, we climb up, come to our senses, repent and get back on path and proceed sacrificially. We do this repeatedly all the way to our death.

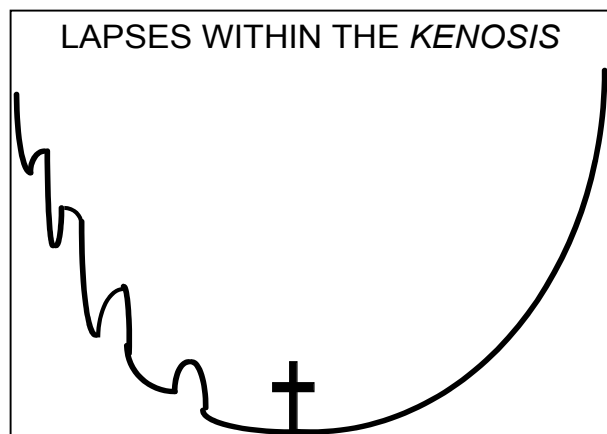


Chart 11:10

The series of interruptions of our *kenotic* pilgrimages come from our not being alert to detect the deceptions that come into our lives. The lack of alertness can be because of bad health, drugs, influence from friends, or any kind of attention-grabbing incidents. Your circle of friends can say, "Oh, do not do that. The Lord does not want you to suffer. He loves you. He never wants you to suffer." All of you hear this kind of stuff. Before you know it, you are climbing along with all your friends. You come to your senses; you repent because you know you are doing something God would not want you to do. You start your downward trek again. Every one of these climbs will have an eternal consequence of loss.

Please see, though, that the general direction or pilgrimage of this model in chart 11.10 is a downward move even though it has the interruptions in it. There is a *kenotic* shape to this model, and that is good. However, it is a distant second to a real *kenosis*. There are consequences of loss for each period of temporal climbing.

It is important for you to be spent by God, and when God spends you, it does not mean you will be comfortable. Self-denial is always involved in being spent by God. It is going to cost you something. The *kenosis* is a costly pilgrimage. It will cost you many things, maybe even your life. Sometimes you will not get to eat supper. Sometimes you will not get to go on vacation. Sometimes you will not get that money that you need. Sometimes you will have less than anybody in town. Sometimes you will be despised and mocked. Sometimes you will be tortured and executed. But that is the *kenosis*. That is the nature of sanctification. You get spent not where you want to be spent, but where and how the Lord wants to spend you. This model in Chart 11.10 has a general downward trend, but there are costly interruptions in the pilgrimage.

The next pseudo-*kenosis* is a variation of Satan's counterfeit (see Chart 11.11). In this model you are on the climb, and you hear a good sermon. You try to turn and go down, but you do not know theology. You think that Christianity is about you and your comforts, getting what you want, and doing what you want. You do not know much of anything. All you know is that the masses are all climbing. Then you turn around and climb some more. Then you have a self-sacrificing, short-term ministry of downward sacrifice. Then you go back to climbing. There is reward for these short windows of *kenosis* but the general trend is upward, and that means there will be a fall on the other side. You have these tiny pieces of real *kenosis* in your pilgrimage. Every one of us has been involved in this model as well.

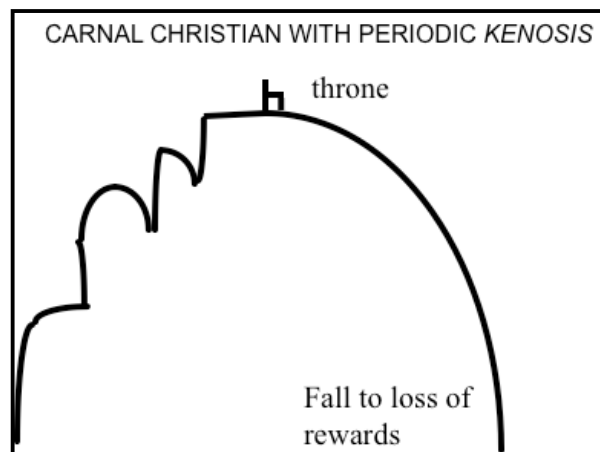


Chart 11.11

Henry: In the Reverse *Kenosis* (Chart 11.9), where is salvation, or is there salvation?

V: Yes. There is salvation, but the sanctification part of life is lived for the self. The real *kenosis* is lived by a small minority of Christians, your better saints, disciples who deny themselves, pick up their crosses, and follow Jesus.

You are not going to find many in the real *kenosis*. All of us are supposed to be in the real *kenosis*, but most of us are not. Satan's

counterfeit, the plain old upside down *kenosis*, illustrates the Christians of today because the majority are following it.

Henry: When you are on the right *kenosis*, your reward is in heaven. But when you seek after position and prestige with man, you have your reward here, not there.

V: Right, so there is a loss, a fall at the end. But the end is not hell. It is heaven "as through fire."¹²

All of these models of sanctification are presupposing that we have gotten past the justification gate because we are inside sanctification. This whole lesson is about the Christian's pilgrimage, the Christian life of sanctification. Where are most of the saints? On the Reverse *Kenosis*, the smooth upward trek. Every church member has been called to the real *kenosis*, but most do not even know what the word means.

Chart 11.12 describes another deception that our saints are facing. Here is what Satan is telling them: "If you will climb up the pinnacle, all the way up to the throne, you will be exalted on up, even further, in heaven." It is deception, and many believe this thing, and they think, "Man, if I can just climb up and get to the throne, I will be exalted even more in heaven."

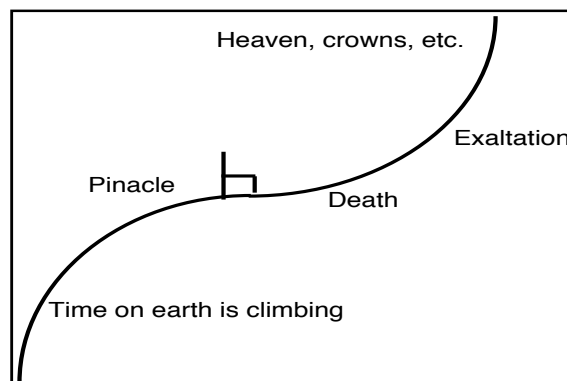


Chart 11.12

¹² 1 Corinthians 3:15.

Another false *kenosis* is the feeling-based *kenosis* (Chart 11.13). Knowledge of the *kenosis* is not supreme for the existentialist. Feelings drive this person. You do what feels good. That will move you in a general upward climb. It is obedience based on feeling. When you are basing your *kenosis* on feelings you will end up going up when you think you are going down.

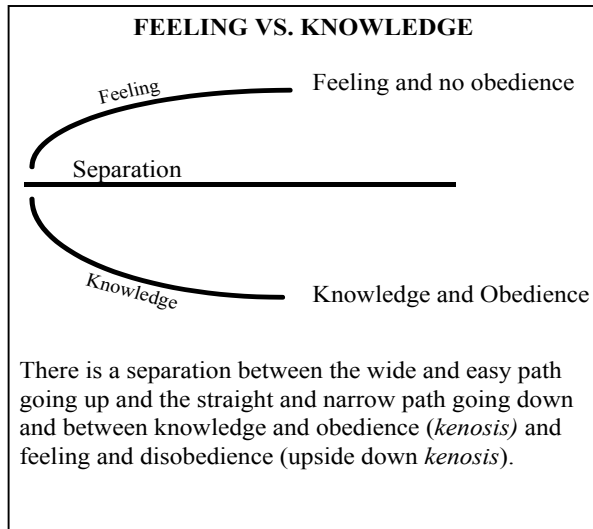


Chart 11.13

Satan sucks you in to doing your Christianity based on feeling. You are not doing it

for temporal rewards. You are doing it based on how you feel on the inside. If it makes you feel good, you will do that particular thing over and over. If it scratches where you itch, i.e. it feels good, then that is what you do. You will call it your Christian pilgrimage, but it is centered in self. That is a false feeling-based *kenosis*. It is ministry based on feeling.

In the knowledge-based *kenosis*, you do it even though it hurts. But you do it anyway even if it costs you your life. There is no greater friend than the one who gives his life for a friend. So you know it, and you grit your teeth, and you do it. You are blessed with additional discernment that converts into additional knowledge with new assignments, and you spiral up. Obedience must be based on knowledge (see the downward slope in chart 11.13).

Where was feeling on the triangle of piety? It was Johannine, and if you start on the Johannine side of the triangle, then your doing is based on what you feel. Moving counter-clockwise, first you feel, then find scriptural support (usually wrong), and then you act. That is liberalism, Schleiermacher had a feeling based hermeneutic.

Questions for Chapter 11

1. When considering ordinances versus sacraments, which is preferable and why?
2. Illustrate the Spiritual Gifts Chart.
3. Name five things that detract from active ministry.
4. What is discipleship?
5. Illustrate five false *kenoses*.

Chapter 12

ESCHATOLOGY

Eschatology must incorporate several things. When is the second coming of Christ? When is the rapture? The tribulation? The millennium? These issues are treated differently in Europe than they are in America.

WHAT IS THE *PAROUSIA*?

It is the presence, or the coming, of Christ.

Here are some models dealing with the presence of Christ for the second coming. You need to recognize these models by their description and by the drawings.

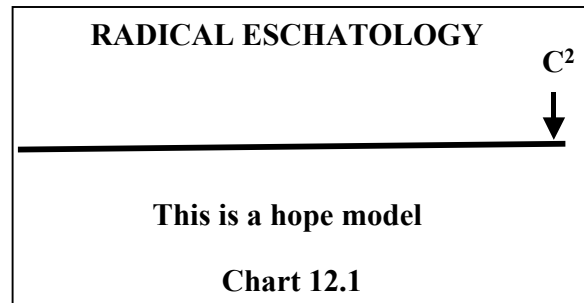
EUROPEAN ESCHATOLOGY

The first four models shown here focus on the second coming of Jesus. These are the European models of eschatology. I will attempt to show you the fault with them, but these are current models that have been propagated for many years. They began in Europe, but for the most part they do not reflect our theological models here in America. I will also give you the American models later.

1. *Radical Eschatology*

Radical Eschatology¹ has no first coming (see Chart 12.1). The coming that is pictured is coming #2. The major proponent, one of whom practically everybody has heard, is Albert Schweitzer. Radical Eschatology has no first coming. This second coming is really a misnomer because it is an idealized kind of coming, and it is not based on His having come before. The nomenclature is based only on placement. Since it is at the end of the timeline, we call it the second coming when actually it would be the first coming.

¹ The “C²” is C = Coming, the superscript “2” means second, and this technique will continue in the following models.



In this model there is no real Christ that came at the beginning. There was somebody who came and claimed to be Christ, but that person was mistaken. He was not the Christ. That mistake cost Him His life. He thought that He was the Christ, and He threw Himself into history, but history ground Him up and killed Him. He was the false Messiah, and the coming of the ideal Messiah is actually in the future.

Radical Eschatology has somewhat of a Judaist Messianic flavor to it. Judaist Messianism is looking for the Christ in His first coming right now. This has that same kind of color to it, but it is not actually the same because it is not a Jewish model. This is a European Christian model.

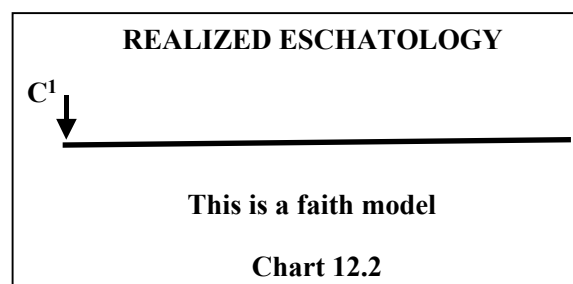
This is an active theology today. So, let's analyze it. If Jesus did not come and die on the cross and pay for our sins, then we are not saved according to our theology. But in the theology of this model, salvation is in the *kerygma*, preaching or sermon. The Christ of the sermon is what saves you. Whether that Christ is historically anchored or not is not important. If you believe the message, whether or not there is a real Christ, then you will be saved.

There is a *kerygmatic* Christ, a Christ of the sermon, a Christ of the Gospel, but it is a mythological Christ in this theology. It is not a real Christ based on a historical first coming,

an incarnation where somebody was actually put on the cross and died for our sins and then was raised. This eschatology produces invalid Christology and soteriology.

