

# **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 3 CLASS NOTES**

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# **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 3**

## **Class Notes**

Robert J. Dunzweiler

These class notes are primarily intended to anticipate, prepare for, and facilitate class discussion of the areas covered by the course. They are not exhaustive, and should not be treated like published materials. This stipulation should not deter the further use of these notes, however, since a secondary purpose of their preparation is to provide a compendium of doctrinal constructions suitable for use as resource materials for teaching and preaching. Of course, reproduction of any sizable portion of these notes should be made by permission only; and quotations from them should be appropriately credited.

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### **Outline of the Contents of these Notes**

#### **OBJECTIVE SOTERIOLOGY**

V.	THE WORK OF CHRIST	4
A.	The States of Christ	4
B.	The Offices of Christ	17
C.	The Atonement of Christ	26
1.	The nature of the atonement	26
2.	The extent of the atonement	45

#### **THE PERSON AND SAVING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

I.	THE PERSON OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD	51
A.	The Personhood of the Spirit	51
B.	The Deity of the Spirit	52
C.	The Spirit in the Trinity	55
II.	THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD	58
A.	The Work of the Spirit in General	58
B.	The Varied Ministries of the Spirit	59
C.	The Major Ministries of the Spirit to Believers	62
1.	Regeneration	62
2.	Indwelling	74
3.	Filling	85
4.	Fullness	92

## **THEOLOGICAL EXPOSITION OF ROMANS 1-8**

Introduction (1:1-17)	98
I. GOD'S CONDEMNATION OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS FOR THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS (1:18-3:20)	
A. Mankind's Unrighteousness	106
B. God's Righteous Judgment	113
II. GOD'S JUSTIFICATION OF SOME UNRIGHTEOUS HUMAN BEINGS THROUGH CHRIST (3:21-5:21)	121
A. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith	121
B. An Example of Justification by Faith	131
C. Some Blessings that Accompany Justification by Faith	134
D. A Sustained Parallel: Condemnation to those in Adam; Justification to those in Christ	137
III. GOD'S SANCTIFICATION OF ALL JUSTIFIED HUMAN BEINGS THROUGH CHRIST (6:1-18:30)	142
A. Step One: Recognizing and Acting Upon our New Relationship to innate Sin	148
B. Step Two: Recognizing and Acting upon our New Relationship to the Law of God	163
C. Step Three: Recognizing and Acting upon our New Relationship to innate Righteousness	181
Conclusion (8:31-39)	191

## **THE APPLICATION OF SALVATION**

I. COMMON GRACE	198
A. The Nature of Common Grace	198
B. The Means of Common Grace	199
C. The Benefits of Common Grace	202
II. CALLING (VOCATION)	206
A. External Calling	206
B. Internal Calling	208

III.	FAITH	211
A.	Aspects of Genuine Faith	211
1.	The Nature of Faith	211
2.	The Object of Faith	218
3.	The Source of Faith	222
4.	The Ground or Basis of Faith	222
5.	The Agent of Faith	222
6.	The Means of Faith	222
B.	Kinds of Non-Genuine Faith	223
IV.	REPENTANCE	226
A.	Statement of the Doctrine	226
B.	Development of the Doctrine	226
V.	UNION WITH CHRIST	238
A.	Statement of the Doctrine	238
B.	Development of the Doctrine	
VI.	JUSTIFICATION	248
A.	Statement of the Doctrine	248
B.	Development of the Doctrine	250
C.	Objections to the Doctrine	261
D.	Summary-Outline of the Doctrine	263
VII.	SANCTIFICATION	264
A.	Statement of the Doctrine	264
B.	Preliminary Observations concerning the Doctrine	267
C.	Development of the Doctrine	268

## V. The Work of Christ

The work of Christ includes three major areas of emphasis: the States of Christ, the Offices of Christ, and the Atonement of Christ. These areas will be taken up in order.

### A. The States of Christ

#### 1. Statement of the Doctrine

##### a. In the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

"Q. 42. Why was our Mediator called Christ?

"A. Our Mediator was called Christ, because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure; and so set apart, and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the offices of prophet, priest, and king of his Church, in the estate both of his humiliation and exaltation."

##### b. By John William Baier

"The State of Humiliation consists in this, that Christ for a time renounced (truly and really, yet freely), the plenary exercise of the divine majesty, which His human nature had acquired in the personal union, and, as a lowly man, endured what was far beneath the divine majesty (that He might suffer and die for the life of the world).

"The State of Exaltation is the state of Christ, the God-man, in which He, according to His human nature, having laid aside the infirmities of the flesh, received and assumed the plenary exercise of the divine majesty."

-- *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* (Berlin: Schlawitz, 1864, reprint of 1685 edition), p. 482.

##### c. By Heinrich Schmid

"As the work of redemption, for whose accomplishment the λόγος became man, could be brought about only through suffering and death, it is altogether natural that we should see Christ, through all His earthly life, even until the completion of His work of redemption, going about in the form of a servant, subject to all the weaknesses and infirmities of human nature. Not until after His resurrection did He lay aside the form of a servant and appear in divine glory. Accordingly, from the time of the incarnation of Christ, we have to predicate of Him a two-fold condition, that of the form of a servant and that of glory. . . Accordingly we designate the former condition the State of Humiliation a condition of self-renunciation; the other, the State of Exaltation. This self-renunciation, however, that is followed by His being in the condition of a servant, does not lie in the act of incarnation; for, although it is a gracious condescension of the λόγος, that He assumed human nature, yet that cannot be the fact here referred to, as the condition of self-renunciation is designated as temporary, while the incarnation is permanent."

Schmid goes on to list eight stages in the State of Humiliation, and four in the State of Exaltation, as those stages are listed in the *Examen Theologicum Acroamaticum* of David Hollaz (A.D. 1707). They are as follows:

- I. The State of Humiliation
    - 1. Conception
    - 2. Nativity
    - 3. Circumcision
    - 4. Education
    - 5. The visible intercourse of Christ in the world (His most holy association with all kinds of men)
    - 6. The bodily and mental anguish; the great suffering which Christ endured in the last days of His earthly life
    - 7. The Death of Christ
    - 8. The Burial
  - II. The State of Exaltation
    - 1. The Descent to the Lower World
    - 2. The Resurrection
    - 3. The Ascension
    - 4. The Sitting at the Right Hand of God
- Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Third Edition, revised (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1899, reprinted by Augsburg Publishing House, n.d.), pp. 376-380.

d. By Louis Berkhof

"In general a state and a condition may be distinguished as follows: A state is one's position or status in life, and particularly the forensic relationship in which one stands to the law, while a condition is the mode of one's existence, especially as determined by the circumstances of life. . . In theology the states of the Mediator are generally considered as including the resulting conditions. In fact, the different stages of the humiliation and of the exaltation, as usually stated, have a tendency to make the conditions stand out more prominently than the states. Yet the stages are the more fundamental of the two and should be so considered. In the stage of humiliation Christ was under the law, not only as a rule of life, but as the condition of the covenant of works, and even under the condemnation of the law; but in the state of exaltation He is free from the law, having met the conditions of the covenant of works and having paid the penalty for sin."

"There is a different of opinion as to the number of the states of the Mediator. Some are of the opinion that, if we assume that the person of the Mediator is the subject of the stages, strict logic requires that we speak of three states or modes of existence: the preexistent state of eternal divine being, the earthly state of temporal human existence, and the heavenly state of exaltation and glory. But since we can speak of the humiliation and exaltation of the person of Christ only in connection with Him as the God-man, it is best to speak of only two states."

"On the basis of Phil. 2:7, 8, Reformed theology distinguishes two elements in the humiliation of Christ, namely, (1) the kenosis (emptying, *exinanitio*) consisting in this that He laid aside the divine majesty, the majesty of the sovereign Ruler of the universe, and assumed human nature in the form of a servant; and (2) the tapeinosis (*humiliatio*) consisting in that He became subject to the demands and to the curse of the law, and in His entire life became obedient in action and suffering to the very limit of a shameful death. . . While Lutheran theology speaks of as many as eight stages in the humiliation

of Christ, Reformed theology generally names only five, namely: (1) incarnation, (2) suffering, (3) death, (4) burial, and (5) descent into Hades."

"Reformed theology, . . . regards the person of the Mediator, that is, the God-man, as the subject of the exaltation, but stresses the fact that it was, of course, the human nature in which the exaltation took place. The divine nature is not capable of humiliation or exaltation. In the exaltation the God-man, Jesus Christ, (a) passed from under the law in its federal and penal aspects, and consequently from under the burden of the law as the condition of the covenant of works, and from under the curse of the law; (b) exchanged the penal for the righteous relation to the law, and as Mediator entered into possession of the blessings of salvation which He merited for sinners; and (c) was crowned with a corresponding honor and glory. It had to appear also in His condition that the curse of sin was lifted. His exaltation was also His glorification."

"Reformed theology distinguishes four stages in the exaltation of Christ:

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Session at the Right Hand of God
4. The Physical Return of Christ"

-- Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, Fourth Revised Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), pp. 331, 332, 344, 346-353.

## 2. Development of the Doctrine

### a. General development of the doctrine

Both Lutheran theology and Reformed theology speak of two states of Christ. Lutheran theology does not include the incarnation as part of the State of Humiliation, whereas Reformed theology does include it. However, Lutheran theology justifies this exclusion by referring the states to the human nature of Christ only, and not to the Person of the Mediator, the God-man, as does Reformed theology. This raises an interesting point. If the states refer (in Reformed theology) to the God-man, and if the first stage in His humiliation is the incarnation itself, then how can the states be said to be only two in number, and not three? Berkhof does not mention the fact that there is a difference of opinion as to the number of states, and refers to McPherson's *Christian Dogmatics* (1898) and Valentine's *Christian Theology* (1906) for proponents of three states; and he concedes that "strict logic requires that we speak of three states or modes of existence." However, "since we can speak of the humiliation and exaltation of the person of Christ only in connection with Him as the God-man, it is best to speak of only two states." (p. 332)

This is not one of Berkhof's better inferences, since it appears to be saying that "since we can speak of the states of Christ during His incarnation only, and since there are only two states of Christ during His incarnation, therefore there are only two states of Christ." This inference is a non sequitur! By ruling out one of three possible components at the outset, the conclusion is drawn that only two Components are possible! But Berkhof himself refers to a third possible state, which he refers to as "the pre-existent state of eternal divine being." (p. 332) But he prefers to rule out this possibility.

Perhaps it would have provided a happier basis for limiting the states of Christ to two, if Berkhof had related the states more closely to the mediatorial work of Christ. Then he could have spoken of the Mediator's becoming incarnate to accomplish His work of redemption, both in His state of humiliation and in His state of exaltation. By thus confining the states of Christ to the work of Christ in redemption, Berkhof could (perhaps) more easily have limited the states to two.

However, even with this consideration, it is still possible to come up with three states, by contrasting Christ's incarnate state of humiliation with His previous, preincarnate state of glory, as well as with His subsequent incarnate state of exaltation. Such a configuration would consider the distinction between the preincarnate state and the incarnate state at least as important as the distinction between the incarnate state of humiliation and the incarnate state of exaltation. This configuration, in outline form, would appear as follows:

1. Preincarnate state (of glory)
2. Incarnate state
  - a. Incarnate state of humiliation
  - b. Incarnate state of exaltation

Perhaps, however, since we are speaking of the redemptive work of Christ, and not His work in creation, providence, etc., it would be most accurate to speak of His preincarnate state of glory as a background to His work of redemption, particularly as that work is bound up with the incarnation and its two major directions -- humiliation and exaltation. In this manner, the emphasis upon two states only, in both Lutheran and Reformed theology, could be affirmed without denying the reality of the preincarnate state of glory. This "third state" could simply be viewed as prelude, background, and backdrop to the two states of Christ's work as Mediator. This happy solution is herein proposed and employed.

b. Scriptures relevant to the doctrine

A great many scriptures are relevant to the various stages of the states of Christ, considered individually. However, the scriptures mentioned here speak of the states in general.

John 17:1, 4-5 -- "These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee,' . . . 'I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given me to do. And now, glorify Thou me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I ever had with Thee before the world was.' "

2 Cor. 8:9 -- "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich."

Gal. 4:4-5 -- "But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."



Phil. 2:5-11 -- "Have the attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Heb. 2:9 -- "But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for every one."

c. Specific development of the doctrine

(1) Background: The Preincarnate State of Glory

(a) Nature of this state

- [1] The Son of God, from all eternity, possessed all of the attributes and prerogatives of deity.
- [2] The Son of God was, from all eternity, the unique Son, the second Person of the Trinity. This eternal relationship of the Son to the Father is expressed in the technical term "eternal generation".
- [3] The Son of God, from all eternity, was equal to the Father and to the Spirit in the unrestrained manifestation of His glory.

(b) Stages in this state

- [1] Preincarnate intrapersonal relationships of the Son to the Father and the Spirit
- [2] Involvement of the Son in the Decrees
- [3] Creation by the Son
- [4] Preservation by the Son
- [5] Special Revelations of the Son during the Old Testament period

(2) The Incarnate State of Humiliation

(a) Nature of this state

- [1] The Son of God laid aside the unrestrained manifestation of His divine glory, and became a servant "of no reputation".
- [2] The Son of God entered into the experience of finiteness and limitation.
- [3] The Son of God subjected himself to the experience of subordination to the Father and the Spirit.
- [4] The Son of God subjected himself to the demands and to the curse of the Law, to the point of death.

(b) Stages in this state

- [1] The act of incarnation itself, as the Lord Jesus Christ  
(Note: This title -- the "Lord Jesus Christ" -- may be viewed as encompassing three aspects of the Person of the Mediator: "Lord" as referring to His divine name; "Jesus" as referring to His human name; and "Christ" as referring to His messianic title.)
- [2] The obedience of Christ, as a feature of His entire life
- [3] The sufferings of Christ
  - [a] both in life and in death
  - [b] both in body and in soul/spirit
- [4] The death of Christ
- [5] The burial of Christ
- [6] Christ's continuance, for a time, under the power of death (sometimes referred to as 'the descent into Hades')

(3) The incarnate State of Exaltation

(a) Nature of this state

- [1] Christ passed from under the demands and the curse of the law
- [2] Christ entered into the blessings of salvation as the Mediator, the one who fulfilled all of the conditions of the Covenant of Grace
- [3] Christ was crowned with honor and glory
- [4] Christ will be crowned as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

(b) Stages in this state

- [1] The resurrection of Christ
- [2] The post-resurrection manifestations of Christ to His disciples
- [3] The ascension of Christ
- [4] The session of Christ at the Father's right hand (the place of favor and honor)
- [5] The second coming of Christ

(4) The "Special Problem" of the Kenosis: the "Self-Emptying"

The passage out of which this 'special problem' arises is, of course, Phil. 2:5-11. Let us look first at the exegetical aspects of the problem; then let us look at the theological aspects.

The first part of verse 6 may be rendered "He who, existing in God's form" (Lenski); or "He, remaining in the form of God" (Buswell). The participle ὑπάρχων is felt by a number, of interpreters to mean more than simple "being", as expressed by εἰμί. As Lenski points out, "In the one instance we have existence as such, in the other we have being

in a condition which comport with that existence. Christ Jesus existed in the form of God; He was in the condition of being equal with God. The word μορφῇ means "that body of characterizing qualities which makes anything the particular thing it is -- in a word, its specific character" (Warfield); "*morphe* implies not the external accidents but the essential attributes" (J. B. Lightfoot); "μορφῇ = the form native to the essence." (Lenski)

The second part of verse 6 may be rendered "did not consider his being equal with God a thing of snatching" (Lenski); or "did not regard equality with God as booty to be clung to" (Buswell). Employing a term used a little further on in the passage, we may say that Christ existed in the specific character, the essential attributes of God (μορφῇ), which He outwardly expressed (σχήμα) by being equal with God. Paul says, however, that Christ did not regard this outward expression of equality a ἄρπαγμός. What does this mean? One possibility is that "He did not regard equality with God as something to snatch, to obtain by robbery." That this is not the correct understanding may be shown by noting the fact that, by virtue of possessing the essential attributes of God, Christ was already equal with God. Equality was something which He already had, and therefore it would make no sense to say that He wanted to snatch it, to obtain it by robbery. The other possibility of meaning is that "He did not regard equality with God as something to cling to, as booty, or as a thing prized." This understanding not only fits with the emphasis in the first part of the verse; it also fits with the movement of thought in the passage as a whole, from the preincarnate state of glory to the incarnate state of humiliation, by means of a temporary laying aside (temporary because of the following state of exaltation) of the outward expression of equality with God and an assumption of the form (μορφῇ) of a human bond servant, and the outward expression (σχήμα) of a man. Equality was something which He already had, which He did not regard as a prized thing to which to cling. Rather, He voluntarily gave up equality with God (not essential equality with the Father, which He possessed by virtue of identity of attributes, but the outward expression of equality) in order to run the race of redemption, endure the suffering and despise the shame, finish the course with joy, and receive the greater prize of the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, both those which rightfully accrue to Christ as fulfiller of the covenant conditions, and those which by grace accrue to those who are Christ's as recipients of the covenant of blessings.

The verb ἐκένωσεν in verse 7 has occasioned much controversy. Kittel, in TDNT, states that κενόω means "to make empty," "to deprive of content or possession," "to nullify, destroy;" but asserts that the meaning "he negated himself, deprived himself of his worth, denied himself" is ruled out of verse 7. Arndt and Gingrich propose that verse 7 means that "he emptied himself, divested himself of his privileges"; and they explain this by saying that Christ "gave up the appearance of his divinity and took on the form of a slave." The advocates of the Kenosis theory take the word as indicating that Christ emptied himself of some or all of His divine attributes in order to become incarnate and to enter the state of humiliation. The meaning common to all of these expressions is that of Christ's "emptying himself". And the question, obviously, is, Of what? What did Christ lay aside? Of what did Christ empty himself?

Many answers have been given to this question. Several of these (together with critiques) follow.

[1] "Christ emptied himself of His deity"

The problem with this answer is that it conflicts with a number of scriptural assertions of Christ's deity while in His incarnate state, including assertions of His omnipotence, omniscience, eternal self-existence, full deity, activity in preservation of all things, authority to forgive sins and raise the dead, equality with the Father, union and identification with the Father, and right to receive worship. "For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form." (Col. 2:9)

[2] "Christ emptied himself of His divine attributes, but not His divine essence"

This answer has two problems: one, in its theoretical formulation; the other, in its practical application. The theoretical problem lies in its separation of attributes from essence. If by "attributes" is meant "external manifestation or expression", perhaps a relative distinction of this kind could be made. Or if by "attributes" one means only what men attribute to God in terms of what they conceive or think or imagine Him to be, in distinction from what He actually is, then that is something different again. But the term "attributes", in the history of the doctrine of God, has been used rather consistently to refer to divine characteristics, qualities, or perfections. These characteristics are characteristic of God himself, as He has revealed himself to us. And when we see these self-disclosures of who and what God is, we understand that God is telling us about himself. To describe what He actually and essentially is, we use terms like "nature", and "being", and "essence". Cornelius Van Til puts it this way: ". . . when God tells us about his attributes he is telling us about himself. Every bit of his revelation shows man something of the nature of the essence of God." (*An introduction to Systematic Theology*, unpublished syllabus, 1955, p. 170). In the Class Notes for *Systematic Theology II* the author of the present Notes has offered the following definition: "The attributes of God are those constant characteristics, qualities, or perfections of God's nature, being, or essence, which are revealed in the scriptures and (to some extent and degree) in the created universe." The point of these quotations is that God's essence or nature is known by His attributes. His attributes describe His essence. His attributes are qualities of His essence.

At this point the subject-object distinction has value. For if we attempt to describe the essence of an object, we describe it in terms of its attributes, or qualities, or characteristics. In such a case, however, we are attributing to the object those qualities which we believe it to possess. The movement of thought proceeds from our minds to the object. However, when we attempt to describe the essence of God, we describe Him as a living, personal, self-disclosing subject, in terms of those attributes which He has revealed to us. In such a case we are simply attributing to God those qualities which He attributes to himself. The movement of thought in this case proceeds from God to our minds back to the living subject, God. Thus we come to a decision: when God reveals His attributes to us, either (a) He is telling us (to a partial extent and on a finite level) what His nature or essence actually is; or (b) He is telling us, not what He actually is, but what He wishes us to believe, in order to regulate our lives by it (sometimes called "regulative knowledge"); or (c) He is telling us what He is not, so that we may understand that His essence is ineffable; or

(d) He is telling us what He is not, so that we may understand that all assertions are filled with error and contradiction, and that there is no such thing as a true assertion (except, of course, this one!). The decision basically comes to this: when God attributes specific characteristics to himself in Scripture, either He is telling us what He is or what He is not. Since there is nothing in Scripture which even hints at the idea that God, when He tells us about himself, is telling us what He is not, then such a view must arise from a nonscriptural source. And most of the options for such a source are not particularly attractive: (a) autonomous individual reason or imagination; (b) non-Christian philosophy, psychology, or religion; (c) liberal, neoorthodox, existential, or process theology; (d) Satan.

The second problem with the answer that Christ emptied himself of His divine attributes, but not of His divine essence, is that concerned with practical application. If God's attributes express to us various aspects of His nature (i.e., tell us what He is), and Christ empties himself of His divine attributes, then how can Christ tell us what He is as divine? He can then only tell us what He has become as human (and this would seem to be the view of the Person of Christ held by one who gives this second answer). The very practical problem then is what to do with the many scriptures which speak of Christ in His incarnate state in terms of possessing divine attributes. These scriptures conflict quite strongly with this answer.

- [3] "Christ emptied himself of His incommunicable attributes (self-existence, infinity, eternity, immutability)"

It should be noted that this answer does not intend to say that Christ in respect of His human nature was dependent, finite, temporal, and changeable, but Christ in respect of His divine nature became characterized by these qualities. Two problems with this answer should be mentioned. The first problem is how Christ can continue to be called God in any meaningful sense if those attributes which are uniquely God's and not shared in any sense by His moral and spiritual beings are negated of Him in His incarnate state. And yet Col. 2:9 tells us "For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form." The second problem with this answer is that once again the scriptural evidence does not support such an assertion; in fact, it conflicts with it. The incarnate Christ is said to be omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, self-existent, and eternal. And He is "the same yesterday and today, yes and forever." (Heb. 13:8)

- [4] "Christ emptied himself of the exercise of His divine attributes"

The problem with this answer is, of course, that Christ not only kept His divine attributes (which this answer would concede); He also exercised them (which this answer denies). In fact, if He kept His divine attributes (i.e., continued to be God), He could not help exercising them! God is characterized in scripture as a living, dynamic, personal Being who feels and wills and acts; not as a lifeless, static, impersonal Being who feels nothing, whose decisions and actions are all eternal and unmoving, and who, unmoved, contemplates the universe. Thus if Christ retained His divine attributes, He, as a living, dynamic Person, must have exercised them.

To put it another way, every time Christ acted, He simply acted according to His nature; i.e., in accordance with His own attributes.

Once again, the scriptures conflict with this answer also. Christ manifested himself many times in terms of His divine attributes.

[5] "Christ emptied himself of the independent exercise of His divine attributes"

This answer holds that Christ kept His divine attributes, and even exercised them at times, but only by permission of the Father. That is, this answer proposes that Christ surrendered the use of His divine attributes to the Father, and thus used them only when it was the Father's will, and by the Father's permission.

One problem with this answer is the kinds of questions it raises. How can Christ "surrender" His omniscience (for example) to the Father? The answer, "Don't ask me how He did it; He just did it!" is not really an answer, but simply an unsupported assertion. To "surrender" His omniscience would have meant to make himself limited in knowledge; to blot out most of His infinite knowledge by "handing it over" to the Father (in some inscrutable fashion). In effect, it would have meant making himself the object of His own power! The infinite God would have needed to overcome His infinite knowledge! The same objection may be made to the idea of Christ's surrender of His omnipotence to the Father. In effect, it would have meant that the infinitely powerful God would have needed to overcome His infinite power, in order to surrender it to the Father. The same could be said in regard to each of the divine attributes.

Once again it may be pointed out that if Christ kept His divine attributes (remained God), and remained active, then He acted constantly in accordance with those attributes (i.e., in accord with His nature). And it may further be pointed out that whatever Christ did in respect of His divine nature, He did in perfect accord with the Father and the Spirit (even though the Father and the Spirit did not do everything the son did), even while He retained freedom of action.

Actually this answer does not apply to Christ's divine nature at all, but to His human nature. In respect of His human nature, Christ surrendered independent exercise of His human attributes to the will of God. He became totally subject to the will of His Father. This actually seems to be the intention of and motivation for this answer. Unfortunately this intention is incorrectly connected with the "emptying" of the Son of God at His incarnation.

[6] "Christ emptied himself of the manifestation of His divine attributes"

This answer retains Christ's divine attributes and the independent exercise of them; but takes a more humble stance, asserting only that Christ, during His earthly ministry, chose not to manifest His deity in terms of His divine attributes, but to live and walk purely in His human nature, the meanwhile veiling His deity from human sight.

The chief objection to this answer is that the scriptures do not support it in the comprehensive sense in which it is stated. There is certainly a partial veiling of His deity, and a partial restraint upon the manifestation of His divine attributes. But this answer, as it stands, cannot be sustained. On a number of occasions Christ manifested His deity during His public ministry.

[7] "Christ emptied himself of the exercise of His divine prerogatives"

Here the ground shifts from attributes to prerogatives. Christ retains His divine attributes (He remains God), the independent exercise of them (He continues being God), and the manifestation of them (He discloses himself as being God). But He empties himself of His rights, His prerogatives, His authority to perform divine actions and claims only the rights of a man who walks in perfect fellowship with and obedience to God, one who walks in the full authority of scripture and the full power of the Holy Spirit.

Once again this answer can serve as a partial explanation of the significance of the self-emptying; it fails as a comprehensive answer simply because it runs aground on the hard evidence of scriptural instances to the contrary. There are simply a number of occasions when Jesus Christ exercises such uniquely divine prerogatives as forgiving sins (not simply promising forgiveness on the basis of God's redemptive provision, or on condition of repentance and confession), locating the authority to raise the dead in himself (not simply resuscitating the dead by the authority of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit), and the right to receive worship (not simply honor or obeisance or acts of subjection or gratitude). Christ retained His divine rights and prerogatives. It is true that at times He chose not to exercise certain of these prerogatives; and these choices may be considered merely as wise acts of restraint or as part of His humiliation.

[8] "Christ emptied himself of the glory which He had with the Father before the world began"

Of course, if "glory" be considered either as a place, or as the character of a place, as in such expressions as "down from His glory", or "He left the glories of heaven", then obviously Christ left that behind when He came from heaven to earth. Of course, if the Son of God was omnipresent (as God) before the incarnation, then He was already here on earth as well as there in heaven before He became man, in which case He could not have left heaven behind (in a spatial sense), nor could He have come to earth (in a spatial sense), at least so far as His divine nature is concerned. Of course, it could be said that Christ did not leave heaven behind when He became incarnate, but simply changed His abode from heaven to earth (while remaining omnipresent). This proposal would allow us to change our focus of attention to His "glory."

What is "glory"? The term "glory" appears to refer (in connection with God) to the honor, the brightness, the splendor, the magnificence, the majesty of God; and it may be used with reference to the nature of God expressed in His attributes, or to the high, lofty, exalted position of God as Creator and Ruler of the universe.

We may therefore ask two questions. First, did Christ give up the splendor and magnificence of His divine attributes to become incarnate? From the considerations made in previous answers, it does not appear so. Second, did Christ give up the splendor and magnificence of His lofty, exalted position as Creator and Ruler of the universe in order to assume human nature? This question must be explored.

Since Creation in the primary sense of bringing of the universe into being is no longer going on, we cannot ask if Christ is still Creator in the active sense. However, we can ask if He is the Sustainer and

Preserver of the universe, and the answer is that He "upholds all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:3), and that "by Him all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). Is He the Ruler of the universe? in Mark 4:35-41 He showed that the elements of nature were subject to His will, when He authoritatively commanded the wind and the waves to cease and be still! No wonder that His disciples were filled with awe and fear, since it is the Lord God himself who controls the elements (cf. Ps. 107:23-30).

Of course, it could still be asked if Christ did not in some sense veil His glory, His splendor, His magnificence during His earthly sojourn; and this would be appropriate to ask. However, veiling His glory in a relative sense and emptying himself of it are two quite different things.

- [9] "Christ emptied himself of the manifestation of His divine glory through His human nature"

Actually, since this answer combines two disparate ideas, perhaps it should be reframed by saying that Christ veiled His divine glory by becoming incarnate, with the net effect that His divine glory (which He retained) was not able to be manifested through His human nature.

Once again if by glory we mean the magnificence of His divine attributes, this was only partially veiled by His human nature (and then only to human eyes). If on the other hand we mean the magnificence of his lofty position as Creator and Ruler of the universe, this was considerably veiled by His human nature and earthly life. As a partial answer, therefore, this has much to commend it.

On at least one occasion, however, the magnificence and brightness and splendor of the Son of God broke through the veil and burst upon the conscious perception of three of Christ's specially chosen disciples. The incident, recorded in Matt. 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, and Luke 9:28-36, is called the transfiguration; and rightly so, because Christ's facial appearance changed, and His clothes became white and gleaming, and Peter and James and John "saw His glory" (Luke 9:32).

- [10] "Christ emptied himself, temporarily and partially, of the manifestation during His earthly life of His honor and majesty and magnificence as King of kings and Lord of lords, and as Creator and Ruler of the universe"

Aside from the comment that this answer is liable to die the death of a thousand qualifications, it should be noted that it emphasizes the glory of position, not attributes; it speaks of manifestation as being veiled; it stresses only a partial veiling; it lays heavy emphasis on the downward movement from a lofty position as King to a lowly position as a bondservant; and it has the distinctive feature of specifying this emptying as temporary, for the duration of Christ's earthly sojourn only.

We shall allow this answer to stand as an explanation of the meaning of ἐκένωσεν in Phil. 2:7, until a better answer is proposed (or suggests itself); and we shall proceed with the development of the passage.

The second section of verse 7 -- "taking the form (μορφῇ) of a bond-servant" -- helps to explain the "emptying". it emphasizes the humiliation of position, not attributes. And yet it was not the mere appearance of a bond servant, but the actual form. Christ placed himself under obligation to fulfill all of the conditions of the



Covenant of Grace, including subjection to all of the demands of the Law of God. He bound himself to yield perfect, uninterrupted obedience to the Law of God until the completion of His mission.

The third section of verse 7 -- "becoming (aorist participle) in the likeness of men" - speaks of the incarnate itself. But why "likeness"? Perhaps Paul uses this expression to remind his readers that Christ, when He became man, did not cease to be God. The difficulty, of course, is to avoid the Scylla of Docetism (Christ appeared to be human, but really wasn't) on the one hand, and the Charybdis of Kenoticism (Christ appeared to be divine, on the one hand, but really wasn't).

The fourth section of verse 7 (in the United Bible Societies Greek text) begins a new sentence -- "And being found (aorist passive participle) in fashion (σχήμα), . . . " Here we have the completion of expression of what Soren Kierkegaard called the Absolute Paradox: the One who was in the form (μορφή) of God, whose essential nature was that of God, was found by angels and men to be in the fashion (σχήμα) of man, the nature of man which He took into personal union with himself. Here we have essential God expressed outwardly as a man!

And yet (verse 8 tells us) being found as a man, He "humbled himself", abased himself, took a low place, "becoming subject until death, even death on a cross." This subjection would appear to refer primarily to His obedience to the Father, which Christ yielded throughout His earthly lifetime. This obedience would relate to subservience to the Law of God already revealed, and to the Will of God which was further revealed to Him throughout His earthly ministry. When death ended His earthly life of subjection to the Father, the form which death took was crucifixion -- "death on a cross."

In verses 9-11 we read of the rewards Christ received for fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant of Grace, all of them moving in the direction of exaltation!

"Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown  
When Thou camest to earth for me;  
But in Bethlehem's home was there found no room  
For Thy holy nativity.  
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus --  
There is room in my heart for Thee!

Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang,  
Proclaiming Thy royal degree;  
But of lowly birth didst Thou come to earth,  
And in great humility.  
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus --  
There is room in my heart for Thee!

Thou camest, O Lord with the living word  
That should set Thy people free;  
But with mocking scorn and with crown of thorn  
They bore Thee to Calvary.  
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus --  
There is room in my heart for Thee!

When the heav'ns shall ring and the angels sing  
At Thy coming to victory,  
Let Thy voice call me home, saying, 'Yet there is room --  
There is room at My side for thee.'  
My heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus,  
When Thou comest and callest for me!

(Emily E. S. Elliott)

B. The Offices of Christ

1. Statement of the Doctrine

a. By Eusebius of Caesarea (A.D. 260-340)

"Nor was the name of Christ among the Hebrews, given solely as an honour to those who were dignified with the priesthood, in consequence of their being anointed with oil prepared for the purpose, as a sacred symbol; the same was done also to the kings, whom the prophets, after anointing them under a divine impulse, constituted certain typical Christs, as they themselves also were, the shadows of the royal and princely sovereignty of the only and true Christ, of that divine word which holds sovereignty over all. Moreover, we are also told respecting the prophets, that some were typical Christs, by reason of their unction; so that all these have a reference to the true Christ, the divine and heavenly word, the only high priest of all men, the only king of all creation, and the Father's only supreme Prophet of the prophets . . . . Even to this day, he is honored by his votaries throughout the world, as a king; he is admired as more than a prophet, and glorified as the only true high priest of God . . . ."

-- *Ecclesiastical History*. Book I, Chapter III.

b. By John Calvin

". . . Therefore, that faith may find in Christ a solid ground of salvation, and so rest in him, we must set out with this principle, that the office which he received from the Father consists of three parts. For he was appointed both Prophet, King, and Priest; . . . .

"Moreover, it is to be observed, that the name Christ refers to those three offices: for we know that under the Law, prophets as well as priests and kings were anointed with holy oil. Whence, also, the celebrated name of Messiah was given to the promised Mediator. But although I admit (as, indeed, I have elsewhere shown) that he was so called from a view to the nature of a kingly office, still the prophetic and sacerdotal unctions have their proper place, and must not be overlooked."

-- *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Two, XV: 1, 2.

c. In the *Heidelberg Catechism* Question 31 (A.D. 1563)

"Why is he called Christ that is, Anointed

"Because he is ordained of God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Ghost, to be our Chief Prophet and Teacher, who fully reveals to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; and our only High Priest, who by the one sacrifice of his body has redeemed us, and ever liveth to make intercession for us with the Father; and our eternal King, who governs us by His Word and Spirit, and defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us."

- d. By Heinrich Schmid (representing essentially the view of John Gerhard) (A.D. 1582-1637)

" 'The mediatorial office is the function, belonging to the whole person of the God-man, originating theanthropic actions, by which function Christ, in, with, and through both natures, perfectly executed, and is even now accomplishing by way of acquisition and application, all things that are necessary for our salvation.' This work Christ undertook in its whole extent, i.e. (1) While upon earth, He Himself announces to men the divine purpose of redemption, and provides that after His departure it shall be further announced to men. (2) He Himself accomplishes the redemption, by paying the ransom through which our reconciliation with God is effected. (3) After His departure He preserves, increases, guides, and protects the Church of the Redeemed thus established. As these three functions correspond to those of the Old Testament prophets, priests, and kings, the mediatorial offices of Christ are accordingly divided into the Prophetic, Sacerdotal, and Regal offices."

-- *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*  
Third Edition, revised (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1899; reprinted by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, n.d.), p. 338.

- e. In the Westminster *Shorter Catechism*

"Q. 23. What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

"A. Christ, as our *Redeemer*, executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation."

"Q. 24. How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?

"A. Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation."

"Q. 25 How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us."

"Q. 26. How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

"A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies."

- f. By Augustus H. Strong

"The Scriptures represent Christ's offices as three in number -- prophetic, priestly, and kingly. Although these terms are derived from concrete human relations, they express perfectly distinct ideas. The prophet, the priest, and the king, of the Old Testament, were detached but designed prefigurations of him who should combine all these various activities in himself, and should furnish the ideal reality, of which they were the imperfect symbols."

-- *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1956), Volume II, p. 710.

## 2. Development of the Doctrine

### a. Christ's office as prophet

#### (1) Scriptures relevant to this office

Deut. 18:15, 18 -- "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him . . . I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him."

(cp. Acts 3:22 [in which Peter applies this prediction to Christ] -- "Moses said, 'The Lord God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to him you shall give heed in everything he says to you.'")

Isa. 61:1-2a -- "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me -- To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord, . . ."

(cp. Luke 4:18-21 -- "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Because He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden, To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.' And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'")

Mal. 3:1 -- "Behold, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts."

Matt. 13:57 -- "And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his home town, and in his own household.' "

Luke 13:32-33 -- "And He (Jesus) said to them, 'Go and tell that fox [Herod], Behold I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach my goal. Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.' "

Luke 24:18-19 -- "And one of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him [the risen Christ], 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?' And He said to them, 'What things?' And they said to Him, 'The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people.' "

John 8:25-26 -- "And so they were saying to Him, 'Who are you?' Jesus said to them, 'What have I been saying to you from the

beginning? I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.' "

John 17:7-8 -- "Now they have come to know that everything Thou hast given me is from Thee; for the words which Thou gavest me I have given to them; and they received them, and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send me."

Heb. 1:1-2 -- "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers by the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world."

(2) Aspects of this office

(a) During the Old Testament period

- [1] Types, pointing to Christ
- [2] Ceremonies, prefiguring Christ
- [3] Christophanies

(b) During Christ's earthly ministry

- [1] The incarnation itself
- [2] Christ's teachings and example
- [3] Christ's miracles [signs, not simply wonders)
- [4] Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension

(c) During Christ's session in heaven

- [1] Christ's operation through the Holy Spirit, illuminating and instructing believers
- [2] Christ's teachings through His apostles and disciples

"Who is He in yonder stall, At whose feet the shepherds fall? Who is He in deep distress, Fasting in the wilderness? 'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story! 'Tis the Lord! the King of glory! At His feet we humbly fall, Crown Him! crown Him, Lord of all!

"Who is He the people bless For His words of gentleness? Who is He to whom they bring All the sick and sorrowing? 'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story! 'Tis the Lord! the king of glory! At His feet we humbly fail, Crown Him! crown Him, Lord of all!

Who is He that stands and weeps At the grave where Lazarus sleeps? Who is He the gath'ring throng Greet with loud triumphant song? 'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story! 'Tis the Lord! the king of glory! At His feet we humbly fall, Crown Him! crown Him, Lord of all!

Lo! at midnight, who is He Prays in dark Gethsemane? Who is He on yonder tree Dies in grief and agony? 'Tis the Lord! O wondrous story! 'Tis the Lord! the king of glory! At His feet we humbly fail, Crown Him! crown Him, Lord of all!

Who is He that from the grave Comes to heal and help and save? Who is  
He that from His throne Rules through all the world alone? 'Tis the Lord! O  
wondrous story! 'Tis the Lord! the king of glory! At His feet we humbly fail,  
Crown Him! crown Him, Lord of all!"

(B. R. Hanby)

b. Christ's office as priest

(1) Scriptures relevant to this office

Psalm 110:1, 4 -- "The Lord says to my Lord; 'Sit at my right hand,  
Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' " "The Lord has  
sworn and will not change His mind, 'Thou art a priest forever According  
to the order of Melchizedek.' "

Isaiah 53:10 -- "But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him  
to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His  
offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will  
prosper in His hand."

John 1:29 -- "The next day he (John) saw Jesus coming to him, and  
said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' "

Ephesians 5:2 -- "and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and  
gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant  
aroma."

Hebrews 3:1 -- "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly  
calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession."

Hebrews 4:14-15 -- "Since then we have a great high priest who has  
passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our  
confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with  
our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are,  
yet without sin."

Hebrews 5:5-6 -- "So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to  
become a high priest, but He who said to Him, 'Thou art my son, Today I  
have begotten Thee;' just as He says also in another passage, 'Thou art a  
priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.' "

Hebrews 7:24-25 -- "but He, on the other hand, because He abides  
forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Hence, also, He is able to  
save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always  
lives to make intercession for them."

Hebrews 7:26-27 -- "For it was fitting that we should have such a  
high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted  
above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to  
offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then

for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all, when He offered up Himself."

Hebrews 8:1-2 -- "Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a ministry in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man."

Hebrews 9:6-7, 11-12 -- "Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship, but into the second only the high priest enters, once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance." "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."

(2) Aspects of this office

- (a) Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin once for all.
- (b) Christ continually intercedes for His people

"Cross of Jesus, Cross of sorrow,  
Where the blood of Christ was shed,  
Perfect man on thee did suffer,  
Perfect God on thee has bled!

Here the king of all the ages,  
Thron'd in light ere worlds could be,  
Robed in mortal flesh is dying,  
Crucified by sin for me.

O mysterious condescending!  
O abandonment sublime!  
Very God Himself is bearing  
All the sufferings of time!

Evermore for human failure  
By His passion we can plead;  
God has borne all mortal anguish,  
Surely He will know our need."

(William S. Simpson)

c. Christ's office as king

(1) Scriptures relevant to this office

Psalms 2:6-9 -- "But as for me, I have installed my King upon Zion, my holy mountain. I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, 'Thou art my Son, Today I have begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.' "

Psalm 45:6-7 -- "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Thy God, has anointed Thee With the oil of joy above Thy fellows."

(Compare Hebrews 1:8-9 -- "But of the Son He says, 'Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His (or Thy) kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee With the oil of gladness above Thy companions.' ")

Isaiah 9:6-7 -- "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this."

Jeremiah 23:5-6 -- " 'Behold the days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days, Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The Lord our righteousness.' "

Micah 5:2 -- "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

Matthew 12:28 -- "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."

Luke 1:32-33 -- "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end."

Luke 17:21-20 -- "Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There it is!" For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.' "

Luke 19:37-40 -- "And as He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, saying, 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!' And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to Him, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.' And He answered and said, 'I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!' "

Luke 22:29-30 -- "and just as my Father has granted me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom."



John 18:36-37 -- "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, my kingdom is not of this realm.' Pilate therefore said to Him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.' "

Ephesians 1:19b-23 -- "These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all."

Ephesians 5:23 -- "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body."

Philippians 2:9-11 -- "Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Colossians 1:13 -- "For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."

Colossians 1:18 -- "He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything."

Revelation 19:11-16 -- "And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.' "

## (2) Aspects of this office

### (a) Christ rules now, in His church

- [1] He rules in the invisible church, as its Lord and Head, by ruling in the hearts of His people

- [2] He rules in the visible church, as its King and Head, through its officers, regulations, and discipline.
- [3] Christ will one day rule in His kingdom upon earth, both during the millennium and in the eternal state.

"Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing, And triumph evermore; Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

The Lord, our Savior, reigns, The God of truth and love; When He had purged our stains, He took His seat above; Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail, He rules o'er earth and heav'n; The keys of death and hell Are to our Jesus giv'n; Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope! our Lord the Judge shall come And take His servants up To their eternal home; Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!"

(Charles Wesley)

C. The Atonement of Christ

1. The Nature of the Atonement

a. Statements of the Doctrine

(1) The *Augsburg Confession* (A.D. 1530), Part First, Article III

"Also they teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, took unto him man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably joined together in unity of persons; one Christ, true God and true man: who was born of the virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, that he might reconcile the Father unto us, and might be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men."

(2) The *Heidelberg Catechism* (A.D. 1563), Questions 37, 40

"Question 37. What dost thou understand by the word Suffered?

Answer. That all the time he lived on earth, but especially at the end of his life, he bore, in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race, in order that by his passion, as the only atoning sacrifice, he might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation, and obtain for us the grace of God, righteousness, and eternal life."

"Question 40. Why was it necessary for Christ to suffer death?

Answer. Because, by reason of the justice and truth of God, satisfaction for our sins could be made no otherwise than by the death of the Son of God."

(3) The *Belgic Confession* (A.D. 1561), Article 21

"We believe that Jesus Christ is ordained with an oath to be an everlasting High-Priest, after the order of Melchisedec: who hath presented himself in our behalf before his Father, to appease his wrath by his full satisfaction, by offering himself on the tree of the cross, and pouring out his precious blood to purge away our sins; as the prophets had foretold. For it is written, He was wounded for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter. and numbered with the transgressors; and condemned by Pontius Pilate as a malefactor, though he had first declared him innocent. Therefore, He restored that which he took away, and suffered the just for the unjust, as well in his body as in his soul, feeling the terrible punishment which our sins had merited; insomuch that His sweat became like unto drops of blood falling on the ground. He called out, My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me? And hath suffered all this for the remission of our sins. Wherefore we justly say with the Apostle Paul, that we know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified; we count all things but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord: in whose wounds we find all manner of consolation. Neither is it necessary

to seek or invent any other means of being reconciled to God, than this only sacrifice, once offered, by which believers are made perfect forever. This is also the reason why he was called by the angels of God, JESUS, that is to say, SAVIOUR, because he should save his people from their sins."

(4) The *Irish Articles of Religion* (A.D. 1615), paragraph 30

"Christ, in the truth of our nature, was made like unto us in all things -- sin only excepted -- from which he was clearly void, both in his life and in his nature. He came as a lamb without spot to take away the sins of the world, by the sacrifice of himself once made, and sin (as St. John saith) was not in him. He fulfilled the law for us perfectly: For our sakes he endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body. He was crucified, and died to reconcile His Father unto us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt, but also for all our actual transgressions. He was buried, and descended into hell, and the third day rose from the dead, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature: wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father, until he return to judge all men at the last day."

(5) The *Canons of the Synod of Dort* (A.D. 1619), Second Head of Doctrine, Articles I-IV

"Article I. God is not only supremely merciful, but also supremely just. And his justice requires (as he hath revealed himself in his Word) that our sins committed against his infinite majesty should be punished, not only with temporal, but with eternal punishments, both in body and soul; which we can not escape, unless satisfaction be made to the justice of God.

"Article II. Since, therefore, we are unable to make that satisfaction in our own persons, or to deliver ourselves from the wrath of God, he hath been pleased of his infinite mercy to give his only-begotten Son for our surety, who was made sin, and became a curse for us and in our stead, that he might make satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf.

Article III. The death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sin; is of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world.

Article IV. This death derives its infinite value and dignity from these considerations; because the person who submitted to it was not only really man and perfectly holy, but also the only-begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and Holy Spirit, which qualifications were necessary to constitute him a Saviour for us; and because it was attended with a sense of the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin."

(6) The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (A.D. 1647), Chapter 8, Articles IV-V

"This office (that of a mediator) the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake, which, that he might discharge, he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfill it; endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his

body; was crucified, and died; was buried, and remained under the power of death, but saw no corruption, on the third day he arose from the dead, with the same body in which he suffered; with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father, making intercession; and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.

"The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the Justice of His Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him."

b. Scriptural Basis of the Doctrine

(1) Old Testament Background

Genesis 3:15 -- "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

Hebrews 2:14-15 -- "Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

Romans 16:20 -- "And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."

Leviticus 4:1-4, 13-15, 20, 22-24, 27-29, 31, 32-35 -- "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'If a person sins unintentionally in any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and commits any of them, if the anointed priest who sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer to the Lord a bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. And he shall bring the bull to the doorway of the tent of meeting before the Lord, and he shall lay his hand on the head of the bull, and slay the bull before the Lord.' "

"Now if the whole congregation of Israel commits error, and the matter escapes the notice of the assembly, and they commit any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and they become guilty; when the sin which they have committed becomes known, then the assembly shall offer a bull of a herd for a sin offering, and bring it before the tent of meeting. Then the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the Lord, and the bull shall be slain before the Lord."

"He shall also do with the bull just as he did with the bull of the sin offering; thus he shall do with it. So the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven."

"When a leader sins and unintentionally does any one of all the things which the Lord God has commanded not to be done, and he becomes guilty, if his sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a male without defect. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the male goat, and slay it

in the place where they slay the burnt offering before the Lord; it is a sin offering."

"Now if anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and becomes guilty, if his sin, which he has committed is made known to him, then he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without defect, for his sin which he has committed. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering."

"Then he shall remove all its fat, just as the fat was removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall offer it up in smoke on the altar for a soothing aroma to the Lord. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven."

"But if he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring it, a female without defect. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they slay the burnt offering. And the priest is to take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and all the rest of its blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar. Then he shall remove all its fat, just as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offerings, and the priest shall offer them up in smoke on the altar, on the offerings by fire to the Lord. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him in regard to his sin which he has committed, and he shall be forgiven."

Leviticus 16:5-11, 14-25, 29-30, 34 -- "And he shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household. And he shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the doorway of the tent of meeting. And Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the Lord fell, and make it a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat. Then Aaron shall offer the bull of the sin offering which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his household, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering which is for himself."

"Moreover he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; also in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat. And he shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel, and because of their transgressions, in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities. When he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the

assembly of Israel. Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar on all sides. And with his finger he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times, and cleanse it, and from the impurities of the sons of Israel consecrate it. When he finishes atoning for the holy place, and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat. Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and sent it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness. And the goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness. Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting, and take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there. And he shall bathe his body with water in a holy place and put on his clothes, and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people. Then he shall offer up in smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar."

"And this shall be a permanent statute for you; in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls, and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you; for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you shall be clean from all your sins before the Lord."

" 'Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year.' And just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so he did."

Leviticus 17:11 -- "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."

Psalms 110 -- "The Lord says to my Lord: Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet. The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, 'Rule in the midst of Thine enemies.' Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of Thy power; in holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Thy youth are to Thee as the dew. The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind. 'Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizekek.' The Lord is at Thy right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country. He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head."

Luke 20:41-44 -- "And He said to them, 'How is it that they say the Christ is David's son? For David himself says in the book of Psalms, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." David therefore calls Him "Lord", and how is He his son?' "

Acts 2:29-36 -- "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and

his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.'" Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus whom you crucified."

I Corinthians 15:25 -- "For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet."

Hebrews 5:10 -- "being designated (Christ) by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews 6:20 -- "where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews 7:11-17 -- "Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also. For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of Him, 'Thou art a priest forever According to the Order to Melchizedek.' "

Isaiah 53 -- "Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open



His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned to be with wicked men, Yea with a rich man in His death; Although He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in his hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors."

Matthew 8:16-17 -- "And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill; in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases.' "

Luke 22:37 -- "For I tell you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'And He was classed among criminals;' for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment."

John 12:38 -- "that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?' "

I Peter 2:20-25 -- "For what credit is there is, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in his steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls."

## (2) New Testament Background

Matthew 20:28 -- "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

John 3:14-15 -- "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life."

Romans 3:24-25 -- "being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed

publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;"

Romans 4:25 -- "Him who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."

Romans 5:6-8 -- "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:10 -- "For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

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

I Corinthians 15:3 -- "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures,"

II Corinthians 5:18-21 -- "Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Galatians 2:20 -- "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."

Galatians 3:13 -- "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us -- for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree.' "

Ephesians 5:2 -- "and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

Ephesians 5:25 -- "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;"

Philippians 2:5-8 -- "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied

Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Colossians 1:22 -- "yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach -- "

Colossians 2:13-15 -- "And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him."

Titus 2:13-14 -- "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."

Hebrews 9:26-28 -- "Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment; so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, not to bear sin, to those who eagerly await Him, for salvation."

Hebrews 10:11-12 -- "And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,"

I Peter 1:18-19 -- "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."

I Peter 2:21-24 -- "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

I Peter 3:18 -- "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;"

I John 2:1-2 -- "My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an

Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."

I John 4:10 -- "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Revelation 5:9 -- "And they sang a new song, saying 'Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.'"

c. Development of the Scriptural Doctrine

(1) The Atonement is substitutionary, vicarious

- (a) The Old Testament sacrifices were substitutes. In the stead of the offerer, the offering was slain. This pattern forms the background of the Atonement.
- (b) In both the Old and New Testaments, the Messiah (Christ) is spoken of as bearing the sins of other human beings.

Isaiah 53:6, 12 -- "All of us like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fail on Him . . . . Therefore I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressor."

John 1:29 -- "The next day he (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming to him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' "

II Corinthians 5:21 -- "He (God) made Him (Christ) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.' "

Galatians 3:13 -- "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us -- for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree' -- "

Hebrews 9:28 -- "so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."

I Peter 2:24 -- "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

- (c) The demands of justice are such that human beings must either be perfectly sinless in character and conduct or incur the

condemnation and wrath that fall on sinners. Since they are not sinless, but sinful (in both character and conduct), then they stand under God's condemnation and wrath; and if they hope for deliverance, it must come from God. God has provided One who can do for sinners what they cannot do for themselves; namely, Christ, the sinless substitute who was delivered for our offenses and bore our sins in His own body on the tree. The condemnation and wrath that we deserve fell on Him, and with His stripes we are healed!

"O sacred Head, now wounded, With grief and shame weighed down,  
Now scornfully surrounded With thorns Thine only crown;  
How pale Thou art with anguish, With sore abuse and scorn,  
How does that visage languish, Which once was bright as morn!

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered Was all for sinners' gain;  
Mine, mine was the transgression, But Thine the deadly pain,  
Lo, here I fall, my Savior; 'Tis I deserve Thy place;  
Look on me with Thy favor, Assist me with Thy grace.

What language shall I borrow To thank Thee, dearest Friend,  
For this, Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?  
O make me Thine forever, And should I fainting be,  
Lord, let me never, never Outlive my love to Thee.

Amen."  
(Bernard of Clairvaux)

(2) The Atonement is primarily objective in its effect

- (a) It is primarily objective in the sense that it has primary reference to the party to whom it is made, rather than to the party who makes it.
- (b) The Old Testament priesthood and sacrifices all pointed Godward. The priests brought the sacrifices to God, and the sacrifices made an effect upon Him.

The terms "atonement", "propitiation", "satisfaction", "ransom", "sacrifice", "reconciliation", "expiation", all emphasize this objective aspect.

- (c) The party offended is God, not the sinner. It is the Law of God that has been broken, and which must be satisfied. It is God's anger, God's wrath that must be propitiated. God must be reconciled to the sinner, if the sinner is to be reconciled to God.
- (d) There is a valid secondary sense in which the Atonement has a subjective effect; i.e., an effect on the party who makes or offers it.

The sinner is "redeemed", bought out of the slavery of sin. The sinner is "reconciled" to God by the death of His Son; and believers beseech the lost to "be reconciled to God." But even in the use of these terms, the objective aspect is presupposed

and thus remains primary, since we are "redeemed" by the payment of the precious blood of Christ, and since God must first be reconciled to the sinner by Christ's death before the sinner can be reconciled to God.

"Hear the story from God's Word  
That kings and priests and prophets heard;  
There would be a sacrifice  
And blood would flow to pay sin's price.  
Precious Lamb of glory,  
Love's most wondrous story.  
Heart of God's redemption of man;  
Worship the Lamb of glory.

On the cross God loved the world  
While all the pow'rs of hell were hurled;  
No one there could understand  
The One they saw was Christ the Lamb.  
Precious Lamb of glory,  
Love's most wondrous story.  
Heart of God's redemption of man;  
Worship the Lamb of glory."