2. *Realized Eschatology*

A second European eschatology is Realized Eschatology, and the way this one works is just backwards to Radical Eschatology. In a realized model you have a real incarnation (first coming), but there is to be no second coming (see Chart 12.2).



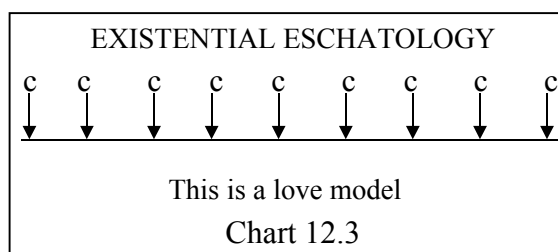
Realized Eschatology is a C. H. Dodd model. In this model there was a Christ Who was born in a manger, lived, died, and ascended into heaven. Here is a Christ Who is actually historically anchored, but there is no second coming. Instead of Him coming down to earth to meet us, we are going to meet God in Christ. If we are in Christ, we are going to meet God in Him. When you depart this life you will meet God in Christ, and that is the *Parousia*. The *Parousia* where He comes to us does not happen because there is no second coming. The consummation is when you meet God in Christ. You can begin to see that there are problems in Europe on theology. Their Existentialism eliminates what the objective Word says. What is believed is all subjective and not objectively real.

My warning to you, class, is that the Church is sliding into apostasy. If you compare commentaries and theologies that were written recently with one written two to three hundred years ago, the difference would be shocking. By knowing the false theology of these proponents, you will be protected when

reading their popular commentaries. When we read a textbook or a theology book, we tend to believe it. However, we need to be more critical and be theologians and do our theology when we are reading these things.

3. *Existential Eschatology*

Existential Eschatology has a series of comings, and they are all in the now (see Chart 12.3). In Existential Theology there is a lightning bolt experience in which you meet the Lord. He comes to you in experience. You may hear a testimony, and wham! the Lord confronts you with a call to change your life.



In Existentialism, decisions are required in order to become “authentic.” Existentialism is a decision-based system in which you have to make a decision, yes or no, for Christ or against Him, in the encounter.

We dealt with this in the doctrine of revelation and saw that the encounter is very subjective. You can be reading the Bible, and if you do not have the encounter, what you read is deemed not to be revelation. The Bible, the sermon, and the testimony are the “environments” in which revelation takes place. The Existentialist may have to get to one of his favorite places in the Bible in order to have the encounter.

What an Existentialist claims that God told him to do may be opposite to what the Scripture actually says. The Existentialist bases his interpretation on a subjective encounter, and it always fits what he wants to do. If you read something that you do not want to do, then that is not an encounter. You just turn the page.

Existentialism is a movement throughout the country right now in which this kind of subjectivity abounds. Here we see how it affects eschatology, but Existentialism also affects all of our doctrines. In this eschatological model there are no incarnation, no second coming, no crucifixion, and no resurrection. All you have is some kind of subjective experience, and that subjective experience is called an encounter with Christ. You cannot get saved with this kind of thing. If there is no real Jesus Who came, died, arose from the dead, and is coming again, then our salvation is void.

Jill: Everybody's doctrine could be different.

V: Yes, to the extent that they do not defy natural science. Thus, there would be no resurrection.

The supernatural is called mythology, and the Existentialist must de-mythologize the supernatural via his hermeneutic. De-mythologizing is from Rudolf Bultmann, by the way, and he treats the Bible as a book of myth. All the supernatural parts have to be stripped away to reveal the kernel of truth that is embedded within the myth. For example: When Jesus walked on the water coming out to the boat where the disciples were, His walking on the water is considered a myth. When you strip the myth away, you have then the kernel of truth, which is that He wants to be close to you. If you are His disciple, He wants to be close to you. That is the kernel of truth embedded within the myth of His walking on the water and coming out to the boat where His disciples are.

Tom: How does He explain Peter getting out of the boat?

V: For the Existentialist, Peter's walking on the water is a myth. Peter wants to be close to His Lord. So you strip the myth away to find the kernel of truth embedded in the passage. After stripping away the miracles,

the so-called embedded kernel of truth may be found.

The whole Bible, then, becomes a book of myth in this model. You do not have a first coming, and you do not have an end-time second coming. You have present existential comings. That is your eschatology.

All three models that I have given up to now are from European Eschatology. However, eschatology overflows and impacts all the other doctrines. Before this lesson, we studied how Christology impacts the doctrine of salvation that in turn impacts ecclesiology. Now we have eschatology that impacts every doctrine. Class, every doctrine is connected to all the other doctrines. That is why we call this kind of study *systematic* theology.

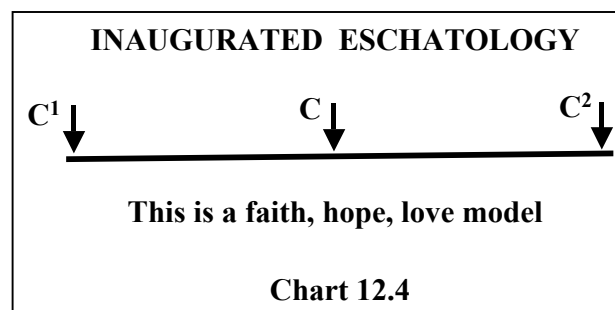
Now I must warn you of our own present-day error. We tend to separate our doctrines from our lives. We build all of our systematic theology, we set it down and we say, "Now that I have that done, I can go on with my life." We do our living separated from our doctrines. We compartmentalize because nothing is going to stop us from living our lives. Brethren, it is not supposed to be like that.

The doctrine of holiness, I repeat once again, is a surrender of yourself to God's use. There is no such thing as living your own life and being holy. Will you allow God to live His life through you? He will spend you how He wants to. That is holiness. What we want to do is have our wonderful systematic theology, set it down as a mental construct, and live our lives just like the world. We want to have a career, have all the money, have all the status, indulge our flesh, and call that holiness.

Compartmentalization is pervasive in our churches. We go to Sunday school, attend church, tithe, do all that is required of us, and then go on with living our lives just as the unsaved do.

4. Inaugurated Eschatology

In Inaugurated Eschatology you have a first coming, a second coming, and a present encounter (see Chart 12.4). This is not too bad an eschatology. The proponent of this one is Oscar Cullmann. I want you to put a star by Cullmann because red flags ought to pop up when you are dealing with him. Just because he has a good eschatology does not mean he is good all across the theological board.



This is a faith, hope, and love model in which love is in the middle. For faith, one must look back at an established historical fact. Hope is in a future consummation, and love is in the present walk where the Lord lifts you up and gives you strength to be able to accomplish your pilgrimage.

The prior existential model would be a love model. What is love for the existential model? Feeling. It is a feelings-based model driven by emotions. There is no faith in the existential model because faith requires an object. Objective facts are taboo in Existentialism. Existential Theology is strictly about feeling. Do you feel it? If you feel it, it is real. If you do not feel it, it is not real.

In the Realized Eschatology model the emphasis is on the past, on the accomplished fact. It is a faith-based model. Knowing and believing are the focus.

The Radical Eschatology model is a hope-based model. The concept of hope is why Albert Schweitzer was considered the great missionary in the world. Because of his work in Africa, we hold him up today as a standard

for foreign missions. Why? He was hope-based. What is hope? Hope is a Petrine model, and that is a work, work, work, trudge-on-through work kind of model. You should be able now to see how all of our doctrines are beginning to link up.

These are the four European models: the Radical, the Realized, the Existential, and the Inaugurated. You have theologians associated with them, and the only one that has any merit to it is the Cullmann model because it has all three comings. American theologians agree that there are a first coming, a second coming and present spiritual comings or encounters. The first and second comings of Christ are physical comings. However, there are spiritual comings also.

In your Christian walk there are times when the Lord is going to meet with you. Part of our doctrine of revelation, if you remember, contained illumination. Illumination involved both understanding and conviction. That understanding means that your mind has been lifted up to understand the things of God. If you do not get lifted up, you are not going to understand because the things of God are beyond us, and we need some elevation or else we never get there.

There is a second part to illumination, and that is conviction. We are sinners, every one of us, and right now there is a need for repentance for every person reading this book. That repentance comes when you are exposed to the Word of God. You need to make a change in your life, and the realization of this need is an inside job of the convicting Spirit of Christ. Christianity is an inside work of the Spirit. It has the same kind of sense as when the leaves on the trees start falling off after turning color during autumn. That transformation is not an externally driven thing. It is inside the tree. The trees' leaves begin to change, and the trees shed their leaves. The leaves are not pulled off. They are shedding because there is something changing inside of the tree.

The same thing happens to you. You are a big, old, bad dude just like Big Dog,² and you end up in prison, and everybody is wondering if there is any hope for you. So then something happens to you. It is an inside job that happens to you. Then you begin to be nicer. You begin to change on the inside, and pretty soon you are doing things you would never have dreamed of doing, and people are saying, “There is something good going on in that guy.” The work of the Spirit is on the inside making a difference in your life. The concept is that Christianity is first an ontological change that works its way out into changed behavior.

Illumination then has both understanding and conviction (the encounter). Conviction comes when that change that is within you has not come to perfection. What does perfection mean? Getting to the end. Perfection means you get all the way to the resulting behavior. The conviction is that God says that there is something that He wants you to do. That is when you start falling on your face. You think, “I will never get there. This is unreal. Every where I look I am dirty and filthy in my life, and I need to get that out of my life.”

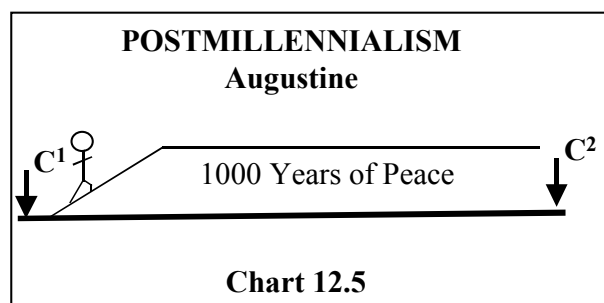
AMERICAN ESCHATOLOGY

The issues change when you come to American Eschatology. Instead of Christ's comings being of first consideration, the question changes to when is the millennium? In our eschatology, we confess right up front that there is a first coming and a second coming. We are looking forward to the second coming right now. But the question now changes in eschatology into, “When is the millennium in relation to His second coming?”

² Big Dog was a nick name for one of Dr. Vinson's ex-con students. The students with shady histories were sent to Dr. Vinson's classes to see if they were for real.

1. Postmillennialism

The first American eschatology is called Postmillennialism, which was originated by Augustine. In Postmillennialism you have a first coming as the beginning of the Church age. The Church age is progressive with society gradually getting better and better and better until it is good enough for peace to be on earth. Once peace has been on earth for 1000 years, then the Lord will consider the earth good enough to come back to. This is a Progressive model. We are somewhere on the incline line (where the stick man is on Chart 12.5). We are trying to get society to be better and better and better until we get up to a utopian kind of society, and then we are going to keep it in place for 1000 years.



Liberation Theology and Progressive Christianity follow this model. People in this model struggle to achieve utopia. We are the Church Militant while on the incline, and we are the Church Victorious on the plateau. The Church's job is to bring militant force to bear on society to create utopia.

Liberation Theology connects with Postmillennialism by seeking to eliminate the have-nots by taking away from those who have and giving it to those who have-not. What that does is create another set of have-nots because the incentive for work is lost. Because greed is the basis of materialism there are always going to be some have not's that you have to rescue by oppressing the haves.

Postmillennialism, Liberation Theology, and Progressivism fit together.³

Please notice that Postmillennialism has a flaw at its beginning—this upward line (the incline on Chart 12.5). Has anybody seen an upward line in society around here? We have been looking for an upward line, and I cannot find one. Society is going down in morality. Just look at the growing esteem for sodomy.

We hear from many quarters that society is getting better. Look at your theology in our culture of today. Why do you need a brand-new copyright in your theology book? Because theology is considered to be progressive so that your best theology is what is current now. What is science doing? Many think that it is lifting us up so that we can bring in a perfect society.

Joe: If that is like a socialist-type model where people can see that God wants to liberate them, and God does what it takes to get there, and if it is militant, have we bought into a little bit of the *Experiencing God* concept? Go where God is working and join Him there?

V: Okay, there is a very big distinction between the two. The first distinction is that God is in charge of the “experiencing God” model. This postmillennial model is a Church-driven model: one is institutional and the other is divine. And so in the *Experiencing God* you get on board with God. You see where He is working and get on board with Him. That is a God-directed model.

Postmillennialism is a militant Church-directed model. Militancy means that the Church uses force. Under Augustine it was the sword of the king that was used in behalf of the Church.

Joe: When you preach go where God is working, the congregation might think that God wants them to join some very strange movements.

V: Depending upon the model adopted by the congregant, he will hear your sermon through that model. You may be preaching wonderful sermons, but you get skewed results in the congregation because they heard you through a different mind-set than through the one you are preaching.

This systematic theology is not just for you to know. It is for you to teach. We go all the way back to the doctrine of revelation. You have to teach it. If your people do not get that, they are food for the wolves because it impacts everything else. If they do not have a good doctrine of revelation and at least a half-decent hermeneutic, they are sitting ducks. There is not a chance for them in this world because everything that they learn in high school and in college and in society and on the job is going to be the Existentialism of “do your own thing! Follow your heart!”

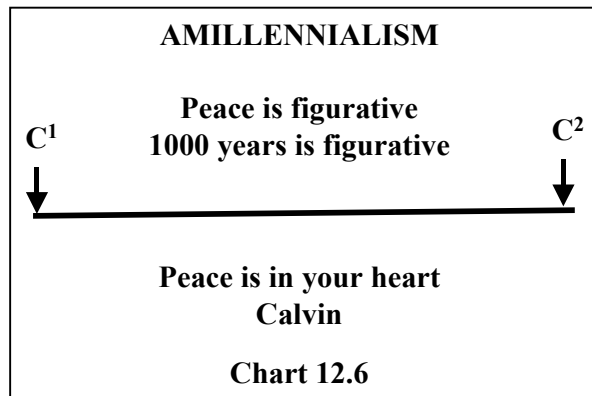
An Existentialist’s truth is whatever feels right for him. The new thought is that there is no absolute truth according to a recent survey. Why would they say that? because their feelings change from day to day to day, from situation to situation. When you leave the objective Word of God, you have lost your anchor. You will be floating around going with the tides and the wind.

It is important that you teach your people this systematic theology. Take them into the doctrine of salvation. Take them into the doctrine of the Church, take them into all of the doctrines. What did we study in the last lesson? the gifts of the Spirit. Take them through that!

³ Progressivism is an evil worldview that is destroying our country. It is unmasked in the course on philosophy.

2. Amillennialism

In the next American model, the 1000 years is figurative, and peace is figurative. In Amillennialism (Chart 12.6), a figurative amount of time means simply that it is a long period of time. The thousand years is that amount of time, figuratively speaking, between the first coming and the second coming. In this model, we are in the millennium right now.



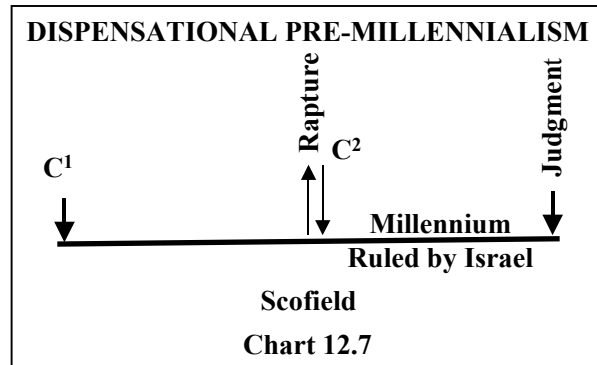
Look around. Where is the peace? It is individual peace; it is peace in your heart. Did the Lord come in and remove the sin out of your life so that you are no longer at enmity with Him? Then you are at peace with Him. There is no peace on earth and good will toward men as found in the utopia of Post-millennialism. The utopia in Amillennialism is in the individual heart.

This “a” of Amillennialism is an “a” of privation which means there is no real millennium in this model. It is a figurative millennium, and it lasts from the first coming to the second coming. We connect John Calvin with this model.

3. Dispensational Premillennialism

The Dispensational Premillennialism model (Chart 12.7) has the first coming, and then that period looking forward to a rapture followed by a second coming to set up the kingdom on the earth. Following that there will be a thousand years of reign by Israel, and

then the judgment. The short name is Dispensationalism.



When I came to this seminary this is what I believed, but I believe now that Dispensationalism contains an inaccuracy that I will show you later.

In Dispensational Premillennialism the Jews failed in their mission. They actually did, but they are still a people of God. Even the Israel that is so apostate today is a people of God. They are God’s people, and we must treat them as such. This nation had better treat Israel right because there is going to be judgment, and how you treat Israel and the Church (God’s people) is going to determine what happens to your nation. Our nation is vacillating on Israel, and we need to start treating them like God expects them to be treated.

This nation is also going to be judged as to how it treats you because you, too, are God’s people. I will tell you something: “You do not touch God’s anointed.” When you mess with God’s anointed, you are messing with God. There have been world empires that have been slapped down by God, *i.e.*, Roman, Greek, Persian, Babylonian, and the Assyrian Empires. All of those world empires were slapped down because they messed with God’s people.

This world today is still looking to see who is going to treat God’s anointed like they are supposed to be treated. That treatment is going to bring about the judgment of nations

and how they treat God's anointed will determine how they fare in that judgment.

You have a re-instatement of Israel with the second coming under this dispensational model. The millennial reign will be by the nation of Israel. Christians are not really a part of that millennial reign. The distinction that you need to see in Dispensationalism is that there is a dichotomy between the nation of Israel and the Church. Israel was set-aside during the church age. But during the millennium, Israel will resume its chosen-of-God role in the world.

4. Historical Premillennialism

The model that I hold to is very much like the preceding model except that instead of Israel reigning in the millennium, it will be the Church or spiritual Israel.

Under the Historical Premillennialism model (Chart 12.8), the dichotomy is no longer there. There is a union between Israel and the Church. That means that the promises in the Old Testament apply to you and me. You see, Jesus completed the Old Testament, and I am in Him. The blessings of the Old Testament apply to Him, and if I am in Him they apply to me. The bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament is Jesus Christ. Jesus brings the Old Testament and the New Testament together. He is God's covenant with man, and when He brings us together, the millennial reign is by spiritual Israel (the men of God's covenant). The format of the model stays the same. However the definition of the participants changes. Dean Tommy Lea of Southwestern Seminary held to this model, and I do too. I think it is a good model.

Paul: Looks like you have a pre-trib rapture for this model.

V: No, because you do not know where the rapture is on this model. To be fair this is a millennial model, not a rapture model. You can hold to this model and put the tribulation

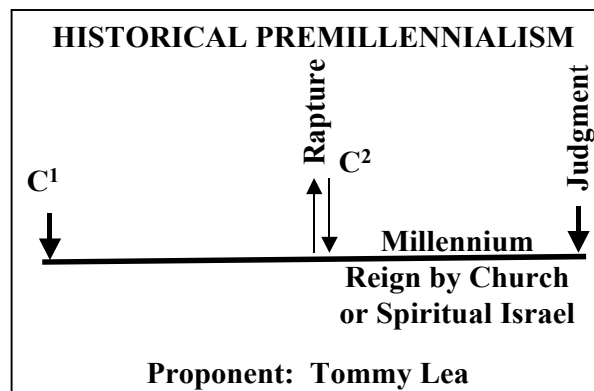


Chart 12.8

and rapture in all manner of places. In American eschatology the question is when is the millennium, not when is the rapture?

Jill: The Church is going to reign with Israel?

V: It is a mixture, God's people, Jews and Gentiles, but all Christians.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Okay, in order to help you assimilate this information, I want to ask you some questions that pertain to these models. You tell me what the answers are.

Which position has judgment at the second coming?

Ted: There is not a judgment in all the models.

V: Yeah, but you can extrapolate.

Ted: Amillennialist and Postmillennialist.

V: Good. Which position would the Roman Catholic Church most likely take?

Paul: Postmillennialist.

V: Good. Which position is optimistic of humanity?

Alan: Postmillennialist.

V: Good. Which position is pessimistic of humanity?

(Silence)

V: Amillennialist is one of them, and pre-millennialist.

Bob: When you say “pre,” are you saying both?

V: Yes. “pre-millennialist” picks up both of those, and so when somebody says, “I am a pre-millennialist,” they still haven’t told you which one they are in.

Which position uses a figurative 1000 years?

Several Students: Amillennialist.

V: Which position has a rapture?

Jack: Dispensational.

Beth: Premillennialism.

Several Students: All models

V: All. Which position has an Antichrist?

Ted: All four.

V: Good. Which position has a resurrection way prior to judgment?

Jerry: Both pre-millennialist’s.

V: Good. Which position has a literal rule of the world by Israel?

Many Students: Dispensational.

V: Good. Which position has a literal rule of the world by the church?

Most of the Students: Historical.

V: Good. When is the tribulation for each position?

Many Students: At various times.

V: Good. Which position would Liberation Theology most likely take?

Several Students: Postmillennialist.

V: Good. In Postmillennialism, it has to get better, and the way you do it is by liberating the oppressed. The liberation could be economic, racial, gender, or any kind, but it is for the purpose of making all equal so that

there will be peace. As long as there is an unequal somewhere, the theory is that the unequal is going to be fighting to get equal. And those who are equal will be fighting to maintain any lead that they have.

The Roman Catholic Church is involved in Liberation Theology in Latin America. Now, Henry, you know something about that, don’t you? The priests and nuns in Latin American countries and in the third world countries are in the forefront of what kind of liberation?

Henry: Economics.

V: A current theologian, Gutierrez, is a Liberation Theologian who has written a great deal of history. I have outlined his three volumes of history to use as a stack pole because I minored in history. He is great in history, but his theology is not worth a hoot.

Tom: Is Liberation Theology to support a new world order?

V: Yes, It blends Marxism and Christianity into a system that is part of the Progressive Movement.

Tom: You hear the word progressive a lot nowadays.

V: Yes, you do. Communism, Islam, Roman Catholicism, materialism, humanism, and atheism mix together in various ways to produce Progressivism.⁴

V: Which position would Marxists take?

Paul: Postmillennialist.

V: Good. Which position would a utopian take?

Carl: Postmillennialist.

V: Good. A utopian seeks to achieve utopia in history.

Carl: How do they see that things are getting better instead of worse?

⁴ See the course on philosophy.

V: Many people, even some in the churches today, think things are getting better. How can people think that we are getting better? I hear it all over the place that we are getting better. Like the Titanic, our economy is sinking, but the band is on deck playing songs about how we are improving. Since our culture's morality is accepting of every evil

under the sun as a good, we think that we are getting better on that, too.

Concerning the tribulation, the intense tribulation is located somewhere close to the rapture—pre-trib, post-trib, or mid-trib. However for many around the world the tribulation is present and growing in intensity towards the great tribulation.

Questions for Chapter 12

1. What is the *Parousia*?
2. Illustrate the four kinds of European Eschatology; name each of the four drawings and their proponents.
3. Illustrate the four kinds of American Eschatology; name each of the four drawings and their proponents.

Chapter 13

ESCHATOLOGY: THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

In the last lesson, we studied about the second coming and the millennial position in relation to the second coming. Now we are going to actually look at the second coming and the judgment that is going to come after that.

This sermon is of the old kind of preaching. It is not the modern kind where you do the three points and a poem, rhyming points, or the points beginning with the same letter or word. It is where the Scriptures do the preaching, and I just become the mouthpiece to explain. In this old-timey kind of preaching, the Lord will show us in our spirits what awaits us. My comments will merely describe to you my understanding of the details. After this lesson, you will know what is coming and recognize it when you see it come to pass.

THE SECOND COMING

Revelation

19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

19:12 His eyes [were] as a flame of fire, and on his head [were] many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

19:13 And he [was] clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

19:14 And the armies [which were] in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

19:16 And he hath on [his] vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

When the Lord does come again, He will be coming with His saints. This army that is with Him dressed in white will be all of His saints as described in verse 8. If the blood of Christ has cleansed you, and you are dressed in white linen, you will be coming with your Lord. That coming is the second coming that we have been talking about in the eschatological models.