(Greg Nelson and Phill McHugh)

(3) The Atonement includes both obedience and suffering

- (a) Christ not only assumed the guilt and penalty of the transgressed Law of God by becoming a perfect sacrifice for sin; He also perfectly fulfilled the demands of the Law of God in their entirety (In both His character and conduct).
- (b) Both Christ's passive obedience (His sacrificial death) and His active obedience (His life of righteousness) are necessary to the Atonement.

On the one hand, if only Christ's passive obedience (His sacrificial death) constitutes the Atonement, then our guilt and penalty (eternal death) are removed, but we still lack positive righteousness and eternal life. On the other hand, if only Christ's active obedience (His righteous life) constitutes the Atonement, then we are still guilty and liable to the penalty of eternal death. Both aspects are necessary to the Atonement!

- (c) This necessity may be clearly seen in the doctrine of justification, as it pertains to the Atonement, specifically in the twofold imputation of sin and righteousness. On the one hand, our guilt was imputed to Christ and our penalty laid on Him; this removes our guilt and penalty. On the other hand, Christ's righteousness is imputed to us and the purchased reward of eternal life graciously bestowed (as a gift) on us; this provides us with (legal) righteousness and eternal life. Both aspects are necessary to our justification, and both aspects are necessary to the atoning work of Christ, which forms the ground of our justification.

(4) The Atonement involves the bearing of both the guilt and the penalty of sin

(a) "Guilt", "penalty", and "law" (In the legal sense) must be defined.

In its objective sense, "guilt" is defined as "liability to transgressed law." A guilty person is a person who has broken the law and is liable to the associated penalty. In the legal sense a verdict of "guilty" means that in the eyes of a judge and/or jury a person is regarded as having committed an unlawful act and as being deserving of an appropriate punishment.

"Penalty" or punishment is a consequence of transgression of law, whether the law is human or divine. In the legal sense, a penalty is a sanction to which one becomes liable by violation of a law or statute.

In the legal sense, a "law" is a rule of conduct promulgated by some competent authority and enforced by an appropriate sanction (or penalty).

(b) In connection with God's Law, one question sometimes raised is whether God is just in His imposition and execution of the law. Scripture recognizes God as righteous and beneficent in His imposition of laws (rectoral justice), and impartial and equitable in His distribution of rewards and punishments (distributive justice). He imposes laws for His glory and mankind's good, and He punishes and rewards without "regarding faces" (respecting persons) or giving human beings less than they deserve (for good actions) and more than they deserve (for evil actions).

(c) Another question sometimes raised is why God must punish at all. If human beings transgress His laws, is it necessary for God to punish them? When, for example, God said to Adam, "You shall not eat of it (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die"; and when later Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree; was it necessary for God to punish them with spiritual and physical death? Could He not simply have overlooked their transgression?

If in response it be said that God gave His word that the penalty would be executed, and that He could not break His promise, then could not the previous question be raised, namely why it was necessary for God to attach a penalty to the command in the first place?

It would appear that God created our universe with a built-in system of physical, biological, moral, and spiritual laws; and this system is intended to have beneficent consequences for those who live in accordance with it. It also appears that these beneficent consequences are intended by God to motivate His creatures to live in accordance with these laws.

It also appears that part of the cost of the beneficent consequences of this system of physical, biological, moral,

and spiritual laws is the unpleasant consequences connected with violations of God's laws. It appears that these unpleasant consequences (notwithstanding the short-term pleasures sin sometimes brings) are also intended by God to motivate His creatures, not so much to want to obey these laws as to want to refrain from violating them, so as to avoid the unpleasant consequences connected with such violations.

In addition to the system of laws that He built into the universe at its creation, God, following the Fall and at various times, promulgated other laws, statutes, and ordinances to regulate human conduct, and accompanied them with various sanctions, some physical, some spiritual. It appears that these additional laws were in some sense established for sinful human beings because they need them and derive benefit from living in accordance with them.

Once laws are promulgated, the question whether or not they will be enforced comes to the force.

In general, "law" may be defined in two basic ways: (1) a principle of uniform, dependable operation, a description of the way things consistently behave; (2) a rule for the regulation of human conduct, a prescription of the way human beings ought to behave. The first meaning (descriptive principle) applies to the physical, the biological, the moral, and the spiritual realms. The second meaning (prescriptive rule of human conduct) applies primarily to the moral and spiritual realms, and to the physical and biological realms only to the extent that they have moral or spiritual value.

In connection with the first meaning (descriptive principles), it would appear that, except for special cases of miraculous intervention, God uniformly sustains His laws (i.e., unsupported objects always fall toward the center of a gravitational field; what a man sows is what he will reap, both in the biological and moral realms; in order to enter the kingdom of God, one must be born again through faith in the crucified Savior). Those who ignore or attempt to violate these laws must suffer the consequences (i.e., if a husband attempts to pick up an expensive china plate with soapy hands and it slips out of his grasp, it will fall to the floor and perhaps shatter; if a farmer sows kernels of field corn hoping to reap a crop of sweet corn and make a large profit from its sale, he will be disappointed in both the crop and the (lack of) profit; if a man indulges his lust with prostitutes and later discovers that he is infected with herpes, syphilis, or even AIDS, he has only himself to blame; if a person rejects the good news of salvation through Christ and refuses to trust in Him, he must remain spiritually dead and dead in his trespasses and sins).

Thus in relation to laws in the sense of descriptive principles, it appears that God enforces His laws by faithfully sustaining them by the exercise of sovereign



control in ordinary and extraordinary providences, and that those who ignore or attempt to violate them simply suffer the consequences connected with them.

In connection with the second meaning (prescriptive rules of human conduct) it would appear that, in the case of believers, God secures inward and outward conformity to His Law (defined as the will of God addressed to man's obedience in each dispensation) by the Holy Spirit's loving persuasion, rebuke, and exhortation through His Word, and by providential rewards and punishments (e.g., believers acting as ambassadors for Christ and beseeching other human beings to be reconciled to God; Paul admonishing Timothy to endure hardships; John exhorting fellow believers to love one another; God commanding His people to honor their parents, so that their days might be long in the Promised Land; Paul admonishing the Corinthian believers to make certain that they discern the Lord's body in the Supper so as not to bring judgment on themselves).

In the case of unbelievers, it would appear that God secures a degree of outward conformity to His Law by the Holy Spirit's quickening of man's awareness that he is a moral being with moral notions and actions for which he will ultimately be held responsible; by His restraint of the full expression of human depravity through the quickening of the conscience and through the enactment and enforcement of laws by human governments; and by His providential distribution of benevolent rewards and punishments, so as to move men away from sin and lead them to repentance, and to move them toward relatively good actions that are in external conformity to His Law.

Thus it would appear that in the case of His system of descriptive principles of operation, God enforces His laws by the exertion of sovereign power to maintain both the laws and their natural consequences. However, in the case of His prescriptive rules of human conduct, it would appear that God secures conformity to His laws by suasive force (i.e., by various influences intended to motivate human beings in the direction of obedience), and that men's responses to these influences inevitably involve consequences, even if those consequences are seen to consist merely in divine approval or lack of approval (the withholding of approval can itself be seen as a kind of punishment, especially when approval involves the bestowal of reward, and disapproval involves the penalty of loss of that reward).

In any case, it would appear that penalty is involved in the very concept of law. Without some sort of sanction or consequence, law loses much of its force and becomes merely advice or encouragement or exhortation.

If a king promulgates an edict stating that no one is permitted to hunt in crown lands, and a short time later one of his subjects kills a deer in a royal forest, and this crime is reported to the king but he states that no penalty will be assessed, how will his officers and people view this

edict? Unless the king places his royal authority behind the edict, it may be viewed as expressing his desire or wish or preference, but it will not be viewed as the law of the land. Those who love the king may obey the edict (out of love to him), but if need arises and their stomachs growl, even those who respect the throne may disobey the edict; and those who neither love the king or respect his office may view the edict as a license to take their fill of the game in crown lands with impunity. And the king's officers may remonstrate with and chide the edict breakers, but they will not enforce the edict, because no authority to do so has been delegated to them.

Once again (by way of review), a law is a rule of conduct, promulgated by some competent authority, and enforced by appropriate sanctions. Penalty is necessarily involved in law; and in the Atonement Christ bore the penalty of the transgressed Law on our behalf.

- (d) But the further question may be raised, Why guilt? Why not simply penalty? Why should Christ take our guilt upon Himself? And how can one person bear the guilt of another?"

Once again (by way of review), "guilt" is liability to transgressed law. In the legal sense a person who is guilty is one who in the eyes of the judge and/or jury is regarded as having committed an unlawful act and as being deserving of an appropriate punishment. A guilty person is a person who has broken the law and is worthy of punishment.

If we say that the Atonement involves the bearing of guilt, does this mean that Christ on the cross is regarded as one who has broken the law and is worthy of punishment? The answer is yes. Does this mean that I am no longer regarded as legally guilty of my sin (technically, that my sins are no longer imputed to me or charged to my account)? The answer is yes. Does this mean that I am no longer guilty in fact of having committed any sins? The answer is no. I am still the one who did it, that is, the one who transgressed God's Law; and I am still the one who deserves the penalty (and will be forever; thus God's grace will be magnified throughout all the eons of eternity future). But legally the guilt of my sin has been imputed to Christ, and legally Christ has become guilty through my sin, and legally Christ's righteousness has been imputed to me, and legally I have become righteous through Christ's righteousness.

- (e) Christ has borne both my guilt and my condemnation; thus I no longer stand under the guilt or condemnation of the Law, and there is no more legal guilt or condemnation resting on me!

"Arise, my soul, arise, Shake off thy guilty fears.  
The bleeding Sacrifice in my behalf appears.  
Before the throne my Surety stands,  
Before the throne ray Surety stands;  
My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above For me to intercede,  
His all-redeeming love, His precious blood to plead.  
His blood atoned for all our race,  
His blood atoned for all our race,  
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds he bears, Received on Calvary.  
They pour effectual prayers; They strongly plead for me.  
'Forgive him, oh, forgive,' they cry,  
'Forgive him, oh, forgive,' they cry,  
'Nor let that ransomed sinner die.'

The Father hears Him pray, His dear Anointed One;  
He cannot turn away The presence of His Son.  
His Spirit answers to the blood,  
His Spirit answers to the blood,  
And tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled; His pard'ning voice I hear.  
He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear.  
With confidence I now draw nigh,  
With confidence I now draw nigh,  
And 'Father, Abba, Father,' cry."

(Charles Wesley)

d. Inadequate Theories of the Nature of the Atonement

(Note: An excellent treatment of theories of the atonement and their adherents is found in H. D. McDonald, *The Atonement of the Death of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985).)

(1) The Ransom to Satan Theory

Origen of Alexandria (A.D. 185-254) held that, by their sin, human beings had sold their souls to Satan, who held them in bondage; and that the death of Christ was a ransom paid to the devil in exchange for their souls. However, once Christ's soul was in Satan's clutches, the devil found that the holy presence of the Son of God in his kingdom of evil was a torture to him, and that it was too painful for him to try to hold Christ captive, and thus he had to let Him go. And so Satan forfeited both the purchase and the price, both the prisoners and the ransom, both men's souls and Christ!

Gregory of Nyssa (335-395) held that, by their sin, human beings had sold their souls to Satan, who held them in bondage. Satan decided to bargain with God for the release of these human slaves; and saw an opportunity to get the best of the transaction. He believed that, in His state of humiliation, Christ was weakened, and could easily be made subject to his evil, power; and thus he demanded Christ as the ransom. God agreed to do this, and Satan released his captives. But alas, Christ's divine nature was hidden under His humanity, and Satan gulped down the hook of deity along with the bait of flesh! So Christ was brought into the devil's realm, but His divine nature was too powerful for Satan to hold, and Christ

vanquished darkness by His light, and conquered death by His life. Thus God tricked Satan, and Satan lost both the ransom price and his captives.

Gregory the Great in the sixth century and Peter Lombard in the twelfth century repeated the idea of the devil being tricked. Gregory conceived of the incarnation as a divine bait to hook the great leviathan; and Peter declared that the cross was a mousetrap, baited with the blood of Christ. Both held that Satan accepted the ransom of Christ's death, that man was thus delivered from bondage to the devil, and that Satan was duped by this stratagem.

Gustav Aulen in his book Christus Victor (1930) has more recently advocated a version of this theory, which he calls the "classic view".

## (2) The Satisfaction to God's Honor Theory

Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)

With the multiplication of schools in the eleventh century, and the application of logic or dialectics to the study of theology, the movement called "Scholasticism" arose. Anselm has been called the Father of the Schoolmen.

During this time the spirit of chivalry was in full force. The distinctive concepts of this spirit were honor and satisfaction. If a man insulted and dishonored another, that insult was a stain on the honor of the other, a stain on his good name that demanded some kind of satisfaction.

Anselm viewed man as having insulted and dishonored God by his sin. This insult is a mark against God's good name and a stain on His honor. Only a satisfaction can wipe away the stain.

However, sinful man cannot satisfy God's honor, for he owes God his best, and yet has wronged Him. Thus only God can make satisfaction. At the same time, since it is man that must satisfy God's honor, only a (sinless) man can render it. Thus satisfaction must be made by both God and man. Why did the Word become flesh; why did God become man (*Cur Deus homo?*) He did so because only a God-man could satisfy God's honor -- thus the incarnation was necessary.

Christ lived a perfect life, but this was only what was required of Him. However, His death was a work of supererogation (beyond what was required); and, since it was of infinite value, it was a genuine satisfaction to God for man's sins, vindicated God's offended honor, and merited a reward for those for whom He died, which reward was bestowed on them as a gift of grace.

## (3) The Moral influence Theory

Peter Abelard (1079-1142)

Abelard held that love is the essential core of God's nature, and that the source, nature, and effect of the atonement can be understood only in terms of God's love. God could have forgiven

men's sins apart from Christ's death but God's love is more clearly exhibited in the death of Christ. This demonstration of the love of God is a potent force to move men's hearts, touch their consciences, and reform their lives. Christ's death inspired in a man a response of love which moves him Godward and outward to embrace God and his fellow men in love. What the law could not do, the moral influence of the cross accomplished. Insofar as love is kindled within us, our sins are remitted, we are justified, and we are reconciled to God.

In this manner Abelard shifted the focus of the Atonement from that which Christ objectively accomplished by His death on the cross to the subjective influence that Christ's death has on the human spirit. Thus the forgiveness of sins has no vital connection with the deed of the cross itself, but is rather connected with the power of the cross to kindle love within us.

in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries several prominent theologians have espoused essentially the same view, including Horace Bushnell (in his *Vicarious Sacrifice* -- 1866), William Newton Clarke (In his *Outline of Christian Theology* -- 11th ed. 1901), Hastings Rashdall (In *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Thought* 1920), and Helmut Thielicke (in *The Evangelical Faith*, -- 1973).

#### (4) The Example Theory

Faustus Socinus or Fausto Sozzini (1539-1604)

Socinus held an Arian view of the person of Christ and a Pelagian view of man's sin. He rejected the doctrine of penal satisfaction to divine Justice, and argued that satisfaction excludes mercy and forgiveness. Since mercy and wrath are both subject to God's will, and since God wills to forgive those who repent of their sins and pursue holiness, there is no need for a satisfaction of His justice.

What then is the significance of Christ's death? it is not really an atonement, since Christ is not the mediator of salvation. Rather, Christ is Savior in that He gives us an example of the way of eternal life and forgiveness of sins, by providing assurance of pardon to those who repent of their sins. As a moral teacher par excellence He moves and leads men to exercise that penitence by which their sins are blotted out.

Thus in Socinus' view God does not need satisfaction; Christ did not make atonement; man needs only a new divine idea to enlighten him, and Christ gives that idea. The cross does not satisfy divine justice; rather it draws us to accept God's free mercy and pardon and to put our faith in Christ Himself, i.e., in His promise of forgiveness. By this faith we are justified; thus it can be said that Christ saves us.

#### (5) The Governmental Theory

Jacobus Arminius or Jakob Hermandszoon or Jakob van Harmen (1560-1609) did not himself develop a formal theory of the atonement (although later Arminian theologians did). Arminius held that God's

justice and mercy are reconciled by wisdom: justice is upheld but mercy triumphs in Christ's death by means of a compromise. Christ's expiatory sacrifice was not an exact equivalent of the demands of justice: it was not the payment of a debt nor a complete satisfaction for sin nor the bearing of a penalty. His sufferings were a substitute for a penalty, what God was willing to accept in lieu. If Christ made full satisfaction for sins, then forgiveness would not be a matter of compassion but of justice, and neither faith nor obedience could be demanded for the application of Christ's benefits (since that would be equivalent to demanding more than full satisfaction).

Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) held that if God were justly to exercise mercy, a satisfaction for men's sins must be made (contrary to Arminius). However, he viewed God as Governor rather than as Judge. A Judge must vindicate the law; he cannot violate or suspend it to free the guilty from punishment or to transfer guilt to another. But a governor can relax the strict demands of the law while upholding it for the general good. Grotius held that, in order to maintain the authority and moral government of God, Christ, by His sufferings and death, met the requirements of God's relaxed law, and thus satisfied, in some sense, the violated holiness of God. There is thus a causal relationship between Christ's death and the forgiveness of sins. And yet Christ's death is not itself an atonement for sin, not a meeting of the law's full demands, but rather a demonstration of God's regard for His law. Christ fulfilled the requirements of the relaxed law and took the relaxed penalty of our sin on Himself. Thus at the same time He upheld the moral government of God and satisfied the rectoral justice of God.

Phillippus van Limborch (1633-1712) held that God's nature does not require punishment of or satisfaction for sin. Christ's death displays God's wrath against sin and serves as both an example and an influence to move men toward repentance. Limborch held that Christ did not satisfy the law for us, and did not make an exact equivalent payment for men's sins. Yet He did suffer grievously and did shed His precious blood as if it were the price of our redemption; and the Father accepted that blood as if it were payment in full for our sins, and was moved by it to bestow on us full forgiveness of sins.

Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875) also espoused the Governmental Theory of the atonement.

## 2. The Extent of the Atonement

### a. Clarification of the points at issue

#### (1) Negative (what is not at issue)

- (a) The basic question is not whether Christ's death is sufficient for all human beings -- it is more than sufficient!

This sufficiency does not lie in the concept that Christ experienced a specific amount of suffering to atone for a

certain number of sins. Rather, Christ's sufferings and death have reference to the penalty, and the penalty prescribed for transgression of God's Law is death, whether the penalty is suffered in behalf of one person or one trillion persons. The all-sufficiency of Christ's atonement lies in its fitness to meet man's needs and in the infinite value of His person as the God-man. Because He was fully man, He could stand in the stead of man as the anti-type of Adam, and could truly represent mankind by living that perfect life of obedience that is demanded of human beings by the Law of God, and by dying that death that is demanded of human beings who have transgressed the Law of God and become liable to its penalty. And because He was fully God, His perfect life and sacrificial death can atone for any number of sinful human beings. The infinite value of His atoning work lies in the infinite value of His person!

- (b) The basic question is not whether all men are saved by Christ's death -- all men are not saved.

Although there will be a vast number of human beings who experience resurrection or transformation at Christ's coming, and although the saints of all dispensations will be a company of redeemed persons too numerous to count, nevertheless this number will represent only some of the human beings who have lived during the ages of mankind's history. Our Lord urged His hearers to "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it" (Matthew 7:13-14)

- (c) The basic question is not whether the offer of the gospel is made sincerely on condition of repentance and faith -- this offer carries God's sincere assurance that those who come will be received.

Our Lord promises, "All that the Father gives He shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out." (John 6:37) And John wrote, "as many as received Him were born . . . of God." (John 1:12-13)

- (d) The basic question is not whether the non-elect benefit from Christ's atonement -- a number of common grace blessings accrue to them through the saving work of Christ.

(2) Positive (what is at issue)

- (a) The basic question at issue is whether Christ made the atonement for the express purpose of saving all human beings or of saving elect human beings,.

Did the atonement have a universal or a particular design? By means of His perfect life and sacrificial death, did Christ intend to save all sinners, or to save those sinners whom He had chosen unto salvation before the foundation of the world?

This question is germane to both Arminians and Calvinists, since both believe in the election of individuals to salvation before the foundation of the world. Arminians believe that election is conditioned on foreseen repentance and faith: those who are foreknown to meet this condition are elect; those who are foreknown not to meet it are non-elect. Thus there are only two classes of human beings; and, since God is omniscient, the number of individual human beings in each class, being precisely foreknown, is fixed from the foundation of the world. Calvinists believe that election is unconditioned by anything in man or done by man, and grounded wholly in God's sovereign love and grace: those who are chosen are elect; those who are passed by are non-elect. Again, the number in both classes is fixed and certain.

In addition, both orthodox Arminians and orthodox Calvinists believe that Christ was both God and man in His incarnate state of humiliation; and that in respect of His divine nature He knew all things, including the precise identity and number of the elect and the non-elect.

This being the case, it must be asked whether the Lord Jesus, when He hung on Calvary's cross, intended by His atonement to save all human beings, or to save the elect whom He had chosen before the foundation of the world.

From the Arminian standpoint on election, did our Lord intend His blood to save those whom He foreknew would never repent and believe (this would be either an exercise in futility or a contradiction, since their salvation is conditioned upon repentance and faith). Or did He intend His death to potentially save those whom He foreknew would repent and believe (thus making their action part of the work of salvation). Or did He intend His crowning act of atonement to actually save those whom He foreknew would repent and believe, and not to save those whom He foreknew would never repent and believe (in which case the Arminian would espouse a particular design of the atonement, and step over on Calvinistic ground, at least on this point!).

- (b) Another important question is whether the atonement actually accomplished salvation for the elect (while being sufficient for all), or made salvation possible for all but contingent (In its effect) upon a favorable response to the gospel.

On the one hand, if Christ lived a perfect life and expiated the guilt and penalty of the transgressed law on behalf of the elect, than those who by the exercise of saving faith have shown themselves to be among the elect are no longer liable to the requirements of the law, and can no longer be condemned by it. Correspondingly, if Christ did not fulfill the law and expiate the guilt and penalty of the transgressed law on behalf of the non-elect, then those who by unbelief have shown themselves to be among the non-elect continue to be liable to the requirements of the law and continue to be condemned by it.



On the other hand, if Christ lived a perfect life and expiated the guilt and penalty of the transgressed law on behalf of all human beings, then those who by Saving faith elect themselves are no longer liable to the requirements of the law, and can no longer be condemned by it. But correspondingly, if Christ atoned for all human beings, then those who do not exercise saving faith in Christ cannot continue to be liable to the requirements of the law (since Christ has already fulfilled them on their behalf), and cannot continue to be condemned by it (since Christ has already expiated their guilt and penalty). Otherwise there would be a double exaction of the penalty!

It would be possible to escape the force of this difficulty by making Christ's atonement only a potential fulfillment of the law and a potential expiation of guilt and penalty, to be made actual by the favorable response of the believing sinner. However, this seems to make the atoning work of Christ something less than finished, and seems to require the addition of human action to make it complete, which in turn appears to ground salvation in both Christ's work and ours! Thus this solution creates more problems than it solves.

It would also be possible to escape the force of this difficulty by acknowledging that Christ has indeed taken away all liability and condemnation for all human beings, and that therefore no human being will be adversely judged for lack of conformity to and transgression of the law of God, but will be judged for one sin only, namely, failure to believe in Christ. Aside from the problem of judging those who have never heard of Christ, this solution is contrary to scripture representations of judgment for various sins and evil works, including unbelief in Christ.

This brings us to the critical question:

#### DOES CHRIST'S ATONEMENT MAKE SALVATION POSSIBLE OR ACTUAL?

Did the atoning work of Christ make salvation possible? Or did it actually accomplish salvation? Did Christ's redemption provide salvation for all human beings? Or did it actually save elect human beings?

Among various scriptures quoted on both sides of this issue, a particularly interesting passage is found in II Corinthians 5:18-20:

- 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:
- 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.
- 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

In verse 18 we learn that God reconciled us. (clearly us believers, since He gave us the ministry of reconciliation) to Himself through Christ.

In verse 19 we learn that God reconciled the world (without qualification) to Himself through Christ. This appears to include all human beings.

In verse 20 we learn that the ministry of reconciliation includes the message: "We implore you (nonbelievers) to be reconciled to God through Christ."

Now if God has reconciled nonbelievers to Himself through Christ, why the message: "We implore you to be reconciled to God through Christ"? Are nonbelievers reconciled to God or not?

The answers seems to be that in one sense they are, and in another sense they are not but need to be. How can this tension be resolved?

The heart of the proposal made here is that Christ's atonement made possible the reconciliation of the world (all sinful human beings) to God (that is, Christ's atonement has universal value because of the infinite dignity of His person); and that Christ's atonement made potential the reconciliation of elect human beings, which potential reconciliation is actualized when they return to God in repentance and saving faith.

The use of these terms (possible, potential, actualized) necessitates a brief excursus regarding the concepts of possibility, potentiality, and actuality.

(1) Possibility brings an object or event out of the realm of non-existence into the realm of contingent existence.

To say that something is possible is to say that it is capable of being an object of thought (In the subjective realm), or that it is both capable of being an object of thought and capable of meeting the necessary conditions of existence (In the objective realm).

In the realm of subjective reality, a thing or an event is possible if it can be an object of thought. It can be an object of thought if it does not violate the laws of thought (which include the law of contradiction -- a thing cannot be both P and not-P; the law of excluded middle -- a thing must be either P or not-P; and the law of identity -- if a thing is P, then it is P).

In the realm of objective reality, a thing or an event is possible if it can be an object of thought, and if it can meet the necessary conditions of objective existence. A thing can meet the necessary conditions of objective existence if it has substance (either physical or some other kind) and location, and if it is distinct from any evaluating mind. An event can meet the necessary conditions of objective existence if it is causally related to its

antecedents and consequents, and if its occurrence is distinct from any evaluating mind.

- (2) Potentiality brings an object or an event out of the realm of possibility into the realm of potential existence.

To say that something is potential is to say that it will come into existence, but has not yet done so. Potentiality is a stage on the way to actuality. Events that are definitely going to come to pass are potential events, not simply possible events.

- (3) Actuality brings an object or event out of the realm of possibility or potentiality into the realm of existence.

To say that something is actual is to say that it exists, either subjectively (in an evaluating mind) or objectively (distinct from any evaluating mind).

Possibility brings non-being into the realm of possible being.

Potentiality brings possibility into the realm of potential being.

Actuality brings potentiality into the realm of actual being.

The accomplishment of the atonement of Christ brought into the realm of possibility the reconciliation to God of all sinful human beings. Reconciliation of sinful human beings is now a possibility.

The accomplishment of the atonement of Christ brought into the realm of potentiality the reconciliation to God of elect human beings. Reconciliation of elect human beings awaits only actualization.

The application of the atonement of Christ brought into the realm of actuality the reconciliation to God of elect human beings. Reconciliation to God of elect human beings is now actualized in the case of those who are united to Christ through the instrument of saving faith.

Thus the cross of Christ makes the reconciliation to God possible for all human beings, and makes reconciliation to God potential for elect human beings before they believe and actual when they believe.

## THE PERSON AND SAVING WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

### I. The Person of the Spirit of God

#### A. The Personhood of the Spirit

The moment we speak of the personhood of the Spirit of God, we are faced with the question, "What is a person?" What do we mean when we speak of persons?

*The American College Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1961) defines a "person" as "a human being as distinguished from an animal or a thing." This is good as far as it goes, but does it go far enough? If animals and plants and rocks are not persons, does this mean that human beings are the only persons in the world?

This forces us to define what a person is, rather than simply to identify persons.

Persons are distinct beings characterized by conceptual thought, the use of some form of language, emotions, deliberate choice and purposive action toward pre-selected goals, self-consciousness, and moral and religious attitudes and actions.