Whenever the Lord comes into the presence of Satan there is going to be war, and that is the next event to be described. That is why you are at war today with Satan, and this war in Revelation 19 is a continuation of the same war. If you follow the Lord, that war is going to get very hot and heavy around you. The closer you get to Him, the fiercer it is going to be.

BATTLE WITH ANTICHRIST

Let us take a look at the battle that is going to come.

Revelation

19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

19:18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all [men, both] free and bond, both small and great

19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

The beast is Antichrist who will be ruling when the Lord comes the second time. Under the rule of Antichrist, there is going to be much deception. As we go through the Scriptures, you need to look for this word

“deceived.” Please see that deception is Satan’s methodology. What is deception? It is to get you to believe something that is not true. If he can get you to believe something that is not true, then he can get you to do what he wants. If he can get you to bow down and worship someone or something other than Jesus Christ, your idolatry is an embarrassment to God. He can put a very good cloak over that idol. If he can get you to worship that really good thing, the idol, as long as it is not the Lord, he has deceived you and is laughing about it.

Now watch this: the beast is working with the false prophet, and their work is bringing about deceit.

Revelation

19:20 And the beast was taken and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he **deceived** them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Antichrist and the false prophet will have deceived people into taking the mark, making those people think that this is a good thing to do. It will be a politically correct thing to do—to take the mark. Political correctness will call for us to line up with government because Antichrist is going to be the head governor. He is going to be deceiving the people and using the false prophet to help him achieve the end of getting all of his subjects to take the mark of political correctness. That mark then is going to be condemning if he can deceive you into thinking it is not condemning.

Remember the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden? He deceived Eve. That is the way he is going to operate. If he can deceive your people into taking that mark, they will be condemned.

It is our job, now, to go against deceit, to bring truth and light into the situation. What

we are to do is just the opposite of what the Antichrist and the False Prophet do.

When Jesus comes back, He is going to take those two, the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and cast them into the lake of fire. Verse 21 speaks of the remainder of the people.

Revelation

19:21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which [sword] proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

All this great army of people, who have been deceived and have taken the mark, will come against the Lord. We will come with the Lord at His second coming. The two that go into the lake of fire are Antichrist and the False Prophet, but the rest of Antichrist’s army does not go into the lake of fire. They are slain, and the fowls come and eat them. They go straight away into hell. The two are in the lake of fire, but all of the rest of the army is in hell.

PREPARATION FOR THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

The following is the preparation for the millennial reign. First, we have the second coming, and then we have the millennial reign that is going to be established.

Revelation

20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Satan is bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, chained up with a seal set upon him. Of the evil trinity, Satan is in the bottomless pit, and the Antichrist and False

Prophet are in the lake of fire. There is no more deception. There will be a thousand years with no deceiver on this planet. Now we have truth and light, and right becomes seen as right. Justice becomes just instead of unjust.

MILLENNIAL REIGN

This sets the stage now for a millennial reign. Let's see who is going to be reigning.

Revelation

20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Look at who is reigning: those that were beheaded. This kind of threatens me because I want to be in this reigning group here. He says here, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God." That is not a reigning by literal Israel because this is for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God. This has to be a reign of Christians. So dispensationalism drops by the wayside right there in that one verse.

You need to see something else. Who is doing the reigning here? Is it just the martyrs? If it is, what does that mean for us? Maybe we are not to be reigning at all in the millennium. Or could we be reigning in a subordinate position? We know that those who had their heads cut off are in those thrones. Thus we could then be subordinate and taking orders from those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus.

You have to resolve these things in your own mind. Where I particularly land is that those sitting on the thrones are those who paid the ultimate price, and I, unless I pay the

ultimate price, will be a subordinate. I will be reigning, but it will be under the authority of those who are higher.

I certainly do not want to be left for the second resurrection. I want to be part of the first resurrection.

Revelation

20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This [is] the first resurrection.

20:6 Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

I know that I am blessed, and I know that I am holy, so I have to conclude that I am part of the first resurrection. That means that I am going to be reigning somehow. Verse 6 says that if I am blessed and holy, I will be part of that reigning group, but it does not say that I will be sitting on a throne.

Then we are going to have the big test. If I am going to be reigning in this thousand years, that means I am going to be in contact with natural man. Natural man is still going to be on this planet. There is going to be somebody reigning in Fort Worth, Nashville, Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles, etc. There are going to be saints that are going to be reigning over natural man. You need to be putting in your bids now because some of you are going to want to reign in particular places in Texas, Tennessee, and other places. There is a lot of competition to get places in Texas.

If you should be reigning over natural man and serving as their priests, then it means that you are going to be the mediator between these people and God. We will be priests who will be mingling with the people, listening to them, and then coming to the Lord in their behalf. That is what it says right there in verse 6. As a priest, you will be expected to teach your people. It is the same principle as today. You are to teach your people, and you are to warn them about deception.

I am going to be telling my people: “Satan is in the pit, and when he comes out, you are not going to see him, but he is going to deceive the nations, and he is going to deceive you if you give him half a chance.” I am going to tell them the whole plan. I am going to tell them about that lake of fire, who is in there. I am going to tell them all about the doctrine of salvation and how we came through history. I am going to tell them the whole thing. I am going to tell them about the millennium. I am going to tell them about the judgment at the end. I am going to say: “When the thousand years are up, you will not know it. Satan is going to come out of that pit, and I want you to be on the alert, and be on guard against deception. I want you to test everything against the Word of God. If Satan comes out and says to you something that is contrary to this objective Word, you are to reject it because if you do not, your life is at stake.” Is that not what we are supposed to be teaching today? Our war is happening today, and it is going to happen again.

THE FINAL BATTLE

Revelation

20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

20:8 And shall go out to **deceive** the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom [is] as the sand of the sea.

This is almost staggering to me. Here you have no deception for a thousand years, and we saints are out there teaching and preaching our hearts out to the people, natural man, for a thousand years. I am going to make them memorize the Bible. And yet, Satan is going to come out, and after a thousand years of teaching and preaching, deception is going to reign over the entire earth.

Pete: How is he able to do this?

V: You have asked the right question because what he does then is the same thing he is doing today, and the church is included.

And our only defense has to be an objective defense.¹ It cannot be your feelings or your sense of right and wrong. Do not depend on a subjective defense!

And so Satan comes out and does the deception thing yet again.

Revelation

20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Verse 9 describes the next war. It is both a fast war and the last war. God just rains fire down and kills them all, and that is the end of war. But watch this—they pick a time when they are going to come up against the Lord, and they are going to encompass the holy city and the camp of the saints.

Here is what I think, and this may not be true, but let me just give this to you. What if the Lord calls a conference with all the saints in Jerusalem? While we are greeting one another, celebrating, and having a good time, Satan comes out and says, “Now is the time.” He gathers up the armies, and comes to Jerusalem and encompasses the entire city while we are there in it. This will be a flesh war, not a spiritual war. The spiritual war is in the deceiving part. This is going to be a flesh war, using the weapons of flesh to conquer our Lord who is Spirit. Prior to this war, Jesus uses spiritual weapons against every kind of attack, and that is where we are supposed to be right now—using spiritual weapons fighting our current war.

Satan’s army comes up to conquer us, and fire is just going to rain down out of heaven and kill them. The ones killed will be flesh and blood people that you have loved, you have sacrificed for, you have taught, you have preached to, you have ministered to, you have comforted and nurtured. These are your

¹ I have developed a whole course on deception. It is the philosophy course.

friends, and could very well be some of your family. So when you start teaching and preaching in this millennial reign, should it not be, “LISTEN TO ME?” Well, what about this current age in which we are today? Should it not be, “LISTEN TO ME? you pastors, you preachers, you teachers, you parents. LISTEN TO ME! This is life or death stuff.”

Revelation

20:10 And the devil that **deceived** them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet [are], and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

The devil is going to be cast into the lake of fire. Two people are already in there; Antichrist and the false prophet, and last comes in the devil himself. So the evil trinity is shut away forever.

THE JUDGMENT

Now we come to this part called the judgment. The way I am going to explain this is: I am going to describe the scene then read the passage, describe the process and then read the passage, describe the next part and then read that. We will just step right through it.

First I will describe the scene. If you can, imagine a great white throne, high and majestic and lifted up. This is a huge place. It is an open expanse of land, and there is an elevation at one end, and a great white throne is up there on top so that it is high and looking down. On that throne is the Lord in all of His majesty. He came in the first coming as a suffering servant, the lamb. He, at this point, is on this throne as the lion, the ruler, the Lord of the universe. There will be no more suffering sacrifice. He has already done that part. Now is the time to do the ruling part.

Around this big expanse of land there will be pickets of angels to secure the entire area. The angels will be like a picket fence, all around. On the right hand of that throne is going to be a saint: somebody just standing

right there at the Lord's right hand, and somebody standing right there at His left hand. You could be right there with the Lord's hand resting on your shoulder, but that is an earned place. We talked about that in the doctrine of salvation, in your sanctification, and in your rewards. That position you see is earned. You will be in whatever position that you earned.

There will be this great huge line of saints as far out as you can see to the right of the throne, and out as far as you can see to the left of it, just saint after saint after saint. Each one of them will be positioned based on how they behaved in their pilgrimage of sanctification. You will be in pecking order there **based on your life here and now**. This is important: your life now determines where you are going to be in this line.

All to the right, and all to the left are going to be the saints. The saints came with Him, and they will never be apart from Him from this point on. You are going to be a part of this scene. Every one of “you” will be weeping because you will know what this scene is all about. However, there will be many saints who will not have a clue what we are talking about here. But you will recognize this as the Great White Throne Judgment.

In front of the throne, there is going to be a table upon which are all these books piled up. One of the books will be the Book of Life. All the rest will be the books of works. All of the deeds of the saints and all of the lost people are going to be in these books. The Book of Life will have your name in it. Once you are saved your name goes into the Book of Life, but the lost people's names will not be in there. There will be a spot for every name, but many will not be in there.

Inside this picket fence of angels, all out in front of the throne are going to be the lost people. All of those people will be waiting for the judgment. They are going to be brought up out of hell and put before the

throne. While you are standing in the line of saints you are going to see people you know. Those people are going to be fearful, tense, thinking, "What is happening to us?" You are going to know, but they are not going to know.

They are going to ask, "What is going on here?"

You are going to have to give some answers. "Well, this is the great white throne judgment."

Sinner: "Well, what is going to happen in it?"

Saint: "You are going to be judged."

Sinner: "Well, what does that mean?"

Saint: "You are going to go into the lake of fire."

Sinner: "Are you going into the lake of fire?"

Saint: "No, I am up here."

Sinner: "How come you are not going into the lake of fire?"

Saint: "Well, I asked the Lord to save me."

Sinner: "Well, how come you did not tell me about the Lord?"

There is going to be recognition between you and your friends and your family members. You are going to be weeping in this line of saints. There will be much quaking out among unsaved people. Each person, you see, is going to be wondering, "What is happening to me?"

The lost people cannot even look upon absolute holiness. They try to look up, but they cannot look upon Jesus. Even the earth itself, the creation, cannot look upon Him.

Revelation

20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the

heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Please understand that everybody goes through two judgments. The first judgment you saints have already gone through. It was the judgment of your personhood. When you confess to the Lord that you are a sinner and ask Him for forgiveness, you have judged yourself as guilty according to the Word of God. Your acceptance of guilt is to agree with God that you are deserving of hell. But when you call upon the name of the Lord for forgiveness, you get saved. Salvation changes you from a guilty person to an innocent person. That is what we call justification, the new birth.

The second judgment through which every one of you will go is a works judgment. That works judgment is going to determine rewards.

What about the lost people, where is their personhood judgment and their works judgment? Their personhood judgment is done at the point of death, the first death. When they die without the seal of God on them, they are judged guilty and taken to hell. Then afterwards, they are going to have their works judged. It is like our current legal system. When you commit a crime, you go to jail. They get you out of jail and bring you to the court. The judge says, "Twenty years in the state penitentiary." Then you go to the state prison. The parallels are: jail is hell, the court trial is the Great White Throne Judgment, and the state prison is the lake of fire. You see our legal system is set up just like the law is described in the Bible. It is even the same process.

Each person is going to be called by name. He will be brought up to the front. The books will be opened. They will look at what he did, and the Lord will pronounce a sentence on him, and that sentence will be a particularly assigned place of suffering in the lake of fire.

The condemned sinner will be set aside for execution of the sentence. Then the next one will be called, and then the next, and the next, and the next—each one small and great. It does not matter how much money you had, no matter how many people you had authority over, no matter how big you have been in your life, you will be called up, your works are going to be read, and your sentence is going to be pronounced, and you will be set aside for execution. The Great White Throne judgment is going to be a works judgment of the lost people.

Revelation

20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

THE EXECUTION

After all have been judged and sentences have been pronounced, death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. Death and hell are personified here. However, it could be that they are regions or something. The two could be demonic angels in charge of a region. In any case, death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation

20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Among the people who have been judged and condemned there will be sheer panic. The three that will have been in the lake of fire, and the two that will have just joined them will all be screaming in pain.

After the execution of death and hell, comes the execution of the lost people. The angels will cast each person who has rejected the Lord into the lake of fire. Suddenly you are going to see people trying the appeal

process. Out of the ranks of the condemned, people are going to run up to appeal their sentence. They are going to say, “Lord, Lord, don’t you remember how I went to church, and I was in Sunday school, and I gave my money, and I got all these awards for perfect attendance? Do you not remember that?” And the Lord is going to say, “I never knew you, depart from me.” The angels are going to take him up and cast him into the lake of fire.

The next one will come up, “Lord, don’t you remember how I fed the hungry and did all these good things like giving clothes and money?” “I never knew you. Depart from me.” And the angels will cast that one into the lake of fire.

For the appeal, let us turn to Matthew 7:21-23.

Revelation

7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

7:22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

These are religious people, religious pretenders who are among us today. I pray that there will not be any of you that will be a religious pretender. A religious pretender usually evaluates himself by looking at another Christian. He does not evaluate himself based on the objective Word or even on the path to which God has called him. If you practice evaluating yourself subjectively on somebody else’s path, you can fall into the trap of deception. You should not evaluate your Christian walk based on somebody else’s Christian walk. If you believe, and your security is based on your doing better than someone else, you could end up as one of these religious pretenders, not having the

real thing. It is important that we get across to those to whom we minister that it is only the real things, the Word of God incarnate, the Word of God written, and our belief in them that count.

In the preceding Scripture we have these religious pretenders making their appeals based on their works. Please note that the judgment of works has no bearing on the first judgment. Works result from personhood rather than create personhood.

Notice, now, that you get to be up with the Lord not based on your works but based on your personhood. Your personhood has been declared righteous in your first judgment. Your righteousness means that you have been washed in the Lord's blood. That washing is a personhood judgment. It is the personhood judgment that determines whether you are in line with the saints or out in the open expanse with the unsaved. The pretenders do not talk about their personhood. Instead, they appeal on the basis of their works. However, their names are not in the Book of Life (indicative of a righteous personhood) because that is accomplished by Christ's work and His work alone, not the pretenders' works.

Revelation

20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

What do we in the church do? We want to forget about doing works and appeal to God's good graces for rewards based on our personhood. Our reversal is similar to that of the appealing sinners. They appeal for latitude on their personhood based on their works, and we appeal for latitude on our works based on our personhood. We become religious pretenders, and we defy God's Word that says, "God is not a respecter of persons."² That means He does not give a flip about your personhood when it comes to works judgment.

² Acts 10:34; Mark 12:14; Romans 2:11; Galatians 2:6; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; James 2:1; 1 Peter 1:17.

ment. When you stand before the Lord, you can say, "I am as righteous as the wind-driven snow," and He is going to say, "You have that part right, but your behavior stinks." These kinds of appeals then are out of place. You do not appeal on your personhood based on your works, nor do you appeal on your works based on your personhood. They have to stand on their own feet.

All of those that make their appeals based on their works are trying to get a declaration of righteousness put on their personhood based on their works. They do not want to go to the lake of fire. They want to get where we are. They will gladly pick the end of the line, anything just to get up where we are. They are going to be cast into the lake of fire by the angels. Each person will have his assigned place in the lake of fire based on his works.

After all the appeals have been made and the pretenders have been executed by being cast into the lake of fire by the angels, then that is when you are going to start quaking really hard. Your knees are going to give out on you. You are going to fall down on your face. You are going to weep tears and make a mud puddle right under your face. I am telling you right now that if you will listen to what I am saying, your agony at this time will be less because you are going to be faced with the execution of those people that you did not witness to. You see the angels are going to execute those who have heard the gospel and rejected it, but the saints will execute those who have not heard.

Ezekiel

3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

3:18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked [man] shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

3:19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn

not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

YOUR CHARGE

Your children whom you drop off at Sunday school hoping that somebody will give them the Gospel message, and they are somehow going to get saved may fall under the teaching of a religious pretender. Your relatives to whom you deny the Gospel message for the sake of not exposing yourself to any pain and suffering, your neighbors and your co-workers, and the people that have been assigned to you just because of who you are and where God has placed you, are yours to witness to, and if you do not do it, you are going to have to execute them. You men who have a little daughter who depends on you for life, loves you, feels secure with you, and you give her the finest clothes, the finest education, and the finest everything, but you do not give her the Gospel message, be aware of what is coming. On that day the Lord will call you up to the throne to cast your loved one into the lake of fire. You will have to run the gauntlet by passing in front of everyone of us. You will hardly be able to walk. Your knees will not hold you up. You will have to take her and cast her into the lake of fire. Your own little daughter!

If you think that it is hard to witness to somebody now, think again. You are going to have to cast your children, relatives, friends, and neighbors into the lake of fire. You say that you love them? Do not tell me that you love them. If you are a goose-bump Existentialist kind of Christian, and your Christianity is just for you to feel good and have your goose bumps while you just listen to your music, if that is all you are, you are going to have a hard time during this last judgment.

To whom much is given, much is required.³ You have been given salvation, the

Word of God, your marching orders, the gifts of the Spirit, a path of sanctification, a network, the Great Commission, children, assets, you have been given all of these things. Use them while you have time. If you do not warn the people in your network, then you will have to execute those neglected people.

The Lord is saying to you, “You are my watchman!”⁴ He says to the wicked, which He does through you, that “if you do not turn from your wickedness, you will die in your sins.” He says to you that “if you do not give that warning, you will be required to execute that person” that is assigned to you to warn.

Certainly the angels will do the executions of those who reject the truth. But do not expect the angels to take care of your executions, too. No, no. God explicitly said that their blood will be required at your hands, not the angels’ hands. He is going to say, “Bill, come up here,” and I am going to get up, and I will be dripping with mud and tears and weak kneed, and I will have to face that person I did not witness to.

What if I did not teach you in this lesson on eschatology the Great White Throne Judgment, and your people did not get taught? I would be at fault for your neglect. I am trying to give you everything that I know, the accountability that is passionately known in my heart. I am trying to give it to you, and if I can get you to do the same thing, then I have done my job. Then if you follow suit, you will have done your job.

I will have to come up before the throne and face the person that I neglected. The person will be facing the lake of fire, and he is going to look me in the eye and say, “Bill, you are a preacher, you taught at the seminary, you knew what was coming, and you let me face this?!” He will say to you, “You are a pastor, you preached at my church, and you let me come to this? You

³ Luke 12:48.

⁴ Ezekiel 3:17.

were my neighbor, you lived next door to me, and you let me come to this? What would it have taken for you to just give me a tract? How much does a tract cost? Some of them only cost a penny. Would you not give a penny for my soul, my eternity?”

These people that go into the lake of fire by your hands are going to remember you for eternity. They are going to remember your name; they are going to curse your name. They are going to say, “That sorry Christian! How could he get to go to heaven and let me go like this? What right does he have to go to heaven? What kind of watchman was he?”

We get to go to heaven not based on our works. We get to go to heaven because we were washed in the Lord’s blood. That is the grace of God! But there is going to be penalty for your lack of witnessing—loss of reward and the forced executions.

The people in the lake of fire that I neglected will remember and curse my name for eternity, but the miracle is that I will not remember their names. I ought to have to. You wonder how in the world can we enjoy heaven if our children are in the lake of fire? That is another miracle. God is too good to us. We do not deserve any shortening of our agonies.

Revelation

21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God.

21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;...

During and after the executions, you are going to be weeping and gnashing your teeth in fear, sadness, and anxiety. At the end of

the judgment, all of us will be weeping and lying on the ground. The Lord will then come to you and pick you up. He will embrace you, and all the divine healing and the joy is going to come into your soul because God Himself is embracing you. He will reach over and wipe away your tears. There will not be any more tears when He wipes your tears away. And miracle of miracles He is going to wipe away the terrible memories. You are not going to remember those people in the lake of fire. You are going to have an eternity of joy and celebration, and you do not deserve it. Those people are going to have an eternity of torment where their “worm dieth not,”⁵ and their smoke rises for eternity.⁶ It is going to be the most terrifying and excruciating pain for them. But it will be the most glorious for you after He comes to dwell with His people and wipes away the tears.

Isaiah

65:17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

65:18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever [in that] which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

65:19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

Verse 17 says “shall not be remembered nor come into mind.” This means then, that after He comes and wipes away the tears and He brings us together as His people to dwell with us, we will not even remember that lake of fire. The people in it will not even come into your mind. That is how you can have joy for eternity. It will be a complete joy. I want you to know right now that the agony that you are going to feel just prior to the joy that you are going to feel when He wipes away your tears will be the severest test of your eternity.

Revelation

21:4...and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any

⁵ Mark 9:43-48.

⁶ Revelation 14:11.

more pain: for the former things are passed away.

We will experience incredibly generous grace bestowed upon us who have neglected and despised the doctrine of salvation. We will have taken salvation as our own selfish gift, and we will not have shared it. Yet, we will escape having to live for eternity with the knowledge of how much torment our loved ones must bear because of our neglect. Many of your friends, relatives, and neighbors do not have a chance unless you bring them that chance.

The Great White Throne Judgment is where you are going to find out what you are made of. I want you to find out now. I want you to commit to Jesus Christ. Do you love Him? If you do, obey Him. Do you love people? If you do, give them the Word so they can be rescued. Do you love your children? You cannot let them go to the lake of fire! Do you love your spouse? You make sure your spouse knows. You make sure your spouse is in teamwork with you and the Lord. Do you love? If you love, you will act.

YOUR COMMITMENT

I am going to ask you to commit to Jesus Christ that you will take positive action. You do not have to be an evangelist to evangelize. Let me tell you, the Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation.”⁷ That is God’s promise to us. Distribute His Gospel. You may be the most timid person in the history of the world, but you can distribute Gospel tracts. You can do secret-agent tracting, you can give them directly to people, you can mail them, and you can put them in your Christmas cards. You ought to witness to your community, those in your neighborhood. Give out Gospel tracts. Send everybody in your neighborhood a Christmas card with a Gospel tract in it. Or, do like what my family is doing. We make our own Christmas cards, and they are the

plan of salvation with an invitation and a prayer. Everybody knows then. You will not be executing those you witness to. If you love them, you will want them saved.

There is a level of commitment that Jesus is asking for you to do. Will you do it? Will you commit? You have been given this sermon now. A lot of these details may not be exact, and I confess that straight up. But I will tell you this, when we are there at that Great White Throne, you are going to recognize it. You are going to remember this sermon.

I am going to lead us in prayer. I am going to ask you to commit. Commit to obey the Lord and to love people. You cannot say that you love Jesus if you do not obey Him. We are talking about loving the Lord and loving people. If you love the Lord by obeying, you love people by witnessing. You can witness with tracts, by witnessing, by preaching, etc. Use your ingenuity, creativity, but get it done!

“Lord, as we come to this moment, this moment of sanctity in which You are dealing with our hearts individually, I am praying that Your saints have heard this message, and that they will take it seriously, and that every life will be changed including my own. I pray God that I will demonstrate my love for You by being obedient, being holy so that You can spend me how You want to, and Lord, I pray that my love for the people for whom You came and died will be manifested in carrying Your Gospel, the power of God unto salvation unto the people. Lord I am praying that everyone of us here will multiply our efforts in tracting and testifying, in helping, in ministering, in doing everything that will shine light upon the Gospel message. And I am praying that, out of this sermon on the Great White Throne Judgment, You will bring a great harvest into Your kingdom of souls who will not have to go to the lake of fire, and over whom we will not have to weep and with

⁷ Romans 1:16.

whom we will rejoice through eternity because we love You, Jesus. You are our Master, our Lord, our Savior, and our God. We love You, Jesus, and I pray that every one of us will come out of this course changed, and because of that change our family, our neighbors, our co-workers will benefit. We lift it all up to You. We ask that You seal this prayer on every soul that is committing right now. Here is my commitment to You, Jesus: I am going to do my very best to witness to those around me. Give me wisdom and the abilities to bring glory to you. I love You, Jesus. Amen.”