Put another way, persons are moral and spiritual beings who have a distinct existence and the faculties of intellect, emotion, will, and self-consciousness.

When we look into scriptures, we discover that persons are spirits. A person is a spirit.

When applied to human beings, we discover that man is a spirit in union with a body. According to the Bible, human beings who become disembodied spirits in the experience of death are still persons. A person is still a person when he or she is without his or her body. In one sense, disembodied persons are not complete persons, but they are nonetheless persons.

Upon reflection, we recall that the Bible teaches that there are spirits other than human beings in the world.

For example, Satan is a spirit. Ephesians 2:2 speaks of "the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."

The demons are spirits. Luke 8:29 tells us that "Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man."

Angels are spirits. Hebrews 1:13-14 asks, "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

And God is a Spirit (or, is spirit). John 4:24 states that "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Thus there are other kinds of spirits in the world besides human beings. And these spirits are all personal beings. They all have the characteristics and faculties and powers of persons. They are persons.

The Spirit of God is also a person. He does not have a physical body (He is incorporeal), but He is a person. He does not have physical substance, but He does have substance. His substance is spiritual. Thus He is a spirit, and He is spirit. Both are true.

The Holy Spirit thinks, He feels, He wills, He is conscious of Himself as a distinct self. He is a person.

This may be seen in scripture. We are told that the Spirit of God knows the things of God (I Corinthians 2:10-11); that He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30); and that He bestows gifts upon human beings as He wills (I Corinthians 12:11). He possesses the intellectual, the emotional, and the volitional faculties.

Throughout scripture He is shown to be capable of personal relationships -- interrelationships with other persons. He has personal relationships to created persons as well as to other persons of the godhead.

Thus scripture teaches, and we acknowledge, that the spirit of God is a person. He is not simply a power, or an influence, or an attitude; He is a living person.

#### B. The Deity of the Spirit

By this is meant that the Spirit is God. But having said this, we must ask what this implies.

One very useful definition of the nature of God is found in the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*. incidentally, a "catechism" is simply a teaching tool consisting of questions and answers and frequently used with children or adolescents or new believers.

Question 4 of the Shorter Catechism asks "What is God?" The answer states: "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth."

Upon analysis, we discover that this statement says that God is an infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Spirit; and that He is an infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Spirit in His being, in His wisdom, in His power, in His holiness, in His justice, in His goodness, and in His truth.

Now when we say that the Spirit of God is God, we are saying all of these things (and more) about Him! We are saying that the Spirit of God is a spirit, i.e., a person (and in this case a person with no physical substance or body).

We are also saying that the Holy Spirit is an infinite, eternal, and unchangeable spirit.

And we are saying that the Spirit of God is a spirit who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, His wisdom, His power, His holiness, His justice, His goodness, and His truth.

But does the Bible teach these things about the Holy Spirit?

We have already seen that scripture teaches that He is a person. But does scripture teach that He has divine characteristics?

Hebrews 9:14 speaks of the "eternal" Spirit.  
Psalm 139:7-12 teaches that the Spirit is infinite in being.  
Psalm 143:10 calls the Spirit "good".  
Psalm 51:11 calls Him "holy".  
Jn. 14:17 calls Him "the Spirit of truth".

And in Acts 5:3-4 Peter says, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit? . . . You have not lied to men, but to God."

Thus scripture teaches, and we acknowledge, that the Holy Spirit is a divine person. The Spirit of God is God.

Now, having stated that the Spirit of God is a person, and having said that the Spirit is a divine person, we need to focus our attention on one of the Spirit's attributes, as a background to our further study. This attribute or characteristic is that of the Spirit's omnipresence.

What do we mean by "omnipresence"? "Omni" means "all" or "every"; and thus omnipresent means all-present or everywhere-present.

The Spirit of God is divine, thus infinite in being. He is present everywhere at the same time.

Human spirits, angels, Satan, and demons are created thus finite in being. They are not present everywhere at one time, but only somewhere.

The Spirit of God occupies all space at the same moment. He does not need to move to get to a particular location in space; He already occupies all locations. He fills space with His presence.

Finite spirits occupy only one location in space at a time. If they want to be in a different location, they must move to that location. Their presence is localized in space.

This idea of omnipresence is admittedly difficult for us as human beings to grasp. And that is understandable, because we are finite spirits, confined to one location at a time, and we presently exist in finite physical bodies.

And since the only persons that we presently experience through our senses are human beings, we are not accustomed to thinking of an infinite Person who is immense, who fills all space, and who is present everywhere in the universe.

But do the scriptures actually teach this?

There are five key references in scripture which, when taken together, do indeed teach this marvelous truth of God's omnipresence (and thus the Spirit of God's omnipresence).

The first reference is found in Jeremiah 23:23-24 -- "Am I only a God nearby, declares the Lord, and not a God far away? Can anyone hide

in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord."

Here we learn that God is both near and far. Here we learn that the reason no one can find a secret place that will hide him from the sight of God is not that God can see from a great distance and look into dark places and pierce through the densest rock with His gaze (somewhat like Superman), but rather that God fills heaven and earth! Thus if a human being finds a really remote secret place, he will not be hidden from God, for God fills that secret place, and thus sees everything! And this is true of the Spirit of God.

The second reference is found in Isaiah 66:1 -- "This is what the Lord says: Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?"

Here we learn that God is great, immense, infinite in being. It is not that God sits on a physical throne in heaven, and His legs are so long that they reach all the way to earth, on which He places His feet! God is spirit, does not have a physical body or form, and thus we cannot understand this in a physical way. Rather, we understand from this that God is present both in heaven and on earth, and that no tabernacle or temple is great enough to house Him. He is immense! And this is true of the Spirit of God.

The third reference is found in I Kings 8:27 -- (Solomon is praying his prayer of dedication of the completed temple) "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!"

Here we learn that Solomon is quite aware that the magnificent temple he is dedicating can never "hold" God in the sense of containing or boxing Him in. Indeed, the heavens cannot "contain" God, for the infinite God transcends, goes beyond, is greater in being than, the limits of the remotest heavens! And this is true of the Spirit of God.

The fourth reference is found in Acts 17:27-28 -- "God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being."

Here we learn that God is not far from each human being. He is near every human being in the world, wherever he or she may be. In fact, we live "in" God and move "in" God and have our being "in" God. The conclusion is inescapable: God is everywhere! in fact, God is our environment! We live and move and have our being in Him. And this is true of the Spirit of God.

The fifth reference is the classic one, and is found in Psalm 139:1-12. David writes:

O Lord, you have searched me, and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue,  
you know it completely, O Lord.  
You hem me in -- behind and before;  
you have laid your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.  
Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"  
even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

Here in verses 1-6 we learn that the Lord knows everything about us as human beings. Although one might get the impression from the second half of verse 2 ("you perceive my thoughts from afar") that God is far away and knows us only from a distance, that idea is ruled out by verses 7-12, where we learn that God is not far away from us, but rather very near. In fact, wherever we go, God is already there! No matter whether we go up to the heavens (to the heights?) or down to Sheol (to the depths?), or far away to the most remote place on the earth, God is already there. We cannot get away from the very presence of the Spirit of God, for His presence is everywhere!

The scriptures clearly teach that the Spirit of God is omnipresent. He fills the universe with His presence!

And since the heavens cannot contain Him, we can say that if the universe is finite in extent, then the Holy Spirit transcends the physical universe!

### C. The Spirit in the Trinity

The Spirit of God is spoken of as the third person of the Trinity. What do we mean by the "Trinity"?

The Bible does not use the word "trinity", but it does teach each of the distinct truths out of which the theological doctrine of the Trinity has been constructed. The Bible simply tells us that God is one (i.e., a unity as in Deuteronomy 6:4 -- "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!"); and that there are three distinct Persons who are God.

The Father is called God (Jude 1 -- "Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father,"); the Son is called God (Titus 2:13 -- "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;") and the Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3-4 -- "But Peter



said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, . . . You have not lied to men but to God.' ").

Negatively, the doctrine of the Trinity does not teach that God is one Person. God is three Persons. The doctrine does not teach that God is three Gods. God is one God. The doctrine does not teach that there are three divine essences ( the "essence" of anything is its ultimate nature). There is only one essence that is divine.

Positively, the doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there is one Being that is divine, but that three Persons participate in that one Being. The doctrine teaches that there is only one God, but that there are three Persons who are that one God. The doctrine teaches that there is one essence (combination of essential characteristics) that is fully divine, but that there are three divine Persons who fully share that essence.

Thus God is a "tri-unity", a "three-in-one", a Trinity, because God is at the same time one and three (but in different senses). God is one in divine essence, and three in divine Persons.

The Trinity, therefore, is the doctrine that there are three Persons who are characterized, through and through, by a unique combination of divine qualities, attributes, perfections, which combination is the same for all three.

### SUMMARY AND BRIEF APPLICATION OF THESE GREAT AND AWESOME TRUTHS

Thus far we have learned that the Spirit of God is a person, and that He is divine. We have learned that the Spirit is present everywhere, or omnipresent. And we have learned that the Spirit is both one with and yet distinct from the Father and the Son.

How do these truths apply to me?

First, the Spirit of God is a person, capable of personal inter-relationships. Do I realize this? Do I treat Him as a person? Or has He been virtually unknown to me in a personal sense? Have I viewed Him as some kind of an impersonal power or as some sort of vague influence? Do I realize that I can hurt Him, grieve Him by my thoughts or words or actions, or that I can lie to Him? Do I enjoy a person-to-person relationship with Him? Is He a real person in my day-to-day life?

Second, the Spirit of God is a divine Person. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in all His perfections. Do I recognize Him as God? Do I realize that He is equal in power and glory with the Father and the Son? Do I realize that He has all of the attributes and all of the rights of deity? Do I understand that He deserves the adoration, worship, praise, obedience, and service that God deserves? Is the Spirit of God God to me?

Third, the Spirit of God is omnipresent. Do I realize what this means? Am I aware of the fact that I am always in His presence, that He is my environment, that I can never go anywhere where He is not already present, that I need never go somewhere in order to find Him, and that

He sees and knows everything I think and say and do, so that I can do whatever is my lot in life to do with a view to the glory of God, knowing that He will take note of it and use it to bring glory to the triune God?

How can this doctrine of the Spirit's omnipresence become personal, meaningful, vital, and very practical to me? By learning to practice the conscious awareness of the presence of God the Spirit, and by learning to recognize the fact that He is always with me, and I am always in His presence.

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove, With all Thy quickening powers  
Kindle a flame of sacred love In these cold hearts of ours.

Look how we grovel here below, Fond of these trifling toys;  
Our souls can neither fly nor go To reach eternal joys.

In vain we tune our formal songs, in vain we strive to rise;  
Hosannas languish on our tongues, And our devotion dies.

Dear Lord, and shall we ever live At this poor dying rate?  
Our love so faint, so cold to Thee, And Thine to us so great!

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove, With all Thy quickening powers;  
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love, And that shall kindle ours.

Amen."  
(Isaac Watts)

## II. The Work of the Spirit of God

### A. The Work of the Spirit in General

Having stressed the oneness of essence and the plurality of Persons in the godhead, we must now turn to the work of the three Persons of the godhead.

The three Persons of the godhead are equal in essence but unequal in their working. Technically, this is referred to as the difference between essential equality and economic subordination.

The three Persons of the godhead accomplish different functions in the outworking of God's Plan; and they are involved in superordinate/subordinate working relationships even while they are equal in essence.

Although all analogies and illustrations ultimately fail when we attempt to find similarities to the Trinity, one analogy which has been found slightly helpful has been that of an ocean liner on which we find captain, a chief executive officer, and a crew. The captain is likened to the Father, the chief executive officer to the Son, and the crew to the Spirit. The captain makes ultimate decisions and gives orders; the chief executive officer goes to carry out the orders and see that they are fulfilled; and the crew actually fulfills the tasks assigned to them.

In one sense the captain, the chief executive officer, and the crew are all human beings, and equally so; yet on ship they do quite different things to keep the ship functioning and moving toward its intended destination.

And although the Father, Son, and Spirit are equally God; yet they do quite different things in making the Plan of God function and in moving all things toward their intended goal.

of course, this analogy falls when applied to essential equality, because the persons of the officers and crew of the ship are quite different beings in many of their characteristics. But perhaps it can serve to aid our understanding of subordination of office and working.

In any case, throughout the Bible it is the Spirit of God who implements the plans of the Trinity. He Is the one who does the work, as far as carrying the purposes of God into effect. He Is the one who gets the job done, in the sense of bringing it into actuality. He is the power of God, the one who actually exerts divine efficiency to accomplish the will of God.

Scripture clearly teaches these distinctions of office and function in the outworking of God's Plan. For example, scripture teaches that the Father sends the Son (not that the Son sends the Father), and that the Father and Son send the Holy Spirit (not that the Spirit sends the Father or the Son).

Scripture also teaches that it is the Father who initiates redemption by sending His beloved Son; that it is the Son who accomplishes redemption through His atoning work; and that it is the Spirit who applies redemption by uniting us to Christ and to the benefits of His atonement.

The Spirit of God is the one who implements the plans of the godhead. Yet in all this implementation of God's purposes, and especially in the application of Christ's redemptive work, the Holy Spirit appears to remain in the background, to keep Himself out of the center of attention, to keep the spotlight of importance and emphasis off Himself, and to focus our attention on the Second Person of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Spirit is the Person of the Trinity who exerts energy and exercises efficiency to move the purposes of the godhead toward fulfillment. And yet He appears to do so quietly, unobtrusively, and modestly, preferring to give the place of honor (especially during the earthly ministry of our Lord and the period just following it) to the Son.

One of the scriptures in which this quiet, unobtrusive attitude may be seen is John 16:14-15, in which Jesus says, "He (the Spirit) will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."

#### B. The Varied Ministries of the Spirit

The Spirit of God does some things in the implementation of the purposes of God that the other members of the godhead do not do. When we turn to the scriptures to discover the specific things the Spirit does, we are amazed to find out how many ministries the Spirit carries on.

Here is an enumeration of some of them:

<u>MINISTRY</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
1. Creation	Genesis 1:2 -- "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."
2. Revelation	II Samuel 23:2-3 -- "The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me."
3. Inspiration of Scripture	II Peter 1:21 -- "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
4. Restraint of Sin	Genesis 6:3 -- "Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal.' "
5. Power to cast out demons	Matthew 12:28 -- "But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."
6. Conception of Christ's human nature	Matthew 1:18, 20 -- "This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit . . . 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.' "

<u>MINISTRY</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
7. Conviction of Sin	John 16:7-8 -- "Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and Judgment."
8. Regeneration	John 3:5,8 -- "Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.' "
9. Baptism into union with the Church	I Corinthians 12:13 -- "for we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free -- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."
10. Indwelling	I Corinthians 6:19 -- "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?"
11. Sealing	Ephesians 4:30 -- "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
12. Distribution of gifts	I Corinthians 12:4, 7-11 -- "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit . . . Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing. . . All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines."
13. Filling	Acts 2:4 -- "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."
14. Sanctification	Romans 8:13 -- "For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live."
15. Production of Christian character	Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

<u>MINISTRY</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
16. Leading Romans	Romans 8: 8:14 -- "Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."
17. Assurance of the new birth	Romans 8:16 -- "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."
18. Intercession in prayer	Romans 8:26 -- "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."
19. Spiritual blessing and fruitfulness	John 7:37-39 -- "On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in were later to receive."

What a wonderful array of ministries the Spirit of God carries on! And what a marvelous administrator He is, planning, organizing, directing, and controlling everything; confusing no one individual with anyone else; forgetting no detail; getting nothing mixed up; and doing everything at the proper time!

And what is really wonderful about His varied ministries is that He does so many of them for my personal benefit!

Think of it!

He has regenerated me!  
He has baptized me into union with His body, the church!  
He indwells me!  
He has sealed me!  
He is my Helper!  
He has distributed gifts to me!  
He fills me for service!  
He sanctifies me!  
He produces Christian Character in me!  
He leads me!  
He assures me that I am a child of God!  
He intercedes for me!  
He blesses and makes me spiritually fruitful!

And in all of these blessed ministries, He points my attention to Christ! The Spirit of God is indeed a wonderful divine Person! He is one whom we should come to love and honor more than ever before.

### C. The Major Ministries Of the Spirit to Believers

The ministries here referred to as "major" include four: regeneration, indwelling, filling, and fullness.

#### 1. Regeneration

The word "regeneration" (παλιγγενεσία) is used only twice in the Bible, in Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5. The Matthew reference refers to the end time, when things will be made new; the Titus reference speaks of the initial application of salvation, when the Spirit of God cleanses and makes new the believing sinner.

But what does "regeneration" mean? What does it involve?

The word "regeneration" in ordinary English is used to mean "the act or process of generating or producing anew or of restoring to original strength or condition." Thus we use regeneration to mean the normal process of the body's renewing of itself day by day, or the restoration, after injury or loss, of a part of the body by the growth of new tissue. And we also use regeneration to mean the upgrading of energy that has been used and would ordinarily be lost for useful work, but can now be used again.

But what does the term mean biblically and doctrinally?

Upon completing an examination of a number of scriptures, we will draw a detailed idea of regeneration, but for the time being we will employ the following working definition of regeneration:

Regeneration is the impartation, by the Holy Spirit, of spiritual life to one who is spiritually dead.

But before we examine scriptures that speak of regeneration, we must ask why regeneration is necessary. And for the answer to this question, we turn to the Bible, and note both the Old Testament and New Testament references pertinent to this question.

#### Old Testament References

Genesis 8:21 -- "man . . . every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood."

I Kings 8:46 -- "for there is no one who does not sin."

Psalms 14:2-3 -- "The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Psalms 51:5 -- "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

Psalms 58:3 -- "Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies."

Psalms 143:2 -- "for no one living is righteous before you."

Proverbs 20:9 -- "Who can say, 'I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin?' "

Ecclesiastes 7:20 -- "There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins."

Isaiah 53:6 -- "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way."

Jeremiah 13:23 -- "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil."

Jeremiah 17:9 -- "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

#### New Testament References

Matthew 15:19 -- "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander."

John 3:3-7 -- "In reply Jesus declared, 'I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' 'How can a man be born when he is old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!' Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." ' "

John 3:19 -- "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."

Acts 7:51 -- "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears!"

Romans 2:1 -- "You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things."

Romans 3:9-18 -- "What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.' Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes.' "

Romans 3:23 -- "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 5:12 -- "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."



Romans 7:5 -- "For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death."

Romans 7:18 -- "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature."

Romans 8:5-8 -- "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires, but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God."

I Corinthians 2:14 -- "The man without the spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Galatians 5:19 -- "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like."

Ephesians 2:1,3 -- "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins. . . . All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of the sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath."

Ephesians 4:18 -- "They (the Gentiles) are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts."

Colossians 2:13 -- "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ."

Why is regeneration necessary? Because all natural descendants of Adam in their natural state are spiritually dead, dead in trespasses and sins, sinners, bondslaves to sin, at enmity with God, rebels against the Law of God, suppressors of the truth of God, unable to understand the things of God, unable to please God in any way, and continually standing under the wrath and condemnation of God!

The Bible reveals fallen man as spiritually dead and morally depraved. These two aspects of man's spiritual condition establish the necessity of regeneration.

But what is the nature of regeneration?

Before proceeding with a scriptural answer to this question, permit me to share an experience that I had when I was a student in college.

Following my first year of college, in which I was exposed to a great many assertions of unbelief, I had many questions and doubts.

When at the end of that year I transferred to another school, I carried these questions and doubts with me, and sometimes they surfaced.

At the second college, whenever I asked someone who I thought would know something about the subject (the meaning of regeneration), something like the following would take place. I would ask, "What is regeneration?" and the answer would come back, "It's the new birth." "But what is the new birth," I asked. "The new birth is being born again." "But what does it mean to be born again?" "It means being born from above, being born by the Spirit." "But what does being born from above involve? And what is it that is born?" "Why, it involves trusting in Christ; and you are the one who is born again. 'Ye must be born again!'"

If I dared ask any further questions, I would be told that the new birth is a mystery; and so, rather than continue asking for answers that I already knew, I stopped pestering people and began an earnest study of the Bible's teachings, attempting to get at the heart of the meaning of regeneration.

I discovered that the Bible presents the doctrine of regeneration under several aspects, but chiefly four: a new birth, a new life, a new creation, and a new nature.

Using these four aspects, let us consider a number of scriptures that refer to regeneration, and then attempt a definition for each aspect.

### Scripture References to Regeneration

#### Aspect One: Regeneration as a New Birth

1. Titus 3:5 -- "Not by works in righteousness which we did, but according to His mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration." (διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας). The word translated regeneration (παλιγγενεσία) means "a being generated again," "a being born again." Notice that the last part of the verse reads, "and renewal of the Holy Spirit." (καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου). Thus we see the role of the Spirit of God in the new birth. Notice also that it is not the spirit of God who is the object of the renewal (He. needs no renewal!); rather it is He who renews. By parallel construction, it is not regeneration that is washed, but rather we who are washed by regeneration.

2. John 1:12-13 -- "But those, who received Him, He gave to them power to become children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ), to those believing in His name, who were begotten (ἐγεννήθησαν), not of bloods,, nor of. \_ the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (ἐκ θεοῦ) Notice that those who receive and trust in Christ become born-ones of God and are begotten of God.

3. John 3:1-8 -- "There was a man of the Pharisees, whose name was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This one came to Him at night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that you have come as a teacher from God; for no one is able to do these signs which you are doing, except God is with him.' Jesus answered and said to him 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is begotten again (γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν), he is not able to see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus says to Him, 'How is a man able to be begotten (γεννηθῆναι), being old? He is not able to enter the womb of his mother a second time and be begotten (γεννηθῆναι), is he?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is

begotten of water and Spirit (ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος), he is not able to enter the kingdom of God. That having been begotten of the flesh is flesh (τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς σὰρξ ἐστίν), and that having been begotten of the Spirit is spirit (καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν) Do not be amazed because I said to you, it is necessary for you to be begotten again (γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν). The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it is coming from or where it is departing; so is everyone having been begotten of the Spirit." (πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος)

A number of interpretive proposals have been made concerning the meaning of the phrase "begotten of water and Spirit (γεννηθῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος), including the following:

(a) "begotten of water and Spirit" uses "water" to refer to the ordinance of baptism; thus this phrase refers to the necessity of water baptism for salvation.

(b) "begotten of water and Spirit" uses "water" to refer to baptismal regeneration; i.e., the Spirit uses baptismal water instrumentally to effect regeneration.

(c) "begotten of water and Spirit" uses "water" as a symbol for the Spirit; thus this phrase refers to the Spirit's act of regeneration, and would be more accurately translated "begotten of water even the Spirit."

(d) "begotten of water and Spirit" uses "water" as a symbol for cleansing; thus this phrase refers to the spiritual and moral cleansing the Spirit accomplishes in regeneration.

(e) "begotten of water and Spirit" uses "water" as a figure for the cleansing effect brought about by the application of the Word of God and the Spirit of God to bring about regeneration.

(f) "begotten of water and Spirit" uses "water" as a figure for natural birth; thus Jesus is saying that human beings must be begotten, not only naturally, but also spiritually.

Although some of these proposed interpretations are attractive (especially the next to last one), the last one seems most cogent and coherent. This proposed interpretation views Jesus as saying that unless one is begotten, not only naturally (i.e., the way one is begotten the first time), but also spiritually (i.e., the way one needs to be begotten a second time), he or she is not able to enter the kingdom of God. This view proposes that "water" is a figure, not for baptism, or cleansing, or for the Word of God, but for natural birth. It suggests that Nicodemus and the people of his day (much more so than the people of our day) were aware that a baby in its mother's womb is enclosed in a membrane or sac containing a water-like fluid (the amniotic fluid), which sac ruptures shortly before the baby is born, releasing the "water" (even modern doctors say "the water broke"). Thus being "begotten of or out of water" is an excellent figure for natural birth. This view proposes that Nicodemus was told, "You must be begotten again"; and that he answered, "How is a man able to be begotten

a second time naturally?" Jesus replied, "One must be begotten, not only naturally, but also spiritually, since that which is born naturally ("of the flesh") is flesh (i.e., natural), whereas that which is born spiritually ("of the Spirit") is spirit (i.e., spiritual)" This proposed interpretation unifies the passage and seems to make the best sense of this remarkable conversation.

(Incidentally, this is the classic passage in scripture on the new birth.)

4. I Peter 1:23 -- "Having been begotten again (ἀναγεγεννημένοι) not of perishable seed but imperishable, through the living and remaining Word of God." This tells us that the Word of God is used as a means to accomplish the new birth."

5. 1 John 3:1-2 -- "Behold, what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ); and we are! Because of this the world is not knowing us because it did not know Him. Beloved ones, now are we children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ), and it has not yet been manifested what we shall be. We know that if he should be manifested we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is." Notice the present relevance of a past event: because we have been begotten of God, we are now children of God!

6. I John 3:9-10 -- "Everyone having been begotten of God (γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) is not practicing sin, because His seed is remaining in Him; and he is not able to be practicing sin, because he has been begotten of God (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται). By this are manifest the children of God (τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ) and the children of the devil; everyone who is not practicing righteousness is not of God (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ), neither the one who is not loving his brother." Notice that John says two things: first, the begotten one does not practice sin; second, the begotten one is not able to be practicing sin. The second assertion is much stronger than the first! The clause, "His seed is remaining in Him" may be understood as teaching that God's seed (the new principle of righteousness) is remaining in the begotten one, or that God's seed (the begotten one) continues in union with Him. The above translation favors the latter understanding.

7. I John 4:7 -- "Beloved ones, let us be loving one another, because love is of God, and everyone who is loving has been begotten of God (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται) and is knowing God." Note that the one who has been begotten of God is marked by love to those who also have been begotten of God.

8. I John 5:1 -- "Everyone who is believing that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται), and everyone who is loving the one who begot is also loving the one having been begotten of Him (τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ)." Here we find two criteria by which the child of God may be identified: the true child of God believes in Jesus as the predicted Messiah, and the true child of God not only loves God, but also loves all other true children of God.

9. I John 5:4-5 -- "For everyone having been begotten of God (γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) is getting the victory over the world, and this is the victory which gets victory over the world, our

faith. Who is the one getting victory over the world except the one believing that Jesus is the son of God?" Here is another mark of identification: the true child of God is the one who is getting victory over the evil world-system through his vital faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

10. I John 5:18 -- "We know that everyone having been begotten of God (πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) is not practicing sin, but the one who was begotten of God (ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ) is keeping him, and the evil one is not taking hold of him." This is a difficult verse because of the second clause. However, if in that clause the phrase "the one who was begotten of God" refers to Christ (who was begotten by God the Spirit in the womb of Mary), then the clause is saying that Christ is keeping the child of God, with the result that the evil one (the devil) is not able to clutch him in such a way as to hold him.

Taking these scriptures into account, the following summary statement of the new birth would appear to be warranted.

The new birth is that act of the Holy Spirit by which a human being is spiritually reborn, thereby becoming a spiritual child of God. This implies such a tragic flaw in man's spiritual nature that a radical rebirth of his spirit is necessary before he can live a life pleasing to God.

#### Aspect Two: Regeneration as a New Life

1. John 5:24 -- "Truly, truly, I say to you that the one who is hearing my word and is believing the one who sent me is having eternal life (ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον), and is not coming into judgment but has crossed over from death to life (εἰς τὴν ζωὴν)." The picture is that of one who crosses a bridge spanning a chasm separating the country of death from the country of life. Notice that the believer has crossed over: he has eternal life now as a present possession.

2. I John 3:14-15 -- "We are knowing that we have crossed over from death to life (εἰς τὴν ζωὴν), because we are loving the brothers. The one not loving is remaining in death. Everyone hating his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer is having eternal life remaining in him (ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἐν αὐτῷ μένουσαν)." Here we have a characteristic mark by which the one who has eternal life may be identified: he is presently loving his brothers and sisters in Christ.