If you are committing, raise your hand up to the Lord right now.

Okay, when you leave this place, when you close this book, that commitment is in place. You be creative. You figure out ways. Do not look at tradition. You be creative. Secret agent tracting is a wonderful way of tracting. Just lay the tracts around like land mines. Someone will come along and pick it up, and then Bam! There is another one in the kingdom.

Joe: Chick has a tract called Party Girl. They work really well if left in the men’s room. Go to www.chick.com.

V: Get your tracts, get armed,⁸ and get into the fracas.

⁸ I have a course on evangelism that everyone should take.

CONCLUSION

So why did we study all of the various doctrines in this book? because it has armed us with a solid foundation in doctrine. We should be able to stand on this good foundation for our future Bible study, our actions, and our hermeneutic.

The plan from the ages is that we know God's Word, do God's bidding, and gain additional understanding. Theology is the first step in this process. However, this process must not stop with our knowledge of Systematic Theology. We must go forward in holiness.

God says that we cannot even be a disciple unless we first deny ourselves. Then comes our death to self when we pick up our crosses. And lastly, we must follow Jesus. So our knowledge must translate into works. If works do not follow our knowledge of theology, then our faith is dead, and we are not disciples of Jesus Christ.

Will you give yourself wholly to Jesus? Will you allow Him to change you by setting you aside for His own uses? You cannot be your own and be holy. Holy means to be set aside by God to be spent for His own purposes. Did you get that? God will spend you as one of His resources as He sees fit. That means that you cannot live your own life. To be holy means that you will allow Jesus to live His Life through you. What I am asking you is impossible to do on your own. God wants to do it through you. However, just as He waited for you to ask Him to cleanse and save you, He is waiting for you to ask Him to take your life and use it as He sees fit. No strings attached and no conditions, He wants you to surrender to Him and then watch and participate with Him. Will you do it? If you will, pray this prayer to Him now:

Lord Jesus, I want to be Your disciple. I want to give myself unreservedly to You. Spend me as You see fit. I want to be used to glorify Your Name. Please live Your Life through me and make me one of Your profitable resources. I want to hear You say: "Well done my good and profitable servant." You have my total permission to change me into Your image. Change my character, my purpose, my play, my work, my studies, my relationships, my ministries, my holiness and my worship as You see fit. I love You, Jesus, my Lord, my Master, my Savior, and my God. Amen.

If you make the commitment, sign your name below. Pass this book on to someone else who may also make the commitment by signing.

APPENDIX A

WHAT TO DO NOW?

1. Pray daily. (1 Thes. 5:17; Luke 18:1)
2. Read the Bible daily. (Acts 17:11; Psalms 1:2)
3. Witness for Christ daily. (Acts 1:8, Acts 5:42)
4. Confess Christ openly and be baptized. (Matt. 10:32, 28:19, 20; Acts 2:41)
5. Attend church where the Bible is preached and Christ is honored. (Hebrews 10:25)
6. Keep Christ's commandments. (John 14:15)
7. Write us for free literature to help you in your new life.

Name

Address

.....

THE



"IF YOU HAD DIED THE MINUTE YOU STARTED TO READ THIS, DO YOU HAVE THE ASSURANCE THAT YOU WOULD BE IN HEAVEN?"

THE BIBLE SAYS there are four things a person must know to go to heaven:

(1) **All** have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23. This means we all have sinned and we fall short of Jesus, God's Glory.

(2) For the wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23(a). Our sin has earned a wage that wage is death or separation from God in Hell.

(3) But the **gift** of God is **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23(b). God offers us the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. We must receive God's Son, Jesus Christ, to receive His gift of eternal life.

(4) Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him. Revelation 3:20. Jesus stands at the door of your heart waiting for you to invite Him in as Saviour.

So taking Him as your Saviour is the next step. How? Simple. Talk to Him, simply ask God to save you, **pray this prayer now.**

"Dear Jesus, forgive me all my sins and save my soul. I repent of all my sins and ask you to come into my heart and be the Lord of my life. Take control of my life, for I give myself to Thee. Thank you for hearing my prayer and saving my soul. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

Now that you have received Jesus Christ you can know that you are saved, because God has given you his word.

1 John 5

11. And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may **know** that ye have eternal life.

APPENDIX B



Text of The Big Question:

"IF YOU HAD DIED THE MINUTE YOU STARTED TO READ THIS, DO YOU HAVE THE ASSURANCE THAT YOU WOULD BE IN HEAVEN?"

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Name..... Address.....

APPENDIX C

Doctrine of Sin

Conscience is a knowing of self in relation to a moral standard. It involves choice whether to conform or not. The will has the power of contrary choice (Romans 7:18).

God's Law is an expression of God's will.

Sin is not conforming to God's Law in act, attitude or state.

1. Act: Numbers 15:28; Psalms 51:1-2; Romans 7:17.
2. Attitude: Matthew 15:19; Hebrews 3:12.
3. State: Romans 7:8-10 (awakened by the Law); Romans 5:21; Leviticus 1:3, Leviticus 12:8.

Sin weakens our power to obey, but our "cannot" is really a "will not." It is voluntary transgression of known law, but it comes out of a depravation which gives shape to the will and causes moral blindness. See Romans 7:7-25.

Sin is selfishness. It is a denial of love for God as holiness, which is the source of our holiness. Selfishness results in sensuality, avarice, ambition, vanity, pride, malice. Selfishness is the opposite of Christ's example. Jesus sought God's will, not His own. Like Him, the Christian is not to live for self. The *Kenosis* is the model for Christianity; it is agape in action:

Matthew 22:37-29	Love God and man
Romans 13:8-10.....	Love fulfills the Law
Galatians 5:14	Love neighbor as self
James 2:8	Royal Law
John 5:30	He seeks God's will
John 7:18	He seeks God's glory
Romans 15:3	He pleased not Himself
Romans 14:7	We don't live or die to ourselves
2 Corinthians 5:15	We don't live unto ourselves
Galatians 2:20	Not I that lives, but Christ in me.
Philippians 2:7	Jesus emptied Himself

Opposite:

2 Timothy 3:1-5	Lovers of self
Genesis 3:5	You shall be as gods
Luke 15:12-13	Give me my portion
2 Thessalonians 2:3-4	Man of sin exalteth himself

Sin is universal:	1 Kings 8:46; Psalms 143:2; Proverbs 20:9;
	Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10, 12, 19-20, 23;
	1 John 1:8, 5:19.

Answers to Chapter 1 Questions

1. Define Systematic Theology (word for word).
It is a contemporary study of God and the rest of reality to make a coherent, valid, and consistent statement about Christian doctrines. It seeks to develop individual meanings, interrelated meanings, and meanings in relation to the whole system. A variety of sources may be used, but they are all secondary to Scripture.
2. What are the factors of canonization?
 1. Apostolicity
 2. They are faithful to Christ
 3. They are well received (catholicity)
 4. They induce worship
3. What are the Protestant distinctives?
Sola Christos: Only by Christ. Christ alone is Savior
Sola Fidei: Only by faith
Sola Scriptura: Only the Scripture
Priesthood of the believer: Priesthood of the saints, not just ordained persons.
4. Compare Liberalism with Fundamentalism.
Description of Liberalism
 1. No supernaturalism, or no miracles.
 2. Emphasis is on the immanence of God.
 3. It is an ethic without a belief.
 4. It emphasizes the subjective atonement.
 5. It is loving and inclusive.
 6. It is utopian.
- Description of Fundamentalism
 1. Belligerent and exclusive.
 2. No social concern.
 3. Emphasizes the transcendence of God.
 4. Emphasizes the objective atonement.
 5. There is an escapist mentality.
 6. The five fundamentals (doctrines) of Fundamentalism
 - a. The virgin birth.
 - b. Substitutionary atonement
 - c. The bodily resurrection.
 - d. The physical return of Christ at the second coming.
 - e. The inerrancy of the Scriptures.
5. Why study theology?
 1. In order to speak about salvation.
 2. Organize your beliefs into a whole.
 3. Enhance your witnessing.
 4. Purify beliefs

Answers to Questions for Chapter 2

1. Describe the four world church councils.
 - a. Council of Nicea: Identified patristic theology as ante-Nicene, Nicene, or post-Nicene. Arius and Athanasius debated before this council in AD325. It was made up of the entire “catholic” church of the whole world. Arius believed that Christ was more than man but less than God, an Ebionite. Athanasius said that Jesus is God. He asserted the *homoousius* or the same essence as a characteristic of God. Only the deity issue was resolved at Nicea.
 - b. Council of Constantinople, AD381.
Apollinarius said that the Word was in eternity past, but Jesus came in the flesh at that time but was not in the flesh prior to that. Christ was the Word, Word was in eternity past, but when Jesus came He gets flesh. After birth you have God, the Deity, the Word and the flesh conjoined. This however is called Word-flesh christology, and that is heresy. It is not the flesh that makes you human. The Word does make Him God. Jesus was all man, not just flesh. Jesus was also all God.
 - c. Council of Ephesus, AD 431. Debate between Nestorius and Cyril. Maryology had begun, and Nestorius objected, saying that God preceded Mary. Cyril said that if Mary was not the Mother of God, then Jesus is not God. If she bore Jesus, then she bore God and man, the God-man. Nestorius said that she bore only the human part that the other part was prior to her. The Third World Council branded Nestorius a heretic and banned him because he defied the statement that Mary was the Mother of God. Cyril was a proponent of Monophysite Christology.
 - d. Council of Chalcedon, AD 451. Eutyches represented the monophysite brand of christology, and Leo represented the two-nature christology that re-addressed Nestorius while holding to the statement that

- Mary is the Mother of God. Leo said that Jesus has two natures, and they are distinguishable but inseparable. Eutyches said there is only one nature after the birth—the Word had added to it the humanity. Leo was victorious, and ultimately became the first pope.
2. Define the finality of Christ.
 - a. Completed history.
 - b. Died once for all.
 - c. Salvation was in no other.
 - d. The fullness of God is not known elsewhere.
 3. What is involved in Peter's confession in Matthew 16?
 - a. Knowledge and reflection of Him.
 - b. Encounter with Him.
 - c. Spiritually aided conviction and faith.
 - d. Existential confession.
 4. Illustrate the *kenosis* and include the Scripture reference.
See Chart 2.9.
 5. Illustrate the Opposite of the *kenosis* and include the Scripture reference.
See Chart 2.10.
 6. How are our confessions going to be tested? God is going to test you, every commitment you have ever made. He is going to test you right now. Three tests.
 - a. The test of theology is to put what He said above all life's desires. All those who fail will be given a warning that they will be required to sacrifice, *i.e.*, no place to lay their heads.
 - b. The test of works is to be willing to lay down your life, your family, your physical security. Otherwise you can minister, but you cannot have a close fellowship of Jesus.
 - c. The test of *kenosis* is actual sacrifice. Unless you immediately take up your cross and follow Jesus regardless of anything else you have in your life you will fail this test. You can have no conditions of your own.

Answers for Questions on Chapter 3

1. List the six kinds of revelation, putting each kind under its proper category of general or special revelation and in proper order.
See Chart 3.0.

General Revelation

Nature
History
Experience

Special Revelation

Salvation History
Christ
Scripture
2. Draw the chart for Propositional Revelation.
See Chart 3.1.
3. Draw the chart for Personal (Act) Revelation.
See Chart 3.2.
4. Draw the chart on Salvation History.
See Chart 3.3.
5. Draw the Feeling Hermeneutic chart.
See Chart 3.4.
6. List and describe the theories of inspiration.
 - (1) Verbal: Every word is supplied by God.
 - a. Dictation theory: The writer is just an instrument.
 - b. Accommodation: The writer participates with God.
 - (2) Plenary: The whole is inspired, but not its parts. This gives us practical or functional inerrancy.
 - (3) Dynamic: God invested in the Bible His power for salvation.