3. Ephesians 2:1-6 -- "And you, being dead in transgressions and in your sins, in which at one time you walking according to the forces of evil of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit who is now working in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all lived at one time in the desires of our flesh, doing what the flesh and the mind desired, and were by nature children of wrath even as also the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, through His great love with which He loved us, and we, being dead in transgressions, he made alive (συνεζωοποίησεν) with Christ -- by grace you have been saved -- and he raised (us) and placed (us) in the supernatural sphere

in Christ Jesus." This passage teaches that we were once spiritually dead, but that through the application of the redemptive work of Christ we have been made spiritually alive.

4. Colossians 2:13 -- "And you, being dead in sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive (συνεζωοποίησεν) together with Him, forgiving us all the sins." Through Christ's atonement we who were spiritually dead were made spiritually alive.

Other passages that could be included under the aspect of a new life are John 6:53-63; II Corinthians 3:6, Galatians 3:21, and Romans 6:1-8:13.

At this point a note of clarification should be inserted. When we say that the unregenerate man's spirit is dead, we do not mean that his spirit is non-existent, or that it lies dormant and inactive until made alive. Rather, we affirm that the unregenerate man has a spirit (or is a spirit united to a physical body), and that his spirit is very active in transgressions and sins, as we have seen in Ephesians 2:1-6. But at the same time that the man's spirit exists and is active in the pursuit of evil, it is spiritually dead. The unregenerate person's spirit is dead to the true knowledge of God, dead to the things of God, and dead to true righteousness and holiness. He is dead spiritually even while he is alive physically and emotionally. The Spirit's act of regeneration makes him spiritually alive!

Taking these scriptures and considerations into account, the following summary statement of the new life would appear to be warranted:

The new life is that aspect of regeneration in which the spirit of a human being who is spiritually dead is through union with Christ made spiritually alive.

### Aspect Three: Regeneration as a New Creation

As soon as we speak of a new creation, we are reminded of mankind's original creation. Accordingly we look first at the Genesis account.

1. Genesis 1:26-27 -- (NASB) "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them,"

At his creation, man was created upright, with righteousness and holiness, and with a personal knowledge of God. But man fell, lost his original uprightness, lost righteousness and holiness, and lost the true knowledge of God. All human beings, except for the Lord Jesus Christ, were included in the sinful effects of the Fall.

2. II Corinthians 5:17 -- "So that if anyone is in Christ, he is (or there is) a new creature (or creation) (καινή κτίσις). The old things have passed away (τὰ ραῖα παρῆλθεν), behold, new things have come into being (ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά)." Does this

mean that the regenerated man has no remnant of sin in him? Does it mean that he no longer has the same physical body? We must reply in the negative to both of these questions. However, whether we understand this verse to mean that the regenerate man is himself a new creature, or that the creation around him appears new to him, in either case . Is greatly changed. He is different, and the way in which he views things is different.

3. Galatians 6:15 -- "For neither is circumcision or uncircumcision anything, but a new creation (καινή κτίσις)." What matters is not whether a man is a Jew or a Gentile, but whether he is a new creation in Christ.

4. Ephesians 2:10 -- "For we are what He has made, having been created in Christ Jesus (κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we should walk in them." The phrase "created . . . for good works" shows the connection between Christian character and Christian conduct.

5. Colossians 3:10 -- "And have put on the new (man), that which is being renewed in full knowledge according to the image of the one who created him (τὸν νέον τὸν νακκινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν)." Originally, God created man in His image. Now He re-creates man in His image. One aspect of that image is the true knowledge of God, in which we are progressively being renewed, as we grow to know Him personally more fully each day.

6. Ephesians 4:24 -- "And put on the new man, which according to God was created (τὸν κατὰ θεὸν κτισθέντα) in righteousness and true holiness." Just as man lost righteousness and holiness at the Fall, so he begins to regain them at regeneration.

Taking these scriptures into account, the following summary statement of the new creation would appear to be warranted:

The new creation is that aspect of regeneration in which the spiritual and moral image ruined in the Fall is initially and progressively restored to the human spirit.

#### Aspect Four: Regeneration as a New Nature

1. I Corinthians 2:14 -- "But the unspiritual man (Ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος) does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to know (them), because they are judged spiritually (ὅτι πνευματικῶς νακρίνεται)." .

Here we have pictured a man who does not have the Spirit of God, who is natural and unregenerate, and whose nature prevents him from looking at things differently. Paul says that he is not able to know the things of God's Spirit.

2. Ephesians 2:3 -- "We were by nature children of wrath (ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς)." .

Paul says that at one time we were all children of wrath; i.e., children who deserved and stood under God's wrath and condemnation, rather than children of joy and approval. And we were objects of God's wrath by nature; i.e., by what we were.

Because of what we were (not simply because of what we did) we were under God's great anger (His wrath).

3. Ezekiel 36:26-27 -- (NASB) "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." This speaks of what God is going to do for the nation of Israel in the last days. But it also appears to show what God does today in giving human beings a new nature in regeneration.

4. II Peter 1:4 -- "through whom have been given to us promises, precious and great, in order that through these you may become sharers in the divine nature, (γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως) having escaped the decay that is in the world by desire." The goal that Peter sets before his readers is that of becoming like God, in that they may realize a progressive conformation of their natures to God's own nature. What God is, they may become, through God's precious and great promises.

At this point a clarification should be made. A nature is a substance with a set of attributes or characteristics. A man's nature is the whole complex of attributes that make up the man. Therefore when we speak of a new nature we do not mean that all of his attributes are discarded and that he is given an entirely new set of attributes. In such a case, he would no longer have the same identity he would not be the same person! And yet in some sense the attributes of one who has a new nature are new. What we mean, then, by a new nature is that a man's nature (what he is) is new in some important sense.

5. Colossians 3:9 -- "Do not be speaking falsely to one another, having put off the old man with his practices(πεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ)." The old man would appear to be the old life before regeneration, including the old characteristics and old behaviors. Although we have once and for all put off the old life, we still find rudiments of it clinging to us; and we find it necessary to struggle with some of our old ways. Sin is still very much with us!

The old man would appear to be the old life before regeneration, including the old characteristics and old behaviors. Although we have once and for all put off the old life, we still find rudiments of it clinging to us; and we find it necessary to struggle with some of our old ways. Sin is still very much with us!

6. Titus 3:5 -- "Not by works in righteousness which we did, but according to His mercy He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (ἀνακαίνωσεν πνεύματος ἁγίου)." The Holy Spirit renews or renovates man's spiritual nature; i.e., He renews what a person is spiritually and morally.

Taking these scriptures into account, the following summary statement of the new nature would appear to be warranted:

The new nature is that aspect of regeneration in which the moral and spiritual attributes of man's nature are initially and progressively renewed, and the direction of man's conduct is changed from an active disposition toward sin to an active disposition toward righteousness.

Regeneration is presented in the scriptures under four key aspects: a new birth, a new life, a new creation, and a new nature. Upon analysis, it would appear that a further refinement suggests



itself, in the form of interrelationships between these aspects. We can say that a new birth results in a new life, and a new creation results in a new nature.

If we meld together the definitions of these four aspects, we arrive at a complex definition somewhat like the following:

Regeneration is that work of the Holy Spirit by which a human being is spiritually reborn in spirit, made spiritually alive, restored to God's image, and renewed in the moral and spiritual attributes of his nature, which renewal is manifest in his conduct by a prevailing tendency toward righteousness.

But now we must add another dimension to our study. We must ask how these great and powerful truths relate to us personally.

Regeneration is a new birth a spiritual rebirth, a being born into God's spiritual family, a becoming a spiritual child of God, a being begotten anew by the Holy Spirit. We must ask ourselves, "Have I been born again? Am I God's spiritual child? Is God my heavenly Father?"

Regeneration results in a new life, a resurrection from the dead, a spiritual coming to life. We must ask ourselves, "Do I have this new life in me? Am I spiritually alive?"

I know that I am physically alive because life functions are going on in my body, because I am aware of my physical activity and movement, because I am aware of physical appetites and drives, and because I am experiencing the physical aspects of thought, feeling, and decision-making.

Similarly, I can know that I am spiritually alive because life functions are going on in me, because I am aware of spiritual activity and movement, because I am aware of spiritual appetites and drives, and because I am experiencing spiritual thoughts, emotions, desires, intentions, and decisions. Jesus said, "The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it is coming from or where it is departing; so is everyone having been begotten of the Spirit." We can't see the wind, but we can hear its sound and experience its other effects as it gently blows across a field of grain, or rustles through the leaves of trees, or cools our faces, or carries the fleecy clouds along, or lashes the ocean waves into great foaming breakers.

So it is with spiritual life. We can't see the Holy Spirit, but we can experience His effects in our lives. New attitudes, new directions, new values, new goals, new interests, all directed toward God and the things pertaining to God -- these are some of the effects of the new birth in an individual.

Regeneration is also a new creation. It is a restoration of God's image and likeness in me. It means being restored to Godlikeness, becoming more and more conformed to the perfect image of God in Christ. It means knowing God personally, and becoming a holy person, as He is holy. We must ask ourselves: "Am I a new creature in Christ? Has the Holy Spirit begun to remake me in God's likeness? Do I have a new outlook on life, and do I see things in relation to the will and glory of God? Do I view my life in terms of spiritual realities, and in light of eternal values?"

And regeneration also results in a new nature in regeneration my very nature, what I am, is renewed and renovated. The Spirit of God enables me to begin to put to death the expressions of godlessness and unrighteousness in myself; the expressions of idolatry, profanity, superstition, unbelief, hypocrisy, rebellion against lawful authority, hatred, sinful anger, immorality, stealing, lying, and covetousness. At the same time the Holy Spirit enables me to begin to produce the expressions of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in my life, with the result that the prevailing direction of my character and conduct is righteousness! We must ask ourselves: "Has my nature, my very being, been renewed and renovated? Am I characterized, not by works of the flesh, but by the fruit of the Spirit?"

Let us ask ourselves sincerely and gently and lovingly and searchingly: "Have I been born again? Am I spiritually alive? Am I a new creation? And do I have a new nature?"

These four aspects do not refer to four distinct spiritual realities, but one, in slightly differing (and often overlapping) ways, they all speak of regeneration.

"A ruler once came to Jesus by night  
To ask Him the way of salvation and light;  
The Master made answer in words true and plain,  
'Ye must be born again.'

Ye children of men, attend to the word  
So solemnly uttered by Jesus, the Lord;  
And let not this message to you be in vain,  
'Ye must be born again.'

Oh, ye who would enter that glorious rest  
And sing with the ransomed the song of the blest,  
The life everlasting if ye would obtain,  
'Ye must be born again.'

A dear one in heaven thy heart yearns to see  
At the beautiful gate may be watching for thee;  
Then list to the note of this solemn refrain,  
'Ye must be born again.'

Ye must be born again,  
Ye must be born again,  
I verily, verily say unto you,  
'Ye must be born again.' "

(William T. Sleeper)

## 2. Indwelling

Before we proceed to the scriptures that speak of indwelling, we need a working definition. But before we can formulate such a definition, we must briefly review and then enlarge our understanding of the scriptural teaching concerning the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit.

We have discovered that the Spirit of God is an infinite Person who is immense, who fills all space and transcends it, and who is present everywhere at once. He is present in all His perfections in every location in the universe, and fills every bit of space!

Now if the Holy Spirit is present in every bit of space, and not absent from any location in space, then it follows that He occupies the same space that the matter and energy of the universe occupies. This means that He occupies the same space that is occupied by stars and planets and mountains and trees and clouds, and oceans and birds and fish and four-legged animals and buildings and pulpits and human beings and angels and demons. All of these things and beings occupy some space; and the Holy Spirit occupies the same space. He is not excluded from the space that a mountain or tree or pulpit or human being occupies; rather He fills all space. Thus He is present in this building at all times; He is present in the lectern from which I am teaching; He is present in every tree and flower and blade of grass on the grounds of this seminary; and He is present in the body of every human being.

How can the Spirit and a physical object occupy the same space at one time? And if we say they do, is this not to affirm Pantheism?

Let us attempt to get clear on this matter by distinguishing between Deism, Theism, and Pantheism. And let us distinguish between these three theistic views in terms of three components: location, essence, and identity.

In regard to the relationship of God to the universe, Deism holds that, with respect to location, God is absent from the universe. With respect to essence, God and the universe are made of different kinds of stuff. With respect to identity God is not the universe.

Theism holds that, with respect to location, God is present in the universe, but not confined to it. With respect to essence, God and the universe are made of different kinds of stuff. With respect to identity, God is not the universe.

Pantheism holds that, with respect to location, God is present in the universe, and confined to it. With respect to essence, God and the universe are made of the same kind of stuff. With respect to identity, God and the universe are one and the same. The universe is God, and God is the universe.

If we say "God is in this lectern," we have definitely ruled out Deism, but it is not yet clear whether we are espousing Theism or Pantheism, since both views hold that God is present in the universe. However, if we say, "God is this lectern," we are definitely espousing Pantheism. But if we say, "God is in this lectern, but He is not this lectern," then of the three views mentioned, we are definitely espousing Theism.

Thus to say that God is present in every bit of space and occupies the same space that things and created beings occupy is not to affirm Pantheism, so long as we do not make God and the created universe one and the same being.

Perhaps our understanding of the matter could be aided if we were to think of the physical realm and the spiritual realm occupying the same space. The physical realm or dimension is that which we can see with our physical eyes. The spiritual realm or dimension is that which we can 'see' with the eyes of faith (faith as a believing response to a revelation from God). Both occupy the same space. Spirits are not excluded or pushed out of the space that a physical object or body is occupying.

Finite spirits such as human spirits, angelic spirits, and demonic spirits, occupy only part of space at a time, but the Holy Spirit occupies all of space at the same time. He fills the heavens and the earth with His presence!

The implications of this great truth for the concept of "indwelling" are extremely important!

In the sense of space, the Holy Spirit is always present in every human being's body, including that of the unbeliever! In the sense of space, the Holy Spirit is just as present in the unregenerate person's body as in the regenerate person's body. And this has always been true, from the moment of mankind's creation in Adam to the present moment!

For the Holy Spirit to indwell a human being, then, cannot mean simply to be present in the space a believer's body occupies, since the Holy Spirit occupies all space. And thus if "indwelling" is taken to mean that when a person is an unbeliever, the Holy Spirit is "outside" his or her body, but when a person becomes a believer, the Holy Spirit comes "Inside" his or her body, that concept of indwelling is of necessity erroneous and should be discarded! The fact is that the Holy spirit, as far as space is concerned, is "Inside" the body of every human being, as well as outside it! And this includes both believers and unbelievers! Since the Holy Spirit fills all space and is present everywhere, He is present in both believers and unbelievers.

What, then, can "indwelling" possibly mean? Have we drained the word of all meaningful content? Or is there some residue of significant meaning?

Surely there must be some sort of difference between the way the Spirit of God is present in the unbeliever and the way He is present in the believer!

Let us affirm that there must be a difference, and a very important one. But the difference is not that the Holy Spirit is absent from one person's body and present in the other's!

The difference appears to be one of personal relationship. The Holy Spirit sustains a relationship to the regenerate man that is radically different from the relationship which He sustains to the unregenerate man. The Holy Spirit is savingly related to the believer, but is not savingly related to the non-believer.

The Holy Spirit is present in both the believer and the unbeliever, but He does not indwell the unbeliever. (Some earlier writers in this area said that He is present everywhere, but He is resident only in the believer).

What, then, does indwelling mean?

The Holy Spirit is not welcome in the unbeliever's "house", but is an intruder and an undesirable alien. The Spirit is very welcome in the believer's "house", and is a beloved friend and honored guest.

The Holy Spirit is not "at home" in the unbeliever. He is "at home" in the believer.

The Holy Spirit is present in the unbeliever, but as a "squatter". He is present in the believer, and as a resident.

The Holy Spirit is present in the unbeliever, but does not indwell him. The Holy Spirit is present in the believer, and indwells him.

Now we must ask, "What is the scriptural evidence for this ministry?"

#### Old Testament References

Genesis 41:38 -- "And Pharaoh said to his servants, 'Shall we find as this man in whom is the Spirit of God (אִשֶּׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ) '?"

Numbers 27:18 -- "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Take to yourself Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom spirit is (אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-רוּחַ בּוֹ) '."

I Samuel 16:14 -- "And the Spirit of Jehovah departed from Saul."

Psalms 51:11 -- "Do not cast me from your presence, and do not take from me your Holy Spirit."

Isaiah 63:11 -- "Where is the one who placed in the midst of him His Holy Spirit (אֵיךָ הָשֵׁם בָּקִרְבּוֹ אֶת-רוּחַ קִדְשׁוֹ) '?"

Ezekiel 11:19 -- "And I will give to them one heart (or another heart), and a new spirit I will give in your midst (וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֶּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם) ."

Ezekiel 36:26 -- "And I will give to you a new heart, and a new spirit I will give in your midst (וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה וְאֶת בְּקִרְבְּכֶם) ."

Ezekiel 36:27 -- "And my Spirit I will give in your midst (וְאֶת-רוּחִי אֶתֶּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם) ."

Haggai 2:4-5 -- "For I am with you, says the Lord of hosts. According to my covenant which I made with you when you came out of Egypt, for my Spirit is remaining (or standing) in your midst (וְרוּחִי עֹמֵד בְּתוֹכְכֶם) . Fear not."

How shall we understand these scriptures in reference to indwelling? Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Israel in the end time, and the post-exilic remnant of Israel are spoken of in these verses. The references to Saul

and David are a special case, which we will address later. The effects of the Spirit's relationships to these Old Testament persons include the following: enablement to interpret dreams, enablement for leadership, righteous conduct, and encouragement and enablement to do the work of the Lord. But do these refer to indwelling, or to some other ministry or ministries?

#### New Testament References

Romans 5:5 -- "And hope does not make ashamed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy, Spirit, who was given to us (διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν)."

Romans 8:9 -- "But you are not in the flesh but in the spirit, since the Holy Spirit is dwelling in you (πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν)."

Romans 8:11 -- "And if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead is dwelling in you (οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν), the one who raised Christ from the dead shall also make alive your mortal bodies through His Spirit the one inhabiting you (τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ὑμῖν)."

Romans 8:15 -- "For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fears but you have received the Spirit of adoption (ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας), by whom we cry, 'Abba,' (that is, 'Father')."

Romans 8:16 -- "The Spirit Himself is bearing witness together with our spirit (αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν) that we are children (born-ones) of God."

Romans 8:26 -- "Likewise the Spirit also comes to help our weakness; for we do not know what we should pray for as is necessary, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα ὑπερεντυγχάνει στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτοις)."

I Corinthians 2:12 -- "And we have received, not the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, in order that we may know the things which were freely given to us by God."

I Corinthians 3:16 -- "Do you not know that you (plural) are a temple of God (ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε) and that the Spirit of God is dwelling in (or among) you (τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν)?"

I Corinthians 6:19 -- "Or do you not know that your (plural) body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who, is in (or among) you, whom you have from God; (τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματός ἐστιν, οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ θεοῦ) and you are not your own?"

II Corinthians 1:22 -- "Who also marked you with a seal, and also gave the pledge of the Spirit in your hearts(καὶ δοὺς τὸν ἄρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν)."

II Corinthians 5:5 -- "And the one who has prepared us for this same thing is God, the one who gave us the pledge of the Spirit (ὁ δοὺς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος)."

II Corinthians 6:16 -- "And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God. Even as God said, 'I will dwell in (or among) them, and will walk in (or among) them; (Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω) and I shall be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people!' "

Galatians 4:6 -- "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His son into our hearts (ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν), crying 'Abba' (that is, 'Father')."

Ephesians 1:13-14 -- "By whom also you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also having believed, you were marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise; who is the pledge of our possession, until the redemption of the property, to the praise of His glory."

Ephesians 2:22 -- "In whom also you are being incorporated into a house of God by the Spirit (ὁμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι)."

Ephesians 3:16-17 -- "In order that He might give you, according to the richness of His glory, power to become strong in the inner man through His Spirit, so that Christ would inhabit your hearts through faith (κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν)."

Ephesians 4:30 -- "And do not pain (or, grieve) the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were marked with a seal (ἐσφραγίσθητε) unto the day of redemption."

I Thessalonians 4:8 -- "Therefore the one rejecting is not rejecting man but God, the one who gave His Holy Spirit to us (διδόντα τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον εἰς ὑμᾶς)."

II Timothy 1:14 -- "That good thing which was entrusted (to you) guard by the Holy Spirit who inhabits us (διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος ἐν ἡμῖν)."

I John 4:13 -- "By this we are knowing that we are remaining in Him and He in us, because He has given to us His Spirit (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν.)."

Jude 19 -- "These are those causing divisions, natural, not having the Spirit (πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες.)."

Whenever we think or speak of the Holy Spirit's ministry of indwelling, we ought to do so against the background of His omnipresence. And we should understand indwelling to mean that the Spirit of God who is present everywhere is present in the believer in the character and relationships of Helper, Friend, Master, Consecrator, Assurer, Comforter, Sanctifier, Energizer, and Sustainer of spiritual life.

Of course, it goes without saying that if indwelling involves the sustaining of spiritual life, then spiritual life must already be present in the person that is indwelt. And thus indwelling presupposes regeneration.

Perhaps it would be helpful to draw a number of contrasts between the relationships the Spirit of God sustains to the unregenerate and those He sustains to the regenerate:

<u>Relationships to the unregenerate</u>	<u>Relationships to the Regenerate</u>
A Stranger	A Trusted Helper
An Enemy	A Friend
An undesirable intruder	A Welcome Guest, Master of the House
A Convincer of God's reality, creatorhood, right to claim worship	A Consecrator, who makes temples of human beings
A Convincer of sin and judgment	An Assurer of salvation
A Convincer of Christ's righteousness	A Comforter, to witness concerning Christ's reality and presence
A Restrainer, who holds back sin	A Sanctifier and Energizer, who cleanses and empowers for godly living
A Convincer of spiritual death	A Sustainer of spiritual life

From the abovementioned scriptures and considerations (especially concerning omnipresence), the following definition of indwelling would appear to be warranted:

Indwelling is that relationship which the Holy Spirit sustains to the believer subsequent to regeneration, in which relationship He helps, rules, consecrates, assures, comforts, sanctifies, empowers, and sustains the life imparted in regeneration. Indwelling is the Holy Spirit's continuance of that new relationship and ministry begun in regeneration.

Now, however, there is a question which was at least suggested by the inclusion of some Old Testament references in the scriptural evidence for the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit. The question is this: Were Old Testament believers indwelt by the Holy Spirit?

Over the years this question has been raised many times. And many times it has been answered by contrasting the Spirit's ministry in the Old Testament period with His ministry at the present time. Two quotations may suffice to illustrate this emphasis on contrast:



Quotation #1

"In an admirable work on the Spirit, the distinction between the former and the present relation of the Spirit is thus stated: 'In the old dispensation the Holy Spirit wrought upon believers, but did not in his person dwell in believers and abide permanently in them. He appeared unto men; he did not incarnate himself in man. His action was intermittent; he went and came like the dove which Noah sent forth from the ark, and which went to and fro, finding no rest; while in the new dispensation he dwells, he abides in the heart as the dove, his emblem!' "

-- A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of the Spirit* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, reprinted 1949), p. 25.

Notice in this quotation two emphases:

- (1) In the old dispensation the Spirit was upon believers; now He is in them.
- (2) In the old dispensation the Spirit came and went; now He abides.

Quotation #2

"The Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, is to abide with God's children for ever. This also is new. In the Old Testament the Spirit of God was with those who believed in the coming of the Messiah, who trusted the Lord. But He was not known as the abiding Spirit. There was no assurance given that He would remain. That is why David prayed in his penitential psalm, 'Take not thy Holy Spirit from me' (Psalm 51:11). No believer in the New Testament needs to pray this prayer."

-- Arno C. Gaebelein, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament* (New York: "Our Hope" Publication Office, n.d.), p. 25.

Notice the two emphases in this second quotation:

- (1) In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit did not abide; there was no assurance that He would remain; now He abides for ever.
- (2) In the Old Testament David prayed that the Holy Spirit would not be taken from him; in the New Testament no believer need ever pray this prayer.

With regard to the emphases made in these two quotations, some observations would appear to be called for.

First, the distinction between the Holy Spirit being upon believers and being in believers, understood simply in the sense of absence from the space of the body of one and presence in the space of the body of the other, should be dropped and forever discarded! The Holy Spirit is omnipresent in space; in that sense He has always been "in" every human being!

But almost immediately someone will point to John 14:16-17 and ask, "What about that?"

Let us give this passage two readings, using the same words, and changing only the emphasis:

One Reading of John 14:16-17

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you.

Another Reading of John 14:16-17

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he DWELLETH with you, and SHALL BE in you.

Notice: the wording is the same; only the emphasis is different. The first reading emphasizes a change of location from the outside of Christ's disciples to the inside of them; whereas the second reading emphasizes the assurance that the Holy Spirit who is already dwelling with Christ's disciples will continue to dwell with them even after Christ ascends to heaven.

But someone may ask: "But if Old Testament believers were indwelt by the Holy Spirit, doesn't this imply that they were previously regenerated? The answer is "Yes."

It is pleasant to be able to report that more and more evangelicals are returning to the view that C. I. Scofield expressed in his small work, *Plain Papers on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (published in 1899), when he confidently asserted that Old Testament saints were regenerated by the Holy Spirit:

In the old Testament the Holy Spirit is revealed. . . as a divine Person. As such He is associated in the work of creation . . . strives with sinful man . . . enlightens the spirit of man . . . gives skill of hand . . . bestows physical strength . . . and qualifies the servants of God for a various ministry . . . . To this should be added that operation of the Spirit by which the men of faith in the Old Testament ages were regenerated. While this doctrine is not explicitly taught in the Old Testament (except prophetically), our Lord's words in John 3:5 and Luke 13:28, leave no doubt as to the fact itself. Since the new birth is essential to seeing and entering the kingdom of God, and since the Old Testament saints are in that kingdom, it follows necessarily that they were born of the Spirit.

If someone were to ask, "But isn't there some distinction between Old Testament indwelling and New Testament indwelling?" it should be pointed out that there may indeed be some distinctions of degree and perhaps one of kind.

This difference of kind may be found in certain statements made by our Lord and recorded in John's gospel following Christ's announcement of His coming departure to the Father's house. These statements are as follows:

John 14:16 -- "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.

John 14:18 -- "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you."

John 14:25-26 -- "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 15:26 -- "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me."

John 16:6-7 -- "But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. 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."

Now let us put ourselves into the historical situation. Christ was about to depart from His disciples. They were filled with sorrow at the thought of losing their Master, of no longer having Him there with them. And they were also filled with apprehension and fear, and felt almost lost at the prospect of being without their Leader. How could they carry on without His presence, without His direction and truth and example?

And so Christ promised them that He would send the Holy Spirit to them as a Comforter and Helper, both to comfort them in their loss of His physical presence, and to help them in their need of wisdom, guidance, and direction after His departure.

With this historical setting in mind, let us take a closer look at John 14:16-17 (using a very literal translation), and draw some truths from this passage.

"And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Comforter (or Helper), in order that He may be with you always (ἵνα ἡ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) -- the Spirit of truth, whom the world is not able to receive because it is neither beholding Him or knowing Him (οὐ θεωρεῖ αὐτὸ οὐδὲ γινώσκει). You are knowing Him (ὑμεῖς γινώσκετε αὐτό), because He is remaining with you (παρ' ὑμῖν μένει), and is (or shall be) in (or among) you (καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν [or ἔσται])."

What truths may be learned from this passage? The following suggest themselves:

- (1) Unbelievers have no experiential knowledge of the Holy Spirit ("the world . . . Is neither beholding Him or knowing Him")

- (2) Therefore unbelievers are not able to receive the Holy Spirit ("the Spirit of truth, whom the world is not able to receive")
- (3) Christ's disciples have an experiential knowledge of the Holy Spirit ("you are knowing Him")
- (4) Therefore Christ's disciples are able to receive the Holy Spirit. In fact, they have already received the Holy Spirit and He is already remaining with them ("You are knowing Him, because He is remaining with you")
- (5) After Christ's departure from them into heaven, Christ's disciples will receive the Holy Spirit in the capacity of Comforter and Helper, and He will remain in (or among) them always ("He will give you another Comforter (or Helper), in order that He may be with you always -- the Spirit of truth . . . He . . . shall be in (or among) you")

What was our Lord telling His disciples? That the Holy Spirit, whom they already knew, whom they had already received, whom they had experienced in various capacities, who was already remaining with them, would be remaining with them forever; and since our Lord would soon be leaving them, He was sending the Holy Spirit to them in a new relationship; namely, that of a Comforter and Helper after Christ's departure.

To put it another way, the Spirit of God, who was already related to them in various ways, would come to them in a new relationship to comfort and help them after their Master was gone.

Incidentally, those who wish to stress the change of preposition in verse 17 from "with" to "in" and to assert that "with" refers to the Holy Spirit's relationship to the disciples in the past and present, whereas "in" refers to His relationship to the disciples in the future, should take special note of the fact that in verse 16 the future relationship of the Holy Spirit to the disciples is expressed in terms of "with" ("He will give you another Comforter, in order that He may be with you always -- the Spirit of truth"). This usage should caution against making theological distinctions purely on the basis of prepositional differences!

A second observation that appears to be in order relates to the distinction made in the two quotations mentioned earlier between the temporary character of the Spirit's relationships to Old Testament saints, and the permanent character of His relationships to New Testament saints, especially as highlighted by David's prayer that the Holy Spirit not be taken from him.

Actually, the only evidence cited for the temporary character of the Holy Spirit's relationships to Old Testament believers (other than references to filling) is that found in Psalm 51:11 and I Samuel 16:14.

Psalm 51:11 reads: "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me (וְלֹא תִקַּח אֶל־תְּהִיָּה מִמֶּנִּי)."

I Samuel 16:14 says: "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul (וְרוּחַ יְהוָה סָרָה מֵעָם שָׁאוּל)."

Much has been built on these two verses. It would seem that much perplexity could have been saved if interpreters had noted that these two references speak of the first two kings of Israel -- Saul and David -- that these men were both anointed with oil as symbolic of the coming upon them of the Holy Spirit to equip and empower them for the particular task of ruling over Israel; that when Saul was rejected from the kingship for his wicked sin of disobedience to the Lord's explicit command in the matter of the Amalekites, the Holy Spirit as the Anointer for kingly service was withdrawn from Saul and placed upon David; and that after David's terrible sins of adultery and murder in the matter of Bathsheba, he was fearful of being rejected from the kingship as Saul had been; and so David prayed to the Lord, asking that the Holy Spirit not be withdrawn from him in the capacity of Anointer for kingly service as He had been withdrawn from his predecessor Saul.

with this understanding, the departure of the Holy Spirit from Saul implies nothing about the loss of the presence of the Holy Spirit. It simply implies the rejection of Saul as king, and the loss of the Spirit as Anointer for kingly service.

And David's prayer that the Father not take the Holy Spirit from him implies nothing about the loss of the Spirit's presence. It simply tells us that David was asking not to be rejected as king of Israel, and not to be cast away from God's presence in the sense of God's favor.

In view of the definitions of regeneration and indwelling proposed, it would appear that Old Testament believers were both regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Old Testament saints, before they became saints, were spiritually dead and morally depraved and needed the Spirit's impartation of spiritual life in order to become spiritually alive. And the new life that was created in them had to be sustained in them by the Holy Spirit (they could not keep themselves spiritually alive by their own power any more than they could keep themselves physically alive by their own power). Thus the Holy Spirit was related to the Old Testament saints in regard to the sustaining of regeneration.

But this is nothing less than indwelling!

Now there may have been differences in degree between Old and New Testament indwelling, and at least one difference in kind (the Spirit's ministry as Comforter and Helper to Christ's immediate disciples following His departure), but the basic concept of indwelling is present in both testaments.

But now we must pause and ask, "How does this apply to me? What are some of the effects of the Holy Spirit's ministry of indwelling in a person's life, and do I see at least some of those effects in my life?"

Let us enumerate some of these effects, as we look back to the scriptural evidences for the indwelling ministry of the Spirit of God; and let us examine our own character and conduct in the light of these evidences.

#### Effects of the Holy Spirit's Work of indwelling in My Life

- (1) I am assured that I have been born again
- (2) My bondage to my sinful nature is broken

- (3) I am an adopted son of God, and enjoy a filial relationship to God
- (4) I do not belong to myself, but to God
- (5) My body is a temple of God
- (6) I am part of the spiritual house that God is building
- (7) I am marked with a seal, God's pledge of the completion of salvation in my life. This pledge or seal is the Holy Spirit Himself.
- (8) In the Holy Spirit I have the needed resident power for the strengthening of the inner man
- (9) My unutterable groanings are expressed by the Spirit in prayer
- (10) I am enabled to understand scripture
- (11) God's love is poured out in my heart
- (12) My mortal body will one day be resurrected and transformed

Think of it! All of these wonderful effects (and more) are my portion because of the Holy Spirit's regenerating work in my life, and because of the personal, saving relationship that the Spirit sustains to me, and I to Him.

The Holy Spirit's ministry of indwelling is truly one for which we have great occasion to praise our God!

### 3. Filling

As far as ministries of the Spirit are concerned, it is fascinating to note that scripture has more to say about filling than about regeneration and indwelling. Yet here again, clear definitions are difficult to find.

At the outset, let us make an important distinction between filling and fullness. But before we establish the basis for this distinction, let us formulate a definition of filling. Two scriptures are particularly helpful in this regard, one in Ephesians and one in Acts.

In Ephesians 5:18 Paul contrasts getting drunk with wine with being filled with the Spirit. He writes: "And do not be getting drunk with wine, in which is debauchery, 'but rather be being filled with the Spirit (ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι)!" (incidentally, debauchery is excessive indulgence of the appetites, leading to abandonment of virtue and duty).

In Acts 2:4-6, 12-18, Peter makes the same contrast. He writes:

And they were all filled (ἐπλήσθησαν) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language . . . And they continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others were mocking and saying, " They

are full of sweet wine!" But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: 'And it shall be in the last days, God says, That I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams; Even upon my bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit. And they shall prophesy.' "

Verse 15 shows Peter telling the multitude that the disciples are not drunk because it is only the third hour of the day. Rather, he says, the disciples have been filled by the Holy Spirit, whom God has poured out on them.

The idea of being under the influence of wine, as contrasted with being filled by the Holy Spirit, is found in both Ephesians 5:18 and Acts 2:15. Unless the contrast of filling with drunkenness in both places is purely coincidental, then the idea of filling appears to mean to be under the influence or control of the Holy Spirit rather than to be under the influence or control of wine.

Additional information for the formulation of a definition of filling would appear to come from scriptures that speak of the work of Satan and the demons in influencing and possessing people, as contrasted with the work of the Holy Spirit in influencing and possessing people.

It is true that in a general sense Satan energizes all unsaved human beings to do evil. Thus Ephesians 2:2 speaks of the 'spirit (Satan) now energizing in the sons of disobedience.'

But in a more specific sense Satan and the demons at various times influence, empower, and overpower human beings. Note the following scriptures:

Acts 5:3 -- "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land?'"

Luke 22:3 -- "And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve."

Matthew 8:16 -- "And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill."

Matthew 9:32-33 -- "And as they were going out, behold, a dumb man demon-possessed was brought to Him. And after the demon was cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marvelled, saying, 'Nothing like this was ever seen in Israel.'"

Mark 1:32-34 -- "And when evening had come, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And He healed

many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was."

Incidentally, the classic passage on demon possession is Mark 5:1-20, but unfortunately we do not have time to examine it.

The idea of Satan, who is a spirit, influencing and energizing and controlling human beings to do his will, and of demons, who are spirits, influencing and possessing and controlling human beings, suggests a contrast between these activities of Satan and the filling of the Holy Spirit. Let us make a brief comparison of their works:

<u>Work of the Holy Spirit</u>	<u>Work of Satan</u>
<u>Spiritually:</u>	<u>Spiritually:</u>
He convinces of truth	He confuses, causes doubt, takes away truth
He convicts of sin	He hardens in sin
He calls to Christ	He creates resistance to the gospel call
He regenerates, makes spiritually alive	He reforms, makes superficially upright
He influences toward, leads into good	He influences toward, leads into evil
He empowers, energizes for good	He empowers, energizes for evil
He effectually influences, controls, possesses for good	He overpowers, controls, possesses for evil
<u>Physically:</u>	<u>Physically:</u>
He heals	He oppresses
He makes alive	He kills

These two ideas: that of being under the influence of the Holy Spirit instead of under the influence of alcohol, and that of being possessed by the Spirit instead of being possessed by Satan or demons, suggest a working definition of the Holy Spirit's ministry of filling:

The Holy Spirit's ministry of filling refers to His temporary control or possession of the faculties and powers of a person's being, in order to enable that person to accomplish some specific task or service for God.

(Under "faculties of a person's being" we would include the intellect, the emotions, the will, the conscience, and the senses. Under "powers of a person's being" we would include believing, thinking,



reasoning, knowing, discriminating, feeling, desiring, purposing, deciding, evaluating, judging, and contacting and manipulating the physical world.)

Notice that this proposed definition says nothing about the spiritual condition of the person who is filled. It does not specify that the person must be regenerate, or indwelt by the Spirit, or advanced in his or her sanctification. Whether any of these qualifiers should be added to the definition is a matter to be decided on the basis of scriptural usage.

Accordingly, let us examine a number of scriptural references to the filling ministry of the Spirit.

Numbers 11:25-29 -- Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him (i.e., Moses), and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again.

וַיֹּאצֵּל מִן־הָרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּתֵּן  
עַל־שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ הַזִּקְנִים וַיְהִי כִנּוּחַ  
עֲלֵיהֶם הָרוּחַ וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ וְלֹא יָסֻפוּ

However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. A young man ran and told Moses, 'Eldad and Hedad are prophesying in the camp.' Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' aide since youth, spoke up and said, 'Moses, my lord, stop them!' But Moses replied, 'Are you Jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit on them.' "

Notice that the filling is selective; not all of the people were filled. Notice also the initial evidence of the Spirit's filling of these elders: they prophesied (but only once; they did not do so again).

Judges 14:5-6 -- "Samson went down to Timnah together with his father and mother. As they approached the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a strong lion came roaring toward him. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power

(וַתֵּצֵאֵל עָלָיו רוּחַ יְהוָה) so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done."

From this and other instances in the life of Samson we learn that filling is temporary; it happens to Samson again and again.

I Samuel 10:6, 10 -- "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you (Saul) in power

(וַיֵּצֵאֵל עָלֶיךָ רוּחַ יְהוָה) and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person . . . . When they arrived at Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him; the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he joined in their prophesying."

Notice that filling in some way changed or modifies personality, which implies the Spirit's control over the human faculties.

Isaiah 11:1-2 -- "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him --

(וְנָחָה עָלָיו רוּחַ יְהוָה)

-- the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.'

This refers to the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who grew in wisdom and understanding from childhood, and who was anointed for public ministry by the Spirit at His baptism.

Joel 2:28-29 -- "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people (אֶשְׁפּוֹךְ אֶת־רוּחִי עַל־כָּל־בָּשָׂר). Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit (אֶשְׁפּוֹךְ אֶת־רוּחִי) in those days."

Here is a prediction that at some future time the Spirit will fill all of God's people, of all ages and of both genders.

Matthew 3:11 -- "I (John) baptize you with water for repentance (Ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμᾶς βαπτίζω ἐν ὕδατι εἰς μετάνοιαν) but after the will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire (αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί)."

Notice the comparison between water baptism and Spirit baptism. Notice also that the term "baptize" is used for the coming outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, when all the disciples are to be filled.

Luke 4:1, 18 -- "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, (Ἰησοῦς δὲ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου) returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert . . . Later, as He stood in the synagogue in Nazareth, He said, 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me (Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ), because He has anointed me (ἔχρισέν με) to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed."

Luke 11:13 -- "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him (δώσει πνεῦμα ἅγιον τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν αὐτόν)!"

Acts 1:5 -- "For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι βαπτισθήσεσθε ἁγίῳ)."

Notice again the use of the term "baptize" for the coming outpouring of the Spirit to fill the disciples at Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-4 -- "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit (ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου) and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Notice the supernatural evidence of the initial outpouring of the Spirit on these Jewish believers: they spoke in various languages and

dialects (vss. 6, 8-11). Notice also that Peter (vss. 16-21) says that this outpouring is a fulfillment of what the prophet Joel says will be characteristic of the entire period of the "last days", which begins at this outpouring and continues until Christ returns. Notice also the non-technical nature of the terms used to describe this great event: "baptism" (Matthew 3:11); "filling" (Acts 2:4); "pouring out" or "pouring forth" (Joel 2:28-29, Acts 2:17-18, Acts 2:33).

Acts 4:29-31 -- "Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus. After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (ἐπλήσθησαν ἅπαντες τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος) and spoke the word of God boldly."

Notice: the people who were filled in Acts 2 were filled again here in Acts 4, together with a number of others.

Acts 8:14-17 -- "When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (ὥπως λάβωσιν πνεῦμα ἅγιον), because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them (οὐδέπω γὰρ ἦν ἐπ' οὐδενὶ αὐτῶν ἐπιτεπτωκός); they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit (ἐλάβανον πνεῦμα ἅγιον)."

Note that in verse 12 these people had made a credible profession and been baptized with water in the name of Jesus Christ. Those whose profession was genuine (apparently Simon the Magician's was not) were joined to Christ by the Spirit, regenerated by the Spirit, and joined to the Body of Christ by the Spirit. Subsequently the Spirit came on them and they received Him. Of course, these represent a new class of individuals, since they were Samaritans, not proper Jews.

Acts 9:17-20 -- "Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord -- Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here -- has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit (καὶ πλησθῇς πνεύματος ἁγίου).' Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God."

If Saul was converted on the Damascus road, then at this time in Damascus he was already regenerated and indwelt by the Spirit. Notice that, having been equipped by the filling of the Spirit, he began immediately to preach Jesus.

Acts 10:44-47 -- "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on (ἐπέπεσε) all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were, astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out (ἐκκέχυται) even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with

water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have (οἵτινες τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔλαβον ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς).' "

Here again we see the nontechnical nature of the terms, "came on", "poured out", "received". Peter, looking back to the baptism (pouring out, filling) of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, says "They (the people in Cornelius' home in Caesarea) have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

Acts 11:15-18 -- "As I (Peter) began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning (ἐπέπεσεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὥσπερ καὶ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἐν ἀρχῇ). Then I remembered what the Lord had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit (βαπτισθήσεσθε ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ).' So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God!' When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, 'So then, God has even granted the Gentiles repentance unto life.' "

Notice again the nontechnical terminology: the Spirit is "poured out", these people are "baptized", the Spirit "comes on" them, they "receive" Him. Notice also the opening of yet another "room" in the household of salvation: first the Samaritans, now the Gentiles. Notice also that the opening of each of the doors to these rooms is marked by a further outpouring of the Spirit on the believers present, symbolic of God's opening of the opportunity of salvation to that entire group.

Acts 19:1-7 -- "While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived in Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' They answered, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' So Paul asked, 'Then what baptism did you receive?' 'John's baptism,' they replied. Paul said, 'John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all.'

It is not easy to know what these men meant by the words, "we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit," since they were Jews who had joined themselves to John the baptizer. As Jews, they were surely conversant with the many references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament! What, then, could they have meant by this cryptic statement?

Perhaps they were saying that they had not even heard that there was such a thing as the Holy Spirit's outpouring on all believers (i.e., that it had taken place), and had therefore not received the Spirit in this way. Or perhaps they were saying that they had not heard that the One coming after John, in whom John had told them to believe, had already come and accomplished redemption, and that therefore they needed to trust in Christ's finished work and be symbolically joined to Him by water baptism.

In any case, they were baptized in Jesus' name, Paul placed his hands on them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit."

"Hover o'er me, Holy Spirit, Bathe my trembling heart and brow;  
Fill me with Thy hallow'd presence, Come, O come and fill me now.

Thou canst fill me, gracious Spirit, Tho I cannot tell Thee how;  
But I need Thee, greatly need Thee, Come, O come and fill me now.

I am weakness, full of weakness, At Thy sacred feet I bow;  
Blest, divine, eternal Spirit, Fill with pow'r, and fill me now.

Cleanse and comfort, bless and save me, Bathe, O bathe my heart and brow;  
Thou art comforting and saving, Thou art sweetly filling now.

Fill me now, fill me now, Jesus, come and fill me now;  
Fill me with Thy hallow'd presence Come, O come and fill me now."  
(Elwood R. Stokes)

#### 4. Fullness

In our attempt to formulate a working definition of this ministry, let us note four scriptures in particular.

Ephesians 5:18 -- "And do not be getting drunk with wine, in which is debauchery, but rather be being filled with the Spirit!" in this connection we stress, not so much the contrast between getting drunk with wine and being filled with the Spirit, but rather the command in the latter part of the verse. This command to "be being filled with the Spirit!" could mean a series of distinct, separate events of filling or a settled state of fullness or both. In the context the command appears to be dealing more with godly conduct of life rather than with temporary enablement to accomplish some task or service for God.

Acts 6:3, 5 -- "But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task . . . . And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.'

The idea here does not seem to be that of a temporary filling to equip for service; rather these seven men were to be characterized, not temporarily, but over a substantial duration, by having wisdom and a good reputation and the controlling influence of the Spirit in their lives. In choosing these men the question before the congregation was, "Is he a wise man? Does he have a good reputation? Does he live a Spirit-filled life?"

These qualities were found in Stephen. His life was characterized by faith and the controlling influence of the Spirit. When the congregation looked for men to nominate for the position, they looked for certain qualities of character and conduct that would ideally suit these men to shoulder this responsibility, and one of these qualities was that of the Spirit's control in their lives.

In Acts 11:22-24 we read, "And the news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he had come and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and

began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith."

Once again, we are not reading about a man who was temporarily filled by the Holy Spirit to empower him for service (although no doubt this happened many times), but rather about a man whose life was characterized by goodness and faith and the presence of the Spirit. He was a good man, a man of faith, a man of the Spirit!

in Acts 13:52 we read, "And the disciples (those in Antioch of Pisidia) were continually filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit." Once again, these disciples were characterized by living joyful and Spirit-filled lives. Their lives were filled with the Spirit's fruit.

in Acts 6:3 the word, translated "full" is πλήρεις (accusative masculine plural from πλήρης), which mean "full, full of, filled with, completely under the influence of. In verse 5 the word is πλήρης. The apostles asked the congregation to select seven men full of the Spirit and wisdom; and one of the men they selected was Stephen, who was full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 11:24 the word translated "full" is again πλήρης. Barnabas is said to have been full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.

In Acts 13:52 the word translated "continually filled" is ἐπληροῦντο (Imperfect passive, 3rd plural from πληρόω). The disciples of Antioch of Pisidia were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

These scriptures retain the idea of influence or possession or control that we saw in those that speak of filling, but add the idea of a more permanent condition or state. In such a state the Spirit's control would probably vary in extent and degree from time to time, and would of necessity require the prior indwelling of the Spirit, which in turn would require prior regeneration.

The following working definition would therefore appear to be warranted:

The fullness of the Spirit refers to the indwelling Spirit's continuous control in varying degrees and to varying extents, of the moral and spiritual development and mode of expression internal and external, of a person's faculties and powers.

Upon reflection, this definition is seen to have particular relevance for the scriptural teaching on progressive sanctification, in which regenerated human faculties and powers are progressively delivered from the influences of Satan and sin, and progressively brought under the controlling influences of the Holy Spirit and righteousness.

But now we must pause and clearly distinguish between filling and fullness. Let us note the following differences:

<u>FILLING</u>	<u>FULLNESS</u>
presupposes no prior ministry of the Spirit	presupposes the Spirit's ministries of regeneration and indwelling
is intermittent and relatively brief	is continuous and extended
specifies the <u>use</u> of human faculties and powers	specifies the development of moral and spiritual qualities
usually involves the extraordinary enablement of the Spirit	usually involves the ordinary enablement of the Spirit
is related to some task or service for God	is related to progressive sanctification

Some Observations Summarizing the Biblical Teaching on Filling and Fullness

- (1) In the scriptures various terms are employed to express the ministries of filling and fullness. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as "on", "put on", "resting on", "coming upon", being "poured out on", "baptizing", being "given", and "filling" various persons. Persons are spoken of as being "baptized", being "filled", "receiving", and being "full of" the Spirit.
- (2) References to filling in the Old Testament period would seem to refer to the Spirit's temporary control or possession of the faculties and powers of a person's being, in order to enable that person to accomplish some specific task or service for God. The same definition would seem to apply to references to filling in the New Testament period.
- (3) Specific tasks in the service of God during the Old Testament period appear to cluster about three basic callings -- that of prophet, that of priest, and that of ruler or king (including the judges). Most of the Old Testament references can be classified under one of these three headings.
- (4) In the Old Testament period, we have no record of the believers as a whole, or of all the believers at any one time, experiencing the filling of the Holy Spirit for specific enablement for a particular task or service. There is no record of a general outpouring of the Spirit, even though such an outpouring in the future is predicted in several places.
- (5) The predicted outpouring of the Spirit spoken of in Joel 2:28-32 is that which the Apostle Peter says is fulfilled throughout this entire age, from Pentecost on.
- (6) At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit indiscriminately filled all of the disciples waiting in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. These numbered about 120 (Acts 1:15).
- (7) It would appear that following Pentecost, as new groups of people (the Samaritans, the Gentiles, the remaining disciples of John the baptizer) were brought to faith in Christ and added to the Church, the Holy Spirit

certified each such transaction by filling those people and by enabling them to speak in foreign languages (i.e., foreign to them), thereby providing visible evidence that each such addition was genuine and according to the will of God.

- (8) It would appear that in the Old Testament period chosen individuals -- chiefly prophets, priests, and rulers and kings -- were filled with the Holy Spirit; whereas in the New Testament period all believers are viewed as prophets (in the sense of being called to proclaim the gospel), all believers are priests (in the sense of being called to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God), and all believers are kings (in the sense that they rule with Christ, now in a spiritual sense and in the eschaton in a physical sense). The implication appears to be fairly strong that if New Testament believers are to be able to carry on their proper prophetic, priestly, and kingly functions, they also need to be filled with the Spirit. In fact, any service for God would appear to require the enablement of the Holy Spirit.
- (9) Up to the time of Pentecost, there were no conditions revealed for the filling of the Spirit, with the one exception of prayer (as mentioned in Luke 11:13). A condition that could have been implied was that of a felt need for special enablement to do the work of God. It would appear that Old Testament saints who were called on to perform certain tasks for God felt this need for a special enablement, called on God for it, and received it (as e.g., Samson in Judges 16:28-30).
- (10) Following Christ's ascension, the disciples began praying for the promise of the Father to be fulfilled, and continued in prayer until that promise was fulfilled in the outpouring of the Spirit on all of the disciples on the day of Pentecost. Following this initial outpouring the disciples, all of whom were called on to witness for Christ, felt the need of the special enablement of the Holy Spirit to do the work of God, called on God for it, and received it.
- (11) Although believers are commanded in Ephesians 5:18 to "be filled with the Spirit!" yet there are no conditions (other than that of prayer) specified for either filling or fullness in the New Testament. In addition to prayer, however, it would seem that the nature of these ministries implies at least two other conditions. Therefore the following three conditions appear warranted:
  - (a) Surrender to the Lordship of Christ and to the leading of the Spirit (since control and influence are central to both filling and fullness).
  - (b) Repentance of all known sin (since sin hinders and grieves the Spirit's working through us, and His development of our moral character).
  - (c) Believing prayer for the Holy Spirit to fill us, to take possession of our faculties, and to fill and control our lives.

But now let us make these tremendous truths personal. Do we desire to be filled with the Holy spirit? Do we desire His filling for enabling for service for God? Do we desire His fullness for holiness and godliness?



First of all, do we desire the filling of the Spirit? if we wish to serve Christ acceptably, the answer must be "Yes!" The Holy Spirit must take possession and control of our thoughts, our feelings, our senses, our will, so that we can do the will of God in His power, for His purposes, and for His glory. If we wish to avoid attempting to do God's work in our own strength, by means of our own natural abilities, to accomplish our own purposes, and to secure our own glory; then we must be filled with the Spirit! The filling of the Spirit to enable us to do God's work is not a luxury but a necessity!

"O Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,  
Revive thy church with life and pow'r;  
O Breath of Life, come, cleanse, renew us,  
And fit Thy Church to meet this hour.

O wind of God, come bend us, break us,  
Till humbly we confess our need;  
Then in Thy tenderness remake us,  
Revive, restore, for this we plead.

O Breath of Love, come breathe within us,  
Renewing thought and will and heart;  
Come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us,  
Revive Thy Church in every part.

O Heart of Christ, once broken for us,  
'Tis there we find our strength and rest  
Our broken contrite hearts now solace,  
And let Thy waiting Church be blest.

Revive us, Lord! is zeal abating  
While harvest fields are vast and white?  
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting.  
Equip Thy Church to spread the light.

Amen."

(Bessie P. Head)

Second, do we desire the fullness of the Spirit in our lives? if we wish to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the answer must be "Yes!" The Holy Spirit must take possession of the development of my character and of its expression, internal and external, in my conduct and behavior, so that my life will become less and less inclined toward sin and more and more disposed toward righteousness. If I wish to live a life which is at one and the same time pleasing to God, beneficial to other human beings, and filled with meaning and significance for myself, then I must be full of the Holy Spirit. Again, this is not a luxury, but a necessity if I am to live a holy life!

## REVIEW

In this study of the Spirit of God and His work, we have learned that the Holy Spirit is a real, living person, capable of personal relationships with us. We have also learned that He is a divine Person, and as such is present everywhere at all times. For those who have eyes to see Him, the Spirit of God is always here and now.

We were also reminded that the Spirit is one of the three Persons of the Trinity, particularly that Person who implements the purposes of the godhead. We found that the Spirit carries on many ministries, and that He accomplishes quite a few of them directly for our benefit as believers.

We also discovered that He is the active agent in regeneration, the One who imparts spiritual life to those who are spiritually dead. He is the One who begets us spiritually in the new birth, who quickens us to new life, who recreates us in the image of God, and who renews and renovates our nature so that we are disposed toward God and toward righteousness.

We also learned that the same Holy Spirit who imparted spiritual life to us in regeneration, sustains that life through His relationship to us of indwelling. He is our Friend, our Comforter, and our Helper. Think of it! The Holy Spirit is my personal Friend!

And we have learned that the Holy Spirit is the one who fills and possesses and empowers our faculties and powers so that we become His instruments to do service for God, as well as the One who fills and possesses our lives so that we can become more and more conformed to Christ's likeness and show forth in our behavior the beauty of holiness, and the glory of lives lived to the glory of God.

What a wonderful Person the Holy Spirit is! What wonderful ministries He carries on in the lives of human beings!

Praise God for the Holy Spirit!