Answers to Questions on Chapter 4.

Compare and contrast propositional with personal revelation.

CHARACTERISTIC	PROPOSITIONAL	PERSONAL
1. Authority	The Scripture is authority (author-ity)	Christ is the authority through existential experience.
2. Norm	<i>Sola Scriptura</i>	<i>Sola Christos</i>
3. History	<i>Historie and Geschichte</i>	<i>Geschichte</i>
4. Inspiration	Objective and subjective	Subjective
5. Application of knowledge	Illumination: Understand via hermeneutics plus conviction via encounter	Conviction via encounter (Emotional crisis)
6. Scripture	Revelation (Word of God written)	The record of revelation (witness)
7. Word of God	Jesus is the Word of God incarnate and Scripture is the Word of God written	Jesus is the Word of God

Questions on Chapter 5

1. List and explain the characteristics of God.

1. His immanence and transcendence
2. Spirit
3. Infinite
4. Constant
5. Holiness
- a. Set apart
- b. Morally right behavior
6. Righteousness
7. Justice
8. Faithful
9. Love
10. Grace
11. Mercy
12. Trinity

2. Explain/illustrate *chronos* and *kairos* time.
See Chart 5.1.

Chronos time is horizontal time, and is measured by a chronometer (clock). *Kairos* time is vertical time, and there is no measurement. In *Kairos* time one can see all of time at one look.

3. Explain/illustrate the church.
See Chart 5.2.

The church is the *ecclesia*, the called out ones. The church is made up of people who were in the world, but have answered God's call to come out of the world. The people of the church are in the world, but they are not of the world. The church is not a building; it is the body of Christ.

4. Illustrate and explain the Trinity.

See Chart 5.4.

The Trinity combines the Oneness of the *Shema*, "Our God is One Lord" with the threeness of persons (He is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit). He is one God in three Persons.

5. Illustrate and explain the first opposing theory—dualism.
See Chart 5.6.

Dualism. There is God, and there is the universe. Both are eternal, and one did not create the other; that is called dualism. There are two continuous eternal things.

6. Explain and illustrate the second opposing theory—emanation.
See Chart 5.5.

Emanation: The universe emanated from God, and redemption, under the pantheistic view, is called theosophy, which is when the universe returns to God. Knowledge is obtained by unlocking the mysteries contained in the nexus of man and God.

7. Explain and illustrate the third opposing theory—spontaneous generation.
See Chart 5.7.

Spontaneous generation is where evolution begins. Somehow life is generated out of dead matter in this theory.

8. Illustrate the Doctrine of Christ as the Bridge.
See Chart 5.8.

Christ embodies both God and man in His person. By being born He bridged the gap by bringing God into man.

9. What is preservation?
God maintains the existence of His creation. He created and He sustains His creation.
10. What is Providence
Providence is the progression of God's plans that involves foreseeing. He knows where the universe is going and He uses circumstances and events to bring it where He wants it to go.
11. Explain Calvin's predestination.
See Chart 5.9.

Five Tenets: Total Depravity (T), Unconditional election (U), Limited atonement (L), Irresistible grace (I), and Perseverance of the saints (P).

The hyper-Calvinist believes in double predestination, and the plain, ordinary, run-

of-the-mill kind of Calvinist believes in single predestination (Chart 5.9). Double predestination is when God creates one person to go to hell and one person to go to heaven. Each person's final destination is determined prior to creation. Single predestination is when all people are created to go to heaven, but then there is the fall which changes that destination to hell. God elects out of the damned the ones who are to go to heaven.

12. Explain christocentric predestination.
See Chart 5.10.

Christ is predestinated to go to heaven because He is Lord. He has been made Lord, and He is going to be Lord in heaven. Who else is predestinated to go to heaven? All of those in Christ go where He goes. See the plane analogy.

Answers to Questions on Chapter 6

1. How does pantheism differ from the idea that God is creator?
 - a. A monism means that creation is God. The universe is all there is.
 - b. The universe comes into being as an emanation.
 - c. God's personal being and His freedom are impugned by the concept that He is constrained by natural law.
2. Why is creation good? What does good mean?
 - a. God's nature is the source of creation.
 - b. People redefine good based on their ideological values, but Christians think of good as something derived from God or pleasing to God. In other words God defines good.
 - c. Theodicy results when evil enters creation.
3. What is theodicy?

We judge God when we impugn His power or His love on the basis of the presence of evil. If God is all-powerful, He could abolish evil; if God is all-loving, He would abolish evil. Since evil is not abolished then God is either not all-powerful or He is not all-loving.
4. Illustrate a dualism and a monism.

See Chart 6.1 and Chart 5.5.
5. Illustrate the trichotomous view of man, adding to that the Holy Spirit.
See Chart 6.3.
6. Illustrate the body, soul, and spirit of the unsaved man.
See Chart 6.4.
7. Illustrate the body, soul, and spirit of the spiritual man.
See Chart 6.5.
8. What does it mean to say that humans are responsible?
 - a. The ability to respond is based on freedom.
 - b. Responding is dependent upon understanding and reflection.
 - c. This ability makes us accountable to God.
9. Draw and label the relationship chart.
See Chart 6.10.
10. What is the biblical view of man?
 - a. He is created in the image of God.
 - b. Christ is the image of God.
 - c. Salvation is into Christ.
 - d. Man is unique in dignity, personality, and responsibility.

Answers to Questions for Chapter 7

1. Illustrate and explain *agape* (love).
See Chart 7.1.

Agape is a love that is unconditional; it is basically unilateral.

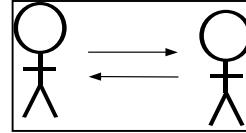
2. Illustrate and explain *phileo*.
See Chart 7.2.

Phileo is a brotherly or friendship love; it is always bilateral. If *phileo* is broken off, it is no longer love or it reverts to *agape*.

3. Illustrate and explain *eros*.
See Chart 7.4.

Eros is a self love; it involves other persons frequently in using them to love yourself.

4. Illustrate and explain bilateral *agape*.
Bilateral *agape* is where each person unconditionally loves the other.



5. What makes us aware we are sinners?
 - a. Awareness is in God's presence. Isaiah 6:5; Luke 5:1-11.
 - b. By hearing the gospel and the law. Romans 3:20 and 23.
 - c. Our guilt is truly known in forgiveness.
6. List the Greek words for sin, giving the general meaning of each

Sin	Reference	Meaning
<i>adikia</i>	Romans 1:18; Hebrews 10:20	Injustice; to violate the law. Unrighteousness
<i>hamartía</i>	1 John 5:16	Sin (wander from the path, miss the mark)
<i>anomia</i>	Romans 6:19	Lawlessness; violate law; iniquity
<i>apistía</i>	Romans 3:3	Unbelief; unfaith; malignant
<i>asebeia</i>	2 Timothy 2:16	Ungodliness; irreverent; and impious toward God
<i>aselgeia</i>	Jude 4	Licentiousness; debauchery; sensuality; Opposite of continence; unbridled lust; lasciviousness
<i>epithumia</i>	James 1:14	Lust or inordinate desire for the forbidden.
<i>echthra</i>	Romans 8:7; James 4:4	Enmity; hostility; hatred
<i>kakia</i>	1 Peter 2:16	Malice; ill will; desire to injure; evil character or disposition
<i>parabasis</i>	Romans 4:15	Transgression; overstep bounds of ratified law
<i>poneria</i>	1 Corinthians 5:8	Wickedness, Maliciousness; evil purposes and desires from depravity

Answers to Questions for Chapter 8

1. Draw the triangle of piety, labeling the corners with the biblical terms and with the meaning of the terms.
See Chart 8.2.

2. Complete the following chart.
See Chart 8.3.

3. Draw the Pauline model.
See Chart 8.4.

4. List the strengths and weaknesses of the Pauline model.
Strengths
(1) Studious

- (2) Know Scripture
- (3) Problem solvers
- (4) Pure lifestyles
- (5) Good teachers
- (6) Miracles tend to happen around them
- (7) Wisdom is a characteristic of them

Weaknesses

- (1) Tend to be content with knowledge alone.
- (2) Tend toward intellectual pride.
- (3) Tend to not soil their hands.
- (4) Tend to study problems too long.
- (5) Tend to be rebaptized and to rededicate often.

- (6) Elitists (everybody else is wrong).
 (7) Tend to be self centered.
5. Draw the Petrine model.
 See Chart 8.5.
6. List the strengths and weaknesses of the Petrine model.
- Strengths
- (1) Get things done.
 - (2) Not hypocritical.
 - (3) Friends of Jesus.
 - (4) World changers.
 - (5) Have a lively faith.
- Weaknesses
- (1) Burnout
 - (2) Impatient
 - (3) Make work out of play
 - (4) Make a lot of mistakes
 - (5) Have liberal tendencies
 - (6) Legalists
 - (7) Tend towards church idolatry
 - (8) Lonely
7. Draw the Johannine.
 See Chart 8.6.
8. List the strengths and weaknesses of the Johannine model.
- Strengths
- (1) Patience
 - (2) Peacemakers
 - (3) Generous
 - (4) Sympathetic/Empathetic
 - (5) Comforters
 - (6) Merciful
 - (7) Make worship services interesting
- Weaknesses
- (1) Emotional
 - (2) No assurance of salvation
 - (3) "Missed a blessing"
 - (4) Easily led astray
 - (5) Tend to hinder the Lord's work.
 - (6) Intolerant

Answers to Questions for Chapter 9

1. What does the Old Testament teach about atonement?
- a. Sacrifice of animals is required for sin.
 The problem was in the abuse of sacrifice by substituting it for right living.
 - b. Suffering servant passages were redemptive because they were vicarious, sacrificial, and substitutionary.
2. What is the difference between the subjective theory of atonement and the objective theory?
- The subjective theory
- a. It emphasizes a change in man.
 - b. Expiation (an associated word).
 - c. Removal or forgiveness of sins.
 - d. An example is The Moral Influence Theory.
- The objective theory
- a. The emphasis is on God.
 - b. Propitiation.
 - c. Pay for sins.
 - d. An example is The Penal Substitutionary Theory.
3. Draw the model on the work of Christ and list one theory of atonement for each of the vectors (the arrows).
 See Chart 9.7.
- Objective view
- First: Vertical-up (priestly) vector
- a. Satisfaction Theory. This is an objective theory proposed by Anselm.
 - b. The Penal Substitution Theory.
- Second, the Vertical-down (Royal) Vector.
- a. The Ransom Theory.
 - b. The *Christus Victor* Theory.
- Third, the Horizontal (Prophetic) Vector, the Subjective view.
- a. The Moral Influence Theory.
 - b. The Example Theory.

Answers to Questions for Chapter 10

1. Draw the Doctrine of Salvation that shows the Trinity.
 See Chart 10.2.
2. Draw the Doctrine of Salvation that shows God's path for you.
 See Chart 10.3.

3. What are the one way, two sides, and three tenses of salvation?
 - a. One way: Jesus. John 14:6
 - b. Two sides: God's side and man's side. John 3:16
 - c. Three tenses: past, Ephesians 2:8-10; present, Philippians 2:12; and future, Romans 13:11 and 1 Peter 1:9.
4. What is man's response to the initial event of salvation?
 - a. Hearing.
 - b. Repentance.
 - c. Faith.
5. What does it mean to have faith?

Faith is a believing in or on. It includes trust and commitment, which issue into works or it is dead.
6. What does justification mean?

It is a righteousness, which is:

 - a. Relational.
 - b. Legal.
 - c. Ontological.
 - d. Functional.
 - e. Declarative.
 - f. Accepted via faith.
 - g. perfect via imputation.
 - h. Growing via experience.
 - i. Given via forgiveness.
 - j. Achieved via redemption.
 - k. Followed by sanctification.
 - l. Completed by glorification.

Answers to Questions for Chapter 11

1. When considering ordinances versus sacraments, which is preferable and why?

Ordinances are observances commanded by God. There are two: baptism and Lord's Supper. Sacraments are considered salvific by some denominations because they are conveyers of grace. Ordinances are preferable because they do not save us. God saves us without an intermediary.
2. Illustrate the Spiritual Gifts Chart.
See Chart 11.5.
3. Name five things that detract from active ministry.
 1. Carnal ministries
 2. Misplaced comma
 3. Titular orientation
 4. Self-interest
 5. Lack of hearing
4. What is discipleship?