"Holy Ghost, with light divine, Shine upon this heart of mine;  
Chase the shades of night away, Turn my darkness into day.

Holy Ghost, with pow'r divine, Cleanse this guilty heart of mine;  
Long hath sin without control Held dominion o'er my soul.

Holy Ghost, with joy divine, Cheer this saddened heart of mine;  
Bid my many woes depart, Heal my wounded, bleeding heart.

Holy Spirit, all divine, Dwell within this heart of mine;  
Cast down ev'ry idol throne, Reign supreme and reign alone.

Amen."

(Andrew Reed)

"Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me.  
Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me."

(Daniel Iverson)

## A THEOLOGICAL EXPOSITION OF ROMANS 1-8

Robert J. Dunzweiler

### INTRODUCTION (Romans 1:1-17)

Sometime during 56 or 57 A.D., during his third missionary journey, the apostle Paul wrote this epistle to the church at Rome. He anticipated visiting Rome for the first time, to strengthen the believers there.

This letter contains the fullest and most systematic exposition of the gospel to be found anywhere in scripture.

John Calvin, in his summary of the argument of Romans, stated:

With regard to this Epistle . . . It will hence appear beyond all controversy, that beside other excellencies, and those remarkable, this can with truth be said of it, and it is what can never be sufficiently appreciated -- that when any one gains a knowledge of this Epistle, he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of scripture.

John Wesley, recalling the experience that transformed his life when he was 35 years old, wrote the following:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away sins, even mine and saved at from the law of sin and death.

Martin Luther, in the preface to his commentary on the book of Romans, wrote:

This epistle is the real chief part of the New Testament, and the very purest gospel, which, indeed, deserves that a Christian not only know it word for word by heart but deal with it daily as with daily bread of the soul. For it can never be read or considered too much or too well, and the more it is handled, the more delightful it becomes, and the better it tastes.

This epistle emphasizes the gospel! (And you thought it emphasized what some refer to as that dry old stuff, doctrine!)

The apostle Paul mentions the gospel in 1:1, where he calls it "the gospel of God"; in 1:9 where he calls it "the gospel of His Son"; and in 1:15, where he says that he is ready to preach the gospel to those in Rome also.

In 1:16-17, Paul states the theme of the epistle:

The good news of deliverance from sin through the revelation of God's righteousness to everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ.

Besides the introduction (1:1-17) and the Conclusion (15:14-16:21), there are five major sections of this epistle:

Section One -- God's condemnation of all human beings for their unrighteousness (1:18-3:20)

Section Two -- God's justification of some unrighteous human beings through Christ (3:21-5:21)

Section Three -- God's sanctification of Justified human beings through Christ (6:1-8:39)

Section Four -- The status of Israel in God's covenant purposes (9:1-11:36)

Section Five -- Practical exhortations related to the implications of receiving God's grace in Christ (12:1-15:13)

In this exposition we will confine ourselves to the first three sections, dealing with the great themes of Condemnation, Justification, and Sanctification.

However, before proceeding we need to look more closely at the theme of the epistle (1:16-17) and its key ideas. Paul says:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."

There are four key words in this theme that should be noted: gospel, salvation, righteousness, and faith.

(1) What is the gospel?

Fully stated, the gospel is the good news that God has graciously accomplished salvation for sinful human beings through Christ and His redemptive work -- His incarnation, atonement, and resurrection -- and that God graciously applies that salvation to sinful human beings through faith in Christ and His redemptive work.

More briefly, the gospel is the good news of salvation by Christ's redemptive work applied through faith.

(2) What does salvation mean in this context?

Salvation is deliverance. in verse 16 salvation means deliverance from sin. However, since sin is a very general term, we need to make it more specific.

Does salvation in this usage mean deliverance from the guilt of sin, i.e., deliverance from liability to transgressed Law?

Does salvation mean deliverance from the penalty of sin, death?

Does salvation mean deliverance from the power of sin, the power of innate depravity?

Or does salvation mean deliverance from the presence of sin, the very presence of innate depravity?

What does salvation mean, when Paul says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation? Which meaning is intended here? Or are all four needed for the fullness of salvation?

Can there be salvation from the penalty of sin, without an accompanying salvation from the guilt of sin?

Can someone be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, and fail to be saved from the power of sin, at least in some sense or to some degree?

Can salvation really be complete without deliverance from the very presence of sin?

Can there be stages or phases in the application of salvation from sin? Is it possible to be saved initially, saved progressively, and saved finally and completely?

If it is possible to speak of salvation in past, present, and future tenses, is the gospel the power of God to salvation in all three tenses?

Furthermore, we have been speaking of salvation as deliverance from the guilt of sin, from the penalty of sin, from the power of sin, and from the presence of sin. Is salvation also a deliverance to something? And if so, what?

- (3) The third key word in this theme is "the righteousness of God." What does this term mean?

Is this speaking of God's attribute or characteristic of righteousness, that quality or perfection of His nature which speaks of His justice or uprightness of character and actions?

Or is this speaking of God's standard of righteousness, His Law, which defines righteousness and unrighteousness for human beings, and reflects His characteristic of righteousness?

How is God's attribute of righteousness or God's standard of righteousness revealed in the gospel?

Are there yet other meanings of the term, 'the righteousness of God,' Which Paul is going to use and develop?

- (4) The fourth key word in this theme is the word faith. What is faith?

Verse 16 says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. Verse 17 says that in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

One who believes is one who exercises faith. Is this faith simply 'trust in God as He is revealed in His Word?' Or is it something more?

In the context faith is connected with salvation; and thus this faith would seem to mean "trust in Christ and His redemptive work as revealed in the gospel."

The phrase "from (or by) faith to faith" is difficult, but the meaning in context of the quotation from Habakkuk 2:4 may help us. The quotation says that "the righteous shall live by faith."

In Habakkuk 2:4 the unrighteous man lives by self-sufficient pride, whereas the righteous man lives by faith. The righteous man lives a life of righteousness by faith. He begins this life by faith, and he continues to live this life by faith. Perhaps the NIV translation captures this idea when it translates Romans 1:17 "for in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last. (emphasis added) Or perhaps "by faith" emphasizes the method by which God's righteousness is revealed, and "to faith" emphasizes the recipients to whom God's righteousness is revealed, i.e., those who believe (as, for example, in 3:22, where Paul says, "even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe;").

In any case this is the theme of the epistle:

The good news of deliverance from sin through the revelation of God's righteousness to everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ.

However, when we move from 1:17 to 1:18 we strike a tremendous contrast! In 1:16-17 we find the righteousness of God being revealed to all those who are believing the gospel. In 1:18ff we find the wrath of God being revealed against all those who are continuing in their unrighteousness.

This brings us to the first major section of the epistle, 1:18-3:20, which deals with God's condemnation of all human beings for their unrighteousness.

## Habakkuk 2:4

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הַיָּדָה \*<sup>1</sup> יִגְפָּלָה לֹא-

יִשְׁרָה \*<sup>2</sup> נַפְשׁוֹ

וְצִדִּיק \*<sup>3</sup> בְּאַמּוּנָתוֹ

יְהִיָּה:

\*<sup>1</sup> Pual pf. of יִגְפַּל - to be proud, inflated

\*<sup>2</sup> Qal pf. of יִשְׁרַ - to be right, straight

\*<sup>3</sup> אֲמוּנָה - faith, faithfulness

## Habakkuk 2:4

(following Hebrew word order)

"Behold, he is proud, his soul is not right; but the righteous by his faith shall live."

(rearranging to show parallel)

"Behold, the one whose soul is not right is proud, but the one who is righteous shall live by his faith."

(paraphrased for theological sense)

"Behold, the one who is not righteous lives by pride, but the one who is righteous lives by faith."



## Habakkuk (חֲבַקּוּק) 2:4

"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."

*Commentary on this contrast between an unrighteous man and a righteous man:*

- ① *The unrighteous man's soul is not upright; the righteous man's soul is upright.*
- ② *The unrighteous man lives his life by pride; the righteous man lives his life by faith.*
- ③ *The unrighteous man proclaims his self-sufficiency, his independence of God;*

*the righteous man acknowledges his insufficiency in himself, his dependency on God.*

- ④ *The unrighteous man does not live by faith; consequently he does not have a righteous standing before God, he does not have an upright character, and he does not live a life of righteousness.*

*The righteous man lives by faith; consequently he has a righteous standing before God by faith, he has an upright character by faith, and he lives a life of righteousness by faith.*

## I. GOD'S CONDEMNATION OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS FOR THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. The first major strand of thought in this section is that of mankind's unrighteousness.

Paul develops two lines of evidence to demonstrate that all unsaved human beings are unrighteous.

1. In the first line of evidence he shows that all unregenerate human beings are opposers of the truth of God -- the revelation of the knowledge of God as divine, all-powerful Creator, righteous Lawgiver, and just Judge.

Instead of glorifying, worshipping, thanking, serving, and obeying God, unregenerate human beings reject Him and accept lies, create false gods, and worship and serve them instead of Him. Note 1:18-23, 25, 28:

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Rom 1:19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Rom 1:21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Rom 1:22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

Rom 1:23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Rom 1:25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Rom 1:28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

2. In the second line of evidence Paul shows that all unregenerate human beings are transgressors of the of God -- the revelation of the righteous will of God addressed to man's obedience.

Instead of giving hearty obedience to God's righteous Law, they turn to various forms of unrighteousness and practice them, even though they know that their sin is wrong, and that a life of unrighteousness justly deserves divine retribution.

The Law of God reveals God's perfect standard of righteousness, which in turn reflects God's attribute of righteousness.

ALL UNREGENERATE HUMAN BEINGS  
ARE OPPOSERS OF THE TRUTH OF GOD

- ① Through the revelation of His power, they know the truth about God as Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of the universe.
- ② Because they do not want to turn from their unrighteousness, they do not give due recognition to, thank, worship, or serve God.
- ③ They suppress the truth about God, and as a result, their reasonings become futile and their hearts are darkened.

- ④ They create idols in their imaginations, and sometimes give these images physical form.
- ⑤ They worship and serve these false gods, instead of the one true and living God.
- ⑥ God permits them to go in their own way.



Whenever God's standard of righteousness confronts fallen human beings it reveals sin. Romans 3:20 tells us that "by the law is the knowledge of sin."

And what is sin? I John 3:4 tells us that "Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law."

And in Romans 3:23 we are told that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." This cannot mean that we all fall short of the splendor of God's magnificence, for that would simply mean that we are not God but are finite, a condition that is not blameworthy.

The "glory of God" here must mean God's glorious attribute of righteousness (because this "falling short" is related to sin) as reflected in His perfect standard of righteousness -- His Law -- and the verse must therefore mean that all human beings have sinned (i.e., have transgressed the Law of God, since sin is transgression of the law) and continue to sin (i.e., fall short of God's standard of righteousness, which reflects God's glorious attribute of righteousness).

Paul provides a good deal of evidence to show that unsaved human beings are unrighteous. He does this by pointing out various ways in which human beings transgress the Law of God, especially by violating the Ten Commandments.

MAN'S UNRIGHTEOUSNESS AS REVEALED BY THE  
RIGHTEOUS LAW OF GOD SUMMARIZED IN THE  
TEN COMMANDMENTS, AS DEVELOPED BY PAUL IN ROMANS 1:1.8-3:20

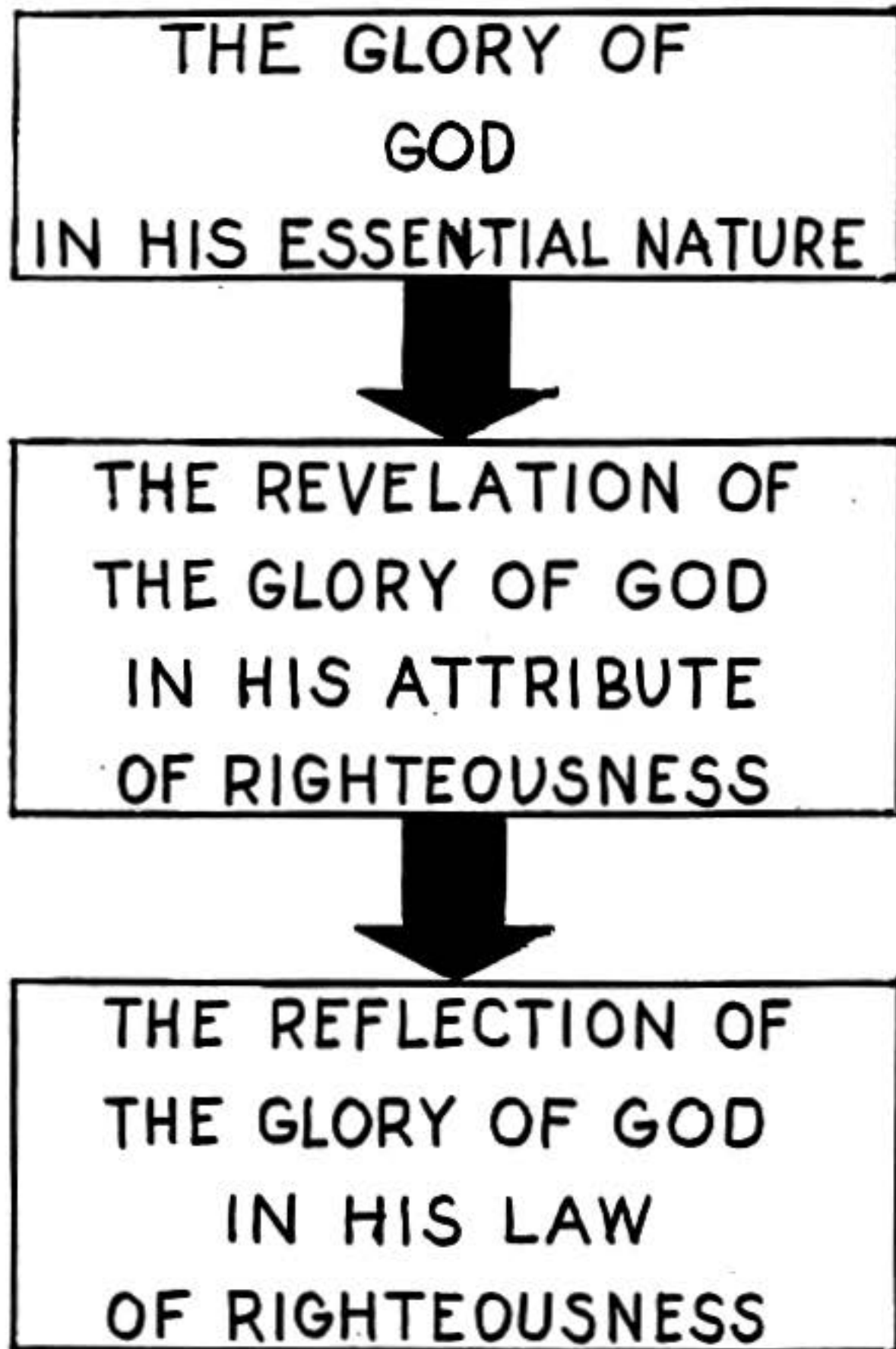
God's righteous law defines righteousness and unrighteousness for human beings. Sin as unrighteousness is transgression of the law of God. In Romans 3:20 Paul tells us that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." And in I John 3:4 John tells us that "whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law." The following references to violations of the Ten Commandments leave no doubt that Paul views sin as transgression of the law of God.

First Commandment -- "You shall have no other gods."

1:18-21 -- "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened."

1:30 -- "God-haters"

# Falling Short of the Glory of God



*"for all have sinned and fall short  
of the glory of God"*  
-Rom. 3:23

3:11 -- "there is no one who understands, no one who searches for God."

3:18 -- "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Second Commandment -- "You shall not make for yourself an idol . . . You shall not bow down to them or worship them."

1:22-23, 25 -- "Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles . . . They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator -- who is forever praised. Amen."

2:22 -- "You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?" (make wealth an idol?)

Third Commandment -- "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God."

2:23-24 -- "You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? As it is written: 'God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.' "

Fourth Commandment -- "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."

(although there is no specific reference to transgression of this commandment, the passage in 2:25-28 does deal with transgression of one aspect of the ceremonial portion of the Mosaic Law -- circumcision -- and as such could be seen to have a bearing upon other aspects as well)

Fifth Commandment -- "Honor your father and your mother."

1:30 -- "they disobey their parents"

1:31 -- "heartless" (i.e., lacking normal human affection)

Sixth Commandment -- "You shall not murder."

1:29 -- "They are full of . . . murder, strife . . . malice."

1:31 -- "they are ruthless" (i.e., unmerciful)

3:15-16 -- "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their paths."

Seventh Commandment -- "You shall not commit adultery."

1:24, 26-27 -- "Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another . . . Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural Ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."



1:22 -- "you who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?"

Eighth Commandment -- "You shall not steal."

2:21 -- "You who preach against stealing, do you steal?"

Ninth Commandment -- "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor."

1:29 -- "They are gossips"

1:30 -- "slanderers"

3:13-14 -- "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."

Tenth Commandment -- "You shall not covet."

1:29 -- "They have become filled with . . . greed . . . They are full of envy."

Speaking of mankind in general Paul says, "They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, . . . and depravity." (1:29)

Speaking of the Jews Paul says, "You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?" (2:23)

And speaking of Jews and Gentiles Paul says, "What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one.' " (3:9-10)

But now we must ask: What about those human beings who do not have the Ten Commandments, who do not possess the revealed Law of God? Are they unrighteous? And if so, by what standard?

Paul takes up these questions in 2:14-15, where he identifies the standard by which the Gentiles are shown to be unrighteous:

For when the Gentiles who do not have the Law do by nature the things of the Law, these not having the Law are a law to themselves, who show the Law's work written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or even defending them.

Paul summarizes his evidence concerning mankind's unrighteousness in 3:9-10, 12:

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one; . . . All have

turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.' "

- B. The second major strand of thought in this first section of the epistle is that of God's righteous judgment.

In Romans 1:32 Paul says that unrighteous human beings, although they know that they deserve God's condemnation for their practice of sin, not only persist in doing these sinful things, but also approve of those who practice the same thing. How do they know that they deserve God's condemnation?

Paul enlarges on this idea in 2:1-16, where he develops teaching concerning God's righteous Judgment.

In verses 1-3 Paul says four things:

- (a) Those who condemn others for practicing the sins listed in 1:29-31 commit the same sins.
- (b) Those who condemn others for practicing sins that they themselves commit condemn themselves. In condemning others they condemn themselves.
- (c) God's righteous judgment rightly falls on those who practice these sins.
- (d) Those who condemn themselves will not escape God's righteous Judgment.

In verse 4 Paul reminds all sinful human beings that God is kind and patient, and defers immediate judgment, so that they may be led to repent of their sins.

In verse 5 he tells them that their stubbornness and refusal to repent is storing up God's wrath against them; and that at the time when God's righteous judgment is revealed, His wrath will be revealed against them.

In verse 6 Paul says that God's righteous judgment will be rendered to every human being on the basis of what he or she has done.

In verses 7-10 the apostle describes two classes of human beings in terms of what they have done and of what they will receive at God's righteous judgment.

#### Class One

This class is composed of those who:

- (a) persevere in doing good (vss. 7, 10)
- (b) seek for glory, honor, and immortality (vs. 7)

This class will receive:

- (a) eternal life (vs. 7)
- (b) glory, honor, and peace (vs. 10)

### Class Two

This class is composed of those who:

- (a) persevere in doing evil (vs. 9)
- (b) are selfishly ambitious (vs. 8)
- (c) do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness (vs. 8)

This class will receive:

- (a) wrath and indignation (vs. 8)
- (b) tribulation and distress (vs. 9)

In verses 10b-12 Paul lays down the principle that God does not show partiality to either Jews or Gentiles. Those who have sinned without the (Mosaic) Law (the Gentiles) will be condemned apart from the Mosaic Law, and those who have sinned within the jurisdiction of the (Mosaic) Law (Jews) will be condemned by the Mosaic Law.

In verse 13 we discover the principle that, in order to be justified by the (Mosaic) Law, one must not only hear it, but obey it.

Does this teach salvation by works? Does it teach that the one who fulfills the Law (perfectly, that is, since the Law is perfect and demands perfection) will be declared righteous in the day of God's righteous judgment? it certainly seems to!

Notice in this connection that verses 14-15 are a parenthesis between verses 13 and 16:

For not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified . . . on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

But if Paul has established the righteousness of all human beings (and he has), then how can he speak of God's declaring some men righteous in the day of His judgment? if all human beings are transgressors of the Law, how can God declare righteous some human beings who obey the Law?

One way out of this impasse is to understand Paul to be speaking of two classes of people in terms of the necessary conditions for being declared righteous at God's righteous judgment.

The first class is composed of those who accept the truth and follow righteousness. They will be declared righteous at the judgment.

The second class is composed of those who reject the truth and follow unrighteousness. They will not be declared righteous at the judgment.

These, then, are the conditions for being declared righteous or unrighteous in the day of God's righteous judgment.

But when we compare these two classes of people and these two conditions with the first major strand of thought in this section -- that of mankind's unrighteousness -- we discover that, except for Jesus Christ Himself, the first class of people is an empty class! There are no people who fulfill the condition in the first class, and thus there are no people in that class!

There simply are no people who persist in doing good, who seek heavenly glory, honor, and immortality, who perfectly obey the Law of God, and who will therefore be declared righteous in the judgment. If there were any such people, they would be declared righteous. But there are none except for Jesus Christ!

To confirm this, Paul concludes this first major section of the epistle with a strong conclusion, found in 3:19-20:

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Here it is clearly stated. Romans 2:13 says that "the doers of the Law will be justified;" i.e., those who obey the Law will be declared righteous. Yet on the other hand Romans 3:20 says that "by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight;" i.e., no one will be declared righteous by obeying the Law.

Is this a contradiction?

Paul says that on the day of God's righteous judgment God will declare righteous all who have perfectly obeyed His perfect standard of righteousness. But none will be found who have done this! None have obeyed the Law! All have transgressed God's Law, and continue to fall short of its high and holy standard of righteousness!

It is not through obeying the Law of God that human beings are declared righteous in God's sight, for human beings do not obey it. Rather, the righteous Law reveals human beings to be what they are -- sinners! And the righteous Law silences every mouth, and holds the whole world accountable to God and liable to punishment for their sin.

If, then, the Law condemns every human being, then no human being can be declared righteous by the Law. The Law can pronounce only one judgment on its transgressors -- GUILTY.

It is of course possible to take another way out of this impasse. We could understand Paul to be speaking of two classes, but divided between believers and nonbelievers. Believers would be those who persevere in doing good and seek for glory, honor, and immortality; and they would receive eternal life and glory, honor, and peace on the day of God's righteous judgment. Nonbelievers on the other hand would be those who persevere in doing evil, are selfishly ambitious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; and they would receive wrath and indignation, tribulation and distress.

Although this interpretation is certainly possible, yet it does not seem to fit the flow of Paul's argument, or the conclusion to which he brings his readers in 3:19-20. And it certainly does not fit with 2:13 ("the doers of the Law will be Justified"), unless the requirements of the Law of God are lowered or the "doing" is partial or token or representative, in which case "justified" takes on a different coloration from that of the context.

Paul has now deliberately brought us to the depths of despair, so far as any attempts on our part to earn a righteous standing before God by trying to fulfill the demands of the Law.

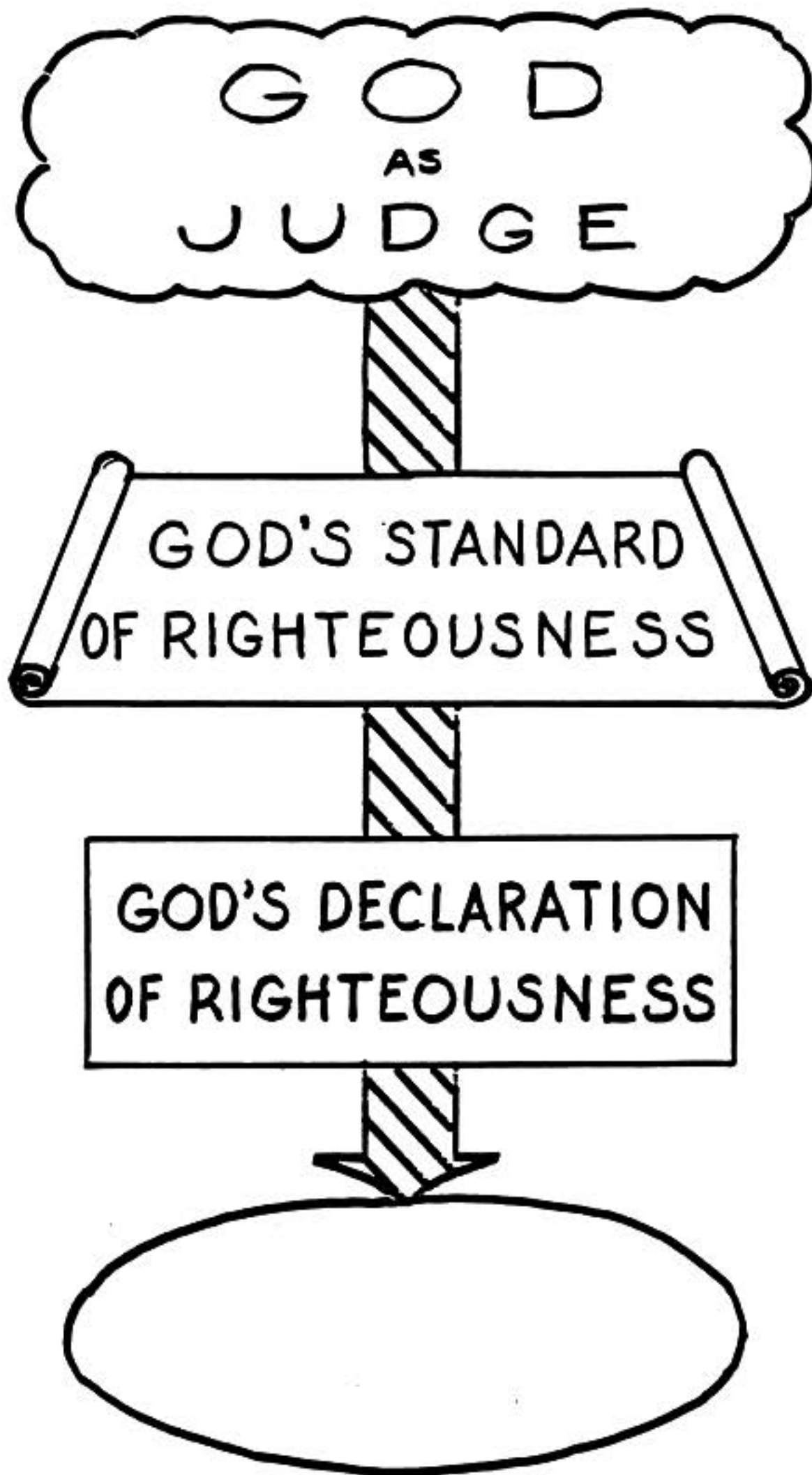
In one interpretation of Romans 2:6-13 there are no persons who persist in doing good and perfectly obey the Law of God except Jesus Christ. In the other interpretation a partial obedience to the Law of God will not merit a righteous standing before God for believers who persevere in doing good. Thus either interpretation leads to despair.

In the first major strand of thought in this section, Paul has amply demonstrated that all unsaved human beings are unrighteous.

In the second major strand of thought he has shown us that unrighteous human beings deserve condemnation for their sins, that they are standing under God's wrath, and that in the day of God's righteous judgment they will not be declared righteous, but rather will be declared guilty and treated accordingly. Paul says that there will be wrath and anger, trouble and distress for every human being who does evil.

The apostle has painted a very dark picture of mankind in this first section of the epistle. Man's past and his present disclose the great fact of SIN. Man's future discloses the great fact of JUDGMENT. Is there no hope for mankind?