Discipleship is related to *kenotic* disciplines such as

 - a. Learning
 - b. Following
 - c. Repentance
 - d. Spirit filled/led by the Spirit
 - e. Suffering and struggling in sanctification.
 - f. Faith, hope, and love in balance.
 - g. Assurance
 - h. Perseverance
5. Illustrate five false *kenoses* including the one described in Isaiah 14:13-16
See Charts 11.9, 11.10, 11.11, 11.12, and 11.13

Answers to Questions for Chapter 12

1. What is the *parousia*?
It is the presence or the coming of Christ.
2. Illustrate the four kinds of European Eschatology, naming each of the four drawings and their proponents.

Radical Eschatology, Chart 12.1.
Realized Eschatology, Chart 12.2.
Existential Eschatology, Chart 12.3.
Inaugurated Eschatology, Chart 12.4.
3. Illustrate the four kinds of American Eschatology, naming each of the four drawings and their proponents.

Postmillennialism, Chart 12.5.
Amillennialism, Chart 12.6.
Dispensational Premillennialism, Chart 12.7.
Historical Premillennialism, Chart 12.8.

Glossary

- Amillennialism: figurative millennium means a long time between comings of Christ.
- Ante-Nicene fathers: those who wrote significantly after the apostolic fathers, but prior to the Nicene Council.
- Aorist* tense: a point in time in the past.
- Asceticism: denying oneself of comforts and luxuries.
- Atonement: in theology it is the redemptive work of Christ. The reconciliation between God and man effected by Christ's life, passion, and death.
- Augustine: Fifth century Roman Catholic Theologian, a proponent of Post-millennialism.
- Bultmann, Rudolf: proponent of Existential Eschatology.
- Calvin, John: proponent of Amillennialism.
- Canon: a rule or law; standard; criterion. The books of the Bible that are recognized by the Church as inspired. Canonization: How the books of the Bible were included in the canon.
- Charisma*: ministry gift given through the Spirit's grace.
- Christocentric predestination: to have the same destination as Christ because you are in Him.
- Christology: the branch of theology that treats the person and the attributes of Christ.
- Christus Victor* Theory: the idea that Jesus redeemed us from the devil's grasp by being victorious over the devil.
- Confirmation: to receive approval.
- Continuum: continuous and uninterrupted.
- Creatio ex nihilo*: created out of nothing.
- Cullmann, Oscar: proponent of Inaugurated Eschatology.
- Deductive theology: when you have a body of truth, and out of that truth you form your theology; it is projected out.
- Deism: God makes creation like a machine, and then walks away from it.
- Dichotomous view of man: the body and soul, two parts.
- Discernment: understanding.
- Dispensation: a period of time in which God treats the earth under a divine principle.
- Docetics: people who emphasize the divine nature to the exclusion of the human.
- Doctrine: that which is taught or set forth for acceptance or belief; in religion it is a tenet or body of tenets.
- Doctrine of dualism: there is God, and there is the universe. Both are eternal, and one did not create the other; that is called dualism.
- Doctrine of emanation: you have God, and coming out of God is the universe. That universe emanated from God, and so this is a pantheistic view.
- Dodd, C. H.: proponent of Realized Eschatology.
- Dynamic inspiration: where God invested in the Bible His power for salvation.
- Ebionites: people in history who emphasize the human nature over the deity of Christ.
- Ecumenicalism: the beliefs, principles, or practices of those who desire and work for worldwide unity and cooperation among all Christian churches.
- Egalitarianism: believes in or working toward equality.
- Eschatology: the branch of theology that treats of death, resurrection, immortality, the end of the world, final judgment, and the future state.
- Evangelical/evangelism: good news.
- Example theory: the idea that we are enabled to behave as Jesus because He gave us a model.
- Exegesis*: to dig out the meanings of a word or statement.
- Existentialism: a twentieth century philosophical movement that denies that the universe has any objective meaning or purpose and requires individuals to determine their own values and shape their own destinies subjectively.
- Expiation: when your sins are removed, they are forgiven; they are cast away as far as east is to west.
- Fatalism: your fate is already set; what you do is predetermined.
- Feeling hermeneutic: the Bible is an expression of the writer's emotions. To have your knowledge and understanding shaped by your feelings.
- Foreshadowing: something in the Old Testament that gives insight into a future event in the New Testament.
- General revelation: it is available to every one.
- Geschichte*: interpretive history. The interpretation by God of *Historie* is an inspired *Geschichte*.
- Gnostic: knowledge is spiritual and salvific, and material is evil.

Heilsgeschichte: salvation history. *Heils* means salvation; *Geschichte* is history.

Hermeneutics: interpretation. The science or art of interpretation especially of the Scriptures.

Hilasterion: it can mean sacrificial atonement; it can mean propitiation; it can mean expiation.

Historie: the historical fact of the act.

Holiness: (1) set apart for God's use; transcendence; (2) morally right behavior.

Homoousios: of the same essence.

Immediate knowledge: immediate knowledge is without a medium; it is knowledge that is touching. It is even closer than first hand.

Imputation: the word "impute" means to "reckon over unto one's account." Three major imputations are expounded in Scripture: (1) Of Adam's sin to the race; (2) Of the sin of the human race to Christ; and (3) Of the righteousness of God to the believer.

Inductive theology: when you bring evidence to bear from many sources and formulate your body of truth out of this evidence.

Infralapsarianism: single predestination. Election occurs "after" the creation and fall of man.

Inspiration: the infusion or imparting of an idea. Divine or supernatural influence as exerted upon men so that their writings have divine authority because God interprets the act for the writer.

Eisegesis: to look at a word or statement with your desired and resulting meaning already in mind.

Kenosis: (an emptying). A Greek word used in theology with reference to the self-abnegation of the Son of God in becoming incarnate, and entering upon His state of humiliation. The use of this term is based upon Philippians 2:7, where it means: "made Himself of no reputation," or emptied Himself.

Kerygma: preaching.

KJV: King James Version (also AV, Authorized Version).

Lea, Tommy: former Dean of Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a proponent of Historical Premillennialism.

Line of demarcation: the boundary line.

Linear: a process occurring over time.

Linear history: there is a beginning and an end.

Manifestation: disclosure or display; revelation.

Mediate knowledge: knowledge through someone or some thing. That medium could be writings or speakings or such things.

Metamelomai: the remorse, the feelings, the emotional content hopefully leading to repentance.

Metamorphosis: a change in form, e.g. a caterpillar into a butterfly.

Metanoeo: to repent.

Metanoia: repentance composed of a change of mind based on understanding.

Missio Dei: the mission of God.

Monophysite: a person who believes that Christ has only one nature.

Moral Influence Theory: the idea that we are moved to new behavior because of our gratitude for Jesus' work.

NASB: New American Standard Bible

Neo-Platonism: a pantheistic doctrine that includes theosophy.

NIV: New International Version.

Objective inspiration: when God gives the actual words to the person to write.

Ontology: the science of real being

Ordinance: a religious rite or ceremony ordered by God.

Orthodoxy: agreement with accepted standards, established doctrines, ideas, etc. *Ortho* means correct; *doxy* means doctrine.

Pantheistic View: means the universe is God because it is the self-existent one.

Parousia: the presence or second coming of Christ.

Patristic theology: the theology that has been constructed from the Nicene times.

Pelagian: man is inherently good and able to act and be righteous.

Penal Substitution Theory: the legal idea that payment for sin was required, and Jesus was our substitute.

Personal revelation: Scripture is not the Word of God. Revelation is a personal encounter with Christ.

Pietism: piety or godliness; devotion as distinguished from insistence on religious creeds or forms.

Piety: How you implement your Christian faith.

Plenary: means full; it is full inspiration.

Postmillennialism: Christ comes after a millennium of peace on earth.

Post-Nicene fathers: those that wrote just after the Council of Nicea.

Premillennialism: Christ comes before the millennium in order to establish peace on earth.

Propitiation: appeasement of God's wrath so that God does not look at you the same way He did before that sacrifice was made.

Proposition: words strung together in order to make a meaningful sentence.

Providence: to see before.

Punctiliar: a point in time like the blink of an eye.

Pseudopegrapha: false writings.

Ransom theory: the idea that Jesus was God's ransom to get us away from the devil.

Reformation: the religious revolution of the 16th century in Europe which began as a movement to reform Catholicism and ended with the establishment of Protestantism in many parts of northern and western Europe.

Regeneration: the spiritual change wrought in man by the Holy Spirit by which he becomes the possessor of a new life. It is a part of justification.

Retribution: punishment

Sacraments: a rite which is held by some Christians to transmit grace. Traditionally they are seven in number in the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches (baptism, Eucharist's, confirmation, matrimony, orders, penance and unction).

Salvation history: history of God's people, Israel and the Church

Sanctification: pilgrimage that goes the rest of your life following justification.

Satisfaction Theory: the medieval idea that God's honor was despised by sin, and that satisfaction was required.

Schleiermacher: the father of liberalism, and the developer of the feeling hermeneutic.

Schweitzer, Albert: proponent of Radical Eschatology.

Scofield: proponent of Dispensational Premillennialism.

Secular theology: worldly or non-religious theology.

Secular: of or pertaining to this world or the present life; temporal, worldly; not under the control of the church.

Sodomy: homosexual relationships

Sola Christos: only by Christ.

Sola Fidei: only by faith.

Sola Scriptura: only the Scriptures.

Soteriology: the Christian doctrine of salvation that has been brought about by Jesus Christ.

Special revelation: God's dealing in a special way to reveal Himself to people who are willing to receive that revelation.

Spontaneous generation: it is self-existent matter, and so you have only one thing—a monism. Evolution is incorporated in this model.

Strong, A. H.: the writer of a Systematic Theology.

Subjective inspiration: when God moves the person as a subject who would write.

Substitutionary: in our stead.

Supralapsarianism: double predestination. Election occurs "before" creation and fall of man.

Systematic theology: a contemporary study of God and the rest of reality to make a coherent, valid, and consistent statement about Christian doctrines. It seeks to develop individual meanings, interrelated meanings, and meanings in relation to the whole system. A variety of sources may be used, but they are all secondary to Scripture.

Theory of continuing creation: you are blipped into existence for a moment, and then blip, and you have another moment of existence.

Theosophy: redemption under a pantheistic view, and that is when creation returns up into God.

Titular: ministry as an office instead of a function.

Transcendence: means God is very distant from His creation. God is far off.

Trichotomous view of man: Body, soul, and spirit; three parts.

Utopian: excellent, but existing only in fancy or theory; ideal. It is inside of time

Vicarious: On our behalf.

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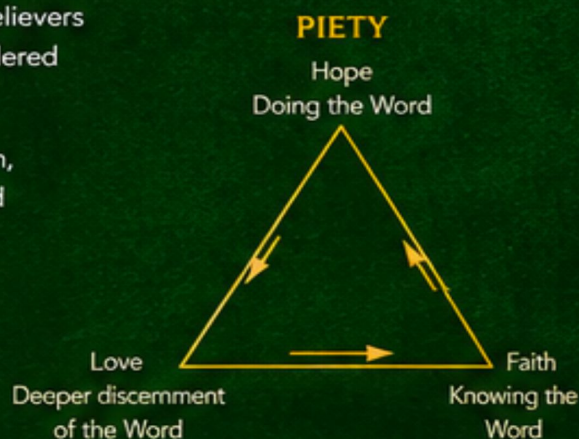
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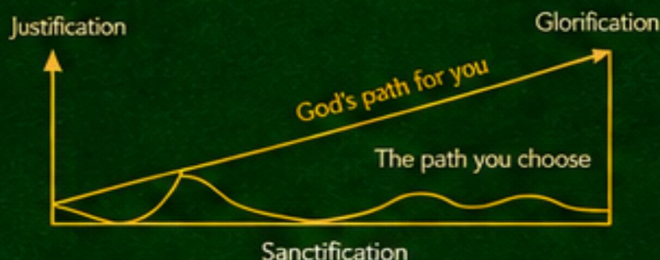


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Sanctification is God's process of making you holy.

Glorification is God's promise of making you like Christ.

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