Paul gives the answer to this question in the second major section of the epistle, found in 3:21-5:21.



THOSE WHO ACCEPT THE TRUTH  
AND FOLLOW RIGHTEOUSNESS



**THOSE WHO REJECT THE TRUTH  
AND FOLLOW UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**



THOSE WHO ACCEPT THE TRUTH  
AND FOLLOW RIGHTEOUSNESS





THOSE WHO REJECT THE TRUTH  
AND FOLLOW UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

## II. GOD'S JUSTIFICATION OF SOME UNRIGHTEOUS HUMAN BEINGS THROUGH CHRIST

This section divides into four segments.

The first segment (3:21-31) is the heart of the gospel -- how God can declare righteous those who are unrighteous, but who nevertheless come to trust in Christ and His redemptive work for salvation from their sins and its consequences. This is the doctrine of justification by faith.

The second segment (4:1-25) provides us with an example (not merely an illustration) of justification by faith -- Abraham, who was declared righteous, not on the basis of a righteousness that came from himself, through the keeping of the Law of God, but on the basis of a righteousness that came from God, through faith in God and His salvation.

The third segment (5:1-11) details a number of the blessings that accompany justification by faith.

The fourth segment (5:12-21) presents a sustained parallel, comparing and contrasting the condemnation which comes to those who are in Adam and the justification which comes to those who are in Christ.

Let us look at each of these segments, some in detail and some briefly, and let us attempt to answer the question, How can unrighteous human beings become righteous before God?

- A. The first segment begins in 3:21 with a sharp contrast to that which has preceded it. In fact, it picks up the key ideas of the theme, found in 1:16-17, and develops them.

Having stated in 3:20 that "no one will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the Law," Paul asserts in 3:21: "But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known;" and he begins to explain how this can be.

First, he says that the Old Testament witnesses to this righteousness apart from the law. "The Law and the Prophets" should be understood as a reference to the whole Old Testament (as in the figure synecdoche, in which part is given for the whole). Incidentally, in the next segment (chapter 4) Paul is going to provide us with instances of this witness.

Let us pause here and affirm a very important principle. The Old Testament does not teach salvation by human works, or salvation by a mixture of faith and works. Salvation has always been by grace through faith, and has always rested on the atonement of Christ, whether viewed in prospect or in retrospect. Righteousness from Adam to Christ was always "apart from law". Thus "apart from the law" (verse 21) should be understood to mean apart from our fulfillment of the Law of God.

Paul says that this righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, without distinction between Jews and Gentiles (verse 22). Previously we noted two meanings of the term "the righteousness of God" -- God's attribute or characteristic of righteousness, and God's standard of righteousness addressed to man's obedience, His perfect Law. Neither of these meanings fits here, since

God's attribute of righteousness does not come through faith (God is righteous whether we believe it or not), and God's Law does not come through faith (God's standard is binding whether we believe it or not). What then can "the righteousness of God" mean in verse 22?

Before Paul answers this, he again refers to the fact that all human beings are sinners -- they all have sinned (transgressed God's standard of righteousness, His Law), and they all continue to sin (fall short of God's standard of righteousness, His Law, which reflects His attribute of righteousness, which in turn is one aspect of the magnificence of the splendor of His nature -- His glory).

And yet in verse 24 Paul states that these very sinners, these unrighteous human beings are the very ones whom God in His great grace, declares righteous through Christ's redemption (to be justified means to be declared righteous; thus when we read "justified freely by His grace" we should simply read "declared righteous freely by His grace").

Think of it! GOD DECLARES RIGHTEOUS THE UNRIGHTEOUS!

Someone may say, "How can God do that? isn't that a contradiction, to say that someone is righteous when he isn't?"

And someone else may respond, "What do you mean, 'How can God do that?' God is God. God is sovereign. God can do anything that He pleases!"

At this point we must interject the scriptural truths that God cannot deny Himself (II Timothy 2:13), that one of God's attributes is truth, and that God cannot contradict Himself, i.e., cannot say something is so when He says it isn't so! If God says an unrighteous human being is righteous, there must be some other explanation than simply to say that God can do anything that He pleases!

If God declares an unrighteous human being righteous, there must be some basis for this declaration; and since it does not lie in the righteousness of that human being, it must lie elsewhere.

In verses 24 and 25 Paul tells us where the basis for our justification lies. He says that God gave His own Son as a propitiatory sacrifice, a sacrifice of atonement.

There are various ideas used in scripture to describe this work: that of redemption, that of atonement, that of propitiation, that of expiation, and that of satisfaction. What do these terms convey? (see figures)

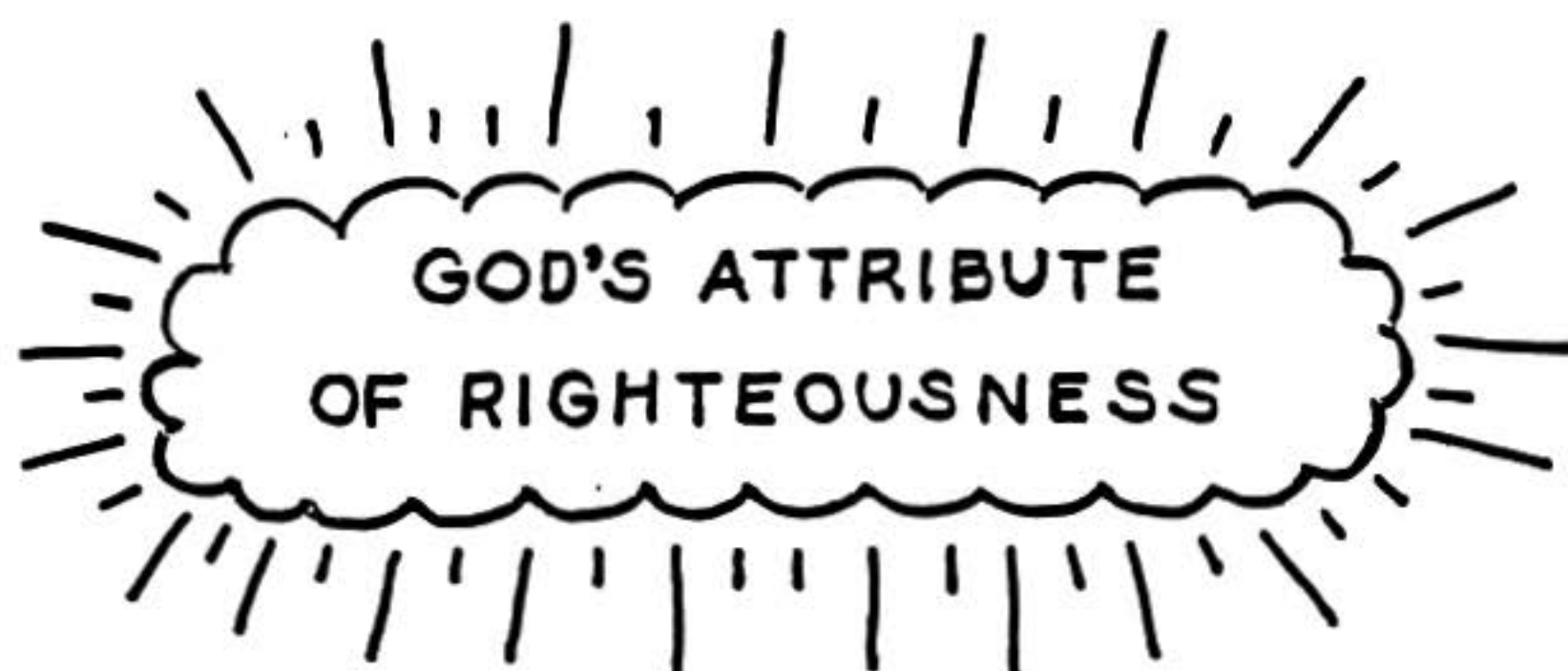
Paul adds that Christ's work is a sacrifice of atonement through faith in His blood; i.e., the benefits of Christ's atoning work become ours through faith (trust) in His redemption.

In verses 25b and 26 we discover that Christ's atonement demonstrated God's righteousness in two or three important ways.

During the time period from Adam to Christ it had looked as though God permitted men's sins to go unpunished. Although there were

# THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

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# What Did Christ Accomplish?

(ROMANS 3:24-25)

- ① Christ redeemed us (purchased our release) from our slavery to sin and its results.
- ② Christ atoned for (made reparation for the offense of) our sins.
- ③ Christ propitiated (appeased the wrath of) God with respect to all of our liability to His Law.
- ④ Christ expiated (paid the full penalty for) all of the guilt and penalty of our sin, took it all upon Himself and exhausted it.

- ⑤ Christ satisfied all of the requirements of the Law of God by offering Himself as a sacrifice on our behalf.
- ⑥ As a result of Christ's finished work, God can be propitious (favorable) to us and can both graciously and justly declare us righteous. All obligations have been fulfilled, all claims against us have been "paid in full," and there is nothing left to do but to believe and adore!

sacrifices for sin throughout the period, it was obvious to the worshipper who thought about it that the blood of lambs and bulls and goats was not valuable enough in itself to take away sin permanently (he had to keep offering it) or even temporarily. Thus these sacrifices looked forward to and anticipated a perfect, complete sacrifice which would be valuable enough to atone for sin once for all. Christ's atonement displayed God's punishment for sins (both past and future), and thus demonstrated God's righteousness and justice.

Looking at it from a slightly different aspect, we see that God's Law reflects His righteous nature. God's Law had been broken over and over again, and the penalty promised for transgression was death. Would God keep His promise and execute His Law? Would He be just, and punish sin? Christ's atonement shows God executing the penalty for sin upon His own son; thus Christ's death upholds God's Law and displays God's justice.

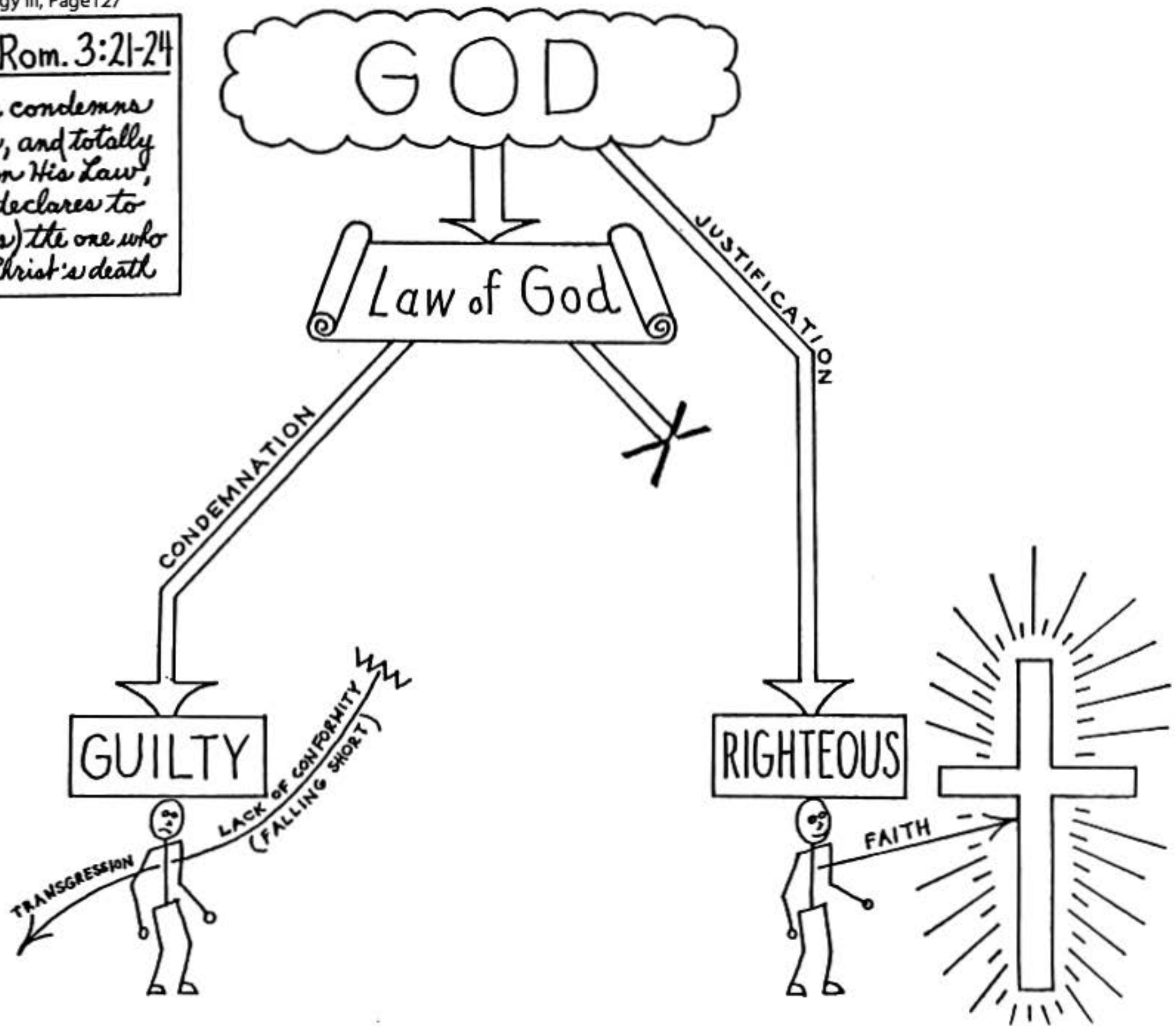
God's justice is also displayed in His justification of a believing sinner. God does not simply declare a believing sinner righteous on no basis whatever. Rather, God credits to that sinner the merit of Christ's righteousness, and then declares that person righteous. Thus God shows us the basis of His act of justification -- Christ's atonement -- and shows Himself to be just at the very time He is showing Himself to be gracious in the justification of believing sinners.

Three accompanying diagrams of differing conceptions of justification as revealed in Romans 3 may serve to elucidate this emphasis on both God's grace and God's justice. Let us analyze and evaluate them.



### View of Rom. 3:21-24

*God justly condemns the sinner, and totally apart from His Law, justifies (declares to be righteous) the one who trusts in Christ's death*

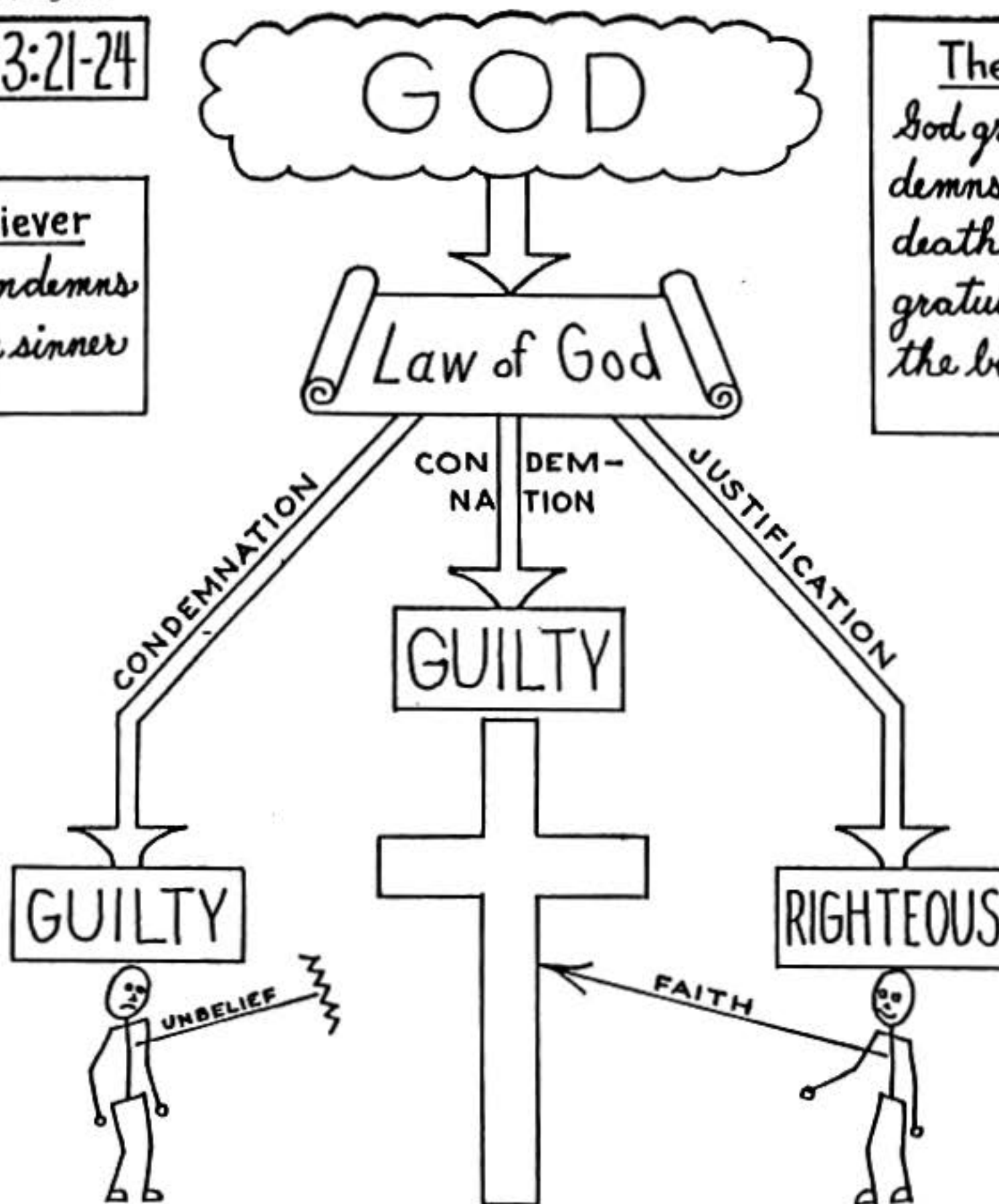


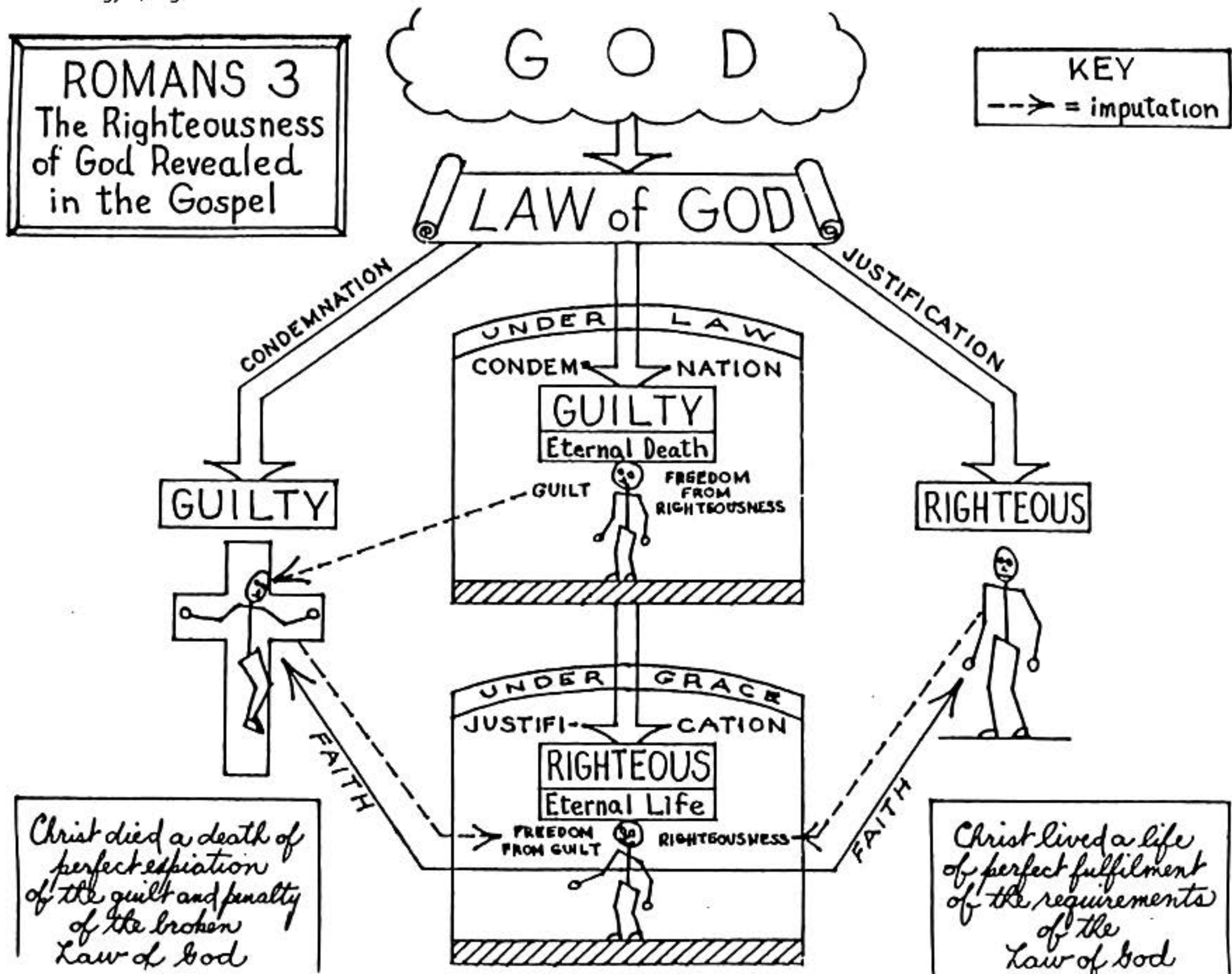


View of Rom. 3:21-24

The Unbeliever  
God justly condemns  
the unbelieving sinner

The Believer  
God gratuitously con-  
demns His Son to  
death, and then  
gratuitously justifies  
the believing sinner





In verse 27 Paul asserts that justification by faith excludes boasting which is something that justification by my own righteous works would never exclude.

In verses 28-30 the principle is stressed that Jews and Gentiles are justified in the same way -- by faith, apart from fulfilling the Law.

In verse 31 the question is raised, Does this faith principle nullify, cancel, abolish, do away with the law of God? Paul says "By no means!" Rather, this faith principle establishes and confirms the Law.

How does it do this?

If we are declared righteous by trusting in Christ and His redemption -- HIS sacrifice of atonement -- and if Christ in His atonement has met all of the demands of the Law of God, then faith in Christ's atonement establishes the Law. Instead of canceling or setting aside God's Law, Christ fully satisfies all of its righteous demands, thus showing that the Law is binding, and that it must be fulfilled if human beings are ever to be declared righteous in God's sight.

Christ perfectly satisfies the Law of God on our behalf and thus establishes its binding authority over us; and we are declared righteous by trusting in His atoning work. The basis on which God declares us to be righteous is Christ's redemption.

What wonderful good news this is! How full of grace and truth is God for providing us with this wonderful way of deliverance from sin and its results!

with Nicolaus von Zinzendorf we can sing:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in Thy great day,  
For who aught to my charge shall lay?  
Fully absolved through these I am,  
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

- B. The second segment of this section comprises the whole of chapter 4, in which Abraham is presented as an example of justification by faith.

In this chapter the concept of imputation is introduced. In fact, LOGIZOMAI -- the word from which we get the concept -- is used 11 times in this chapter.

In some versions it is translated "count" or "reckon", in other versions "impute", and in still other versions "credit".

What does imputation mean?

Negatively, it does not mean to change someone's character or conduct. To impute selfishness to a person is not to make that person selfish. To impute greed to a person is not to make that person greedy. To impute righteousness to a person is not to make that person righteous.

Positively, it means to charge or to credit something to someone. This idea is expressed in verse 5, where Paul says that it is "God who justifies the wicked," and in verse 6, where we read that "God credits righteousness apart from works."

However, here we strike a difficult problem. Four times in the chapter Paul seems to say that Abraham's faith was credited to him righteousness (verses 3, 5, 9, and 22). These statements could very easily be understood to mean that, although Abraham did not have righteousness (i.e., he too was a sinner), yet he did have faith and God accepted his faith in place of, or as equivalent to, or as constituting righteousness. Thus God credited (imputed) faith as though it were righteousness (even though it wasn't).

If we understand these verses in this way and then apply that understanding to our situation today, we get something like the following scenario:

- (1) God sees that we have no righteousness, but that we do have faith.
- (2) God credits our faith as constituting righteousness.
- (3) God credits a right standing to us on the basis of our faith.

Another set of statements in this chapter speaks, not of God's crediting faith, but of God's crediting righteousness (verses 6, 11, 24). But as soon as we read about God's crediting of righteousness, we must ask, "Whose righteousness?" Surely God does not credit us with our own righteousness, for we have none of our own. In fact, all of our own righteousnesses are as filthy rags with which we attempt to cover our moral nakedness and our guilt and corruption! And no matter how strong our faith is, it is always imperfect and inconstant, and a poor substitute for genuine righteousness!

Then with whose righteousness does God credit us, if not our own?

## WHAT IS IMPUTATION ?

*Imputation is a judicial act of God in which He mentally transfers and charges the guilt of one person to another, or mentally transfers and credits the righteousness of one person to another. It changes the way God legally views a person who stands before Him (a person's legal standing).*

The previous segment (3:21-31) has already partially supplied the answer to this question, particularly in 3:24-25. The basis on which God declares us to be righteous is Christ's redemption.

God credits (imputes) Christ's righteousness to us, and declares us righteous!

This suggests an alternative scenario, something like the following

- (1) God sees that we have no righteousness, but that we do have faith.
- (2) God credits us with faith through which Christ's righteousness is imputed to us.
- (3) God credits a right standing to us on the basis of Christ's righteousness.

But if our own imperfect works and our own imperfect faith are not credited to us as though they were righteousness, and to the contrary, if Christ's atoning work is credited to us as righteousness, then how shall we understand the statement of verses 3, 5, 9, and 22? If faith is not the basis of our justification (or of Abraham's), then what role does faith play in God's declaring us righteous?

In Romans 1:17 ("a righteousness that is by faith"), 3:22 ("this righteousness from God comes through faith"), and 5:1 ("since we have been justified through faith"), faith is portrayed as the means or instrument through which God joins us to Christ's atoning work, on the basis of which atonement He declares us righteous. God uses our faith instrumentally to join us to Christ. Since Christ's righteousness and death, not our faith, is the basis of our justification, then I would suggest that we translate verses 3, 5, 9, and 22 as follows:

verse 3 -- "And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him unto righteousness" (i.e., God declared him righteous through his faith)

verse 5 -- "his faith is credited unto righteousness" (i.e., God declares him righteous through his faith)

verse 9 -- "faith was credited to Abraham unto righteousness" or "faith unto righteousness was credited to Abraham" (i.e., God declared Abraham righteous through his faith, or, faith through which God declared Abraham righteous was credited to him.)

verse 22 -- "And therefore it was credited to him unto righteousness" (i.e., God declared Abraham righteous through his faith.)

Thus this fourth chapter is a chapter on imputation, specifically the crediting of righteousness to those who believe in the Savior and salvation that God provides.

But now we must ask a pointed question. If Abraham is not merely an illustration but an example of justification by faith, does this imply that Abraham was saved by faith?

Abraham was not only saved through the instrumentality of faith; he was saved on the basis of Christ's atoning work. That is, the basis of salvation was Christ's redemption, and the instrument of salvation was faith.

That this is not strictly and solely a Reformed view of salvation during the Old Testament period may be seen in the doctrinal statement of Dallas Theological Seminary, Article V. The statement declares: "We believe that according to the 'eternal purpose' of God (Eph. 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is always 'by grace, through faith', and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ."

However, here we strike another problem. If saving faith is defined as "trust in Christ and His redemptive work as revealed in the gospel," then we must ask: Did Abraham know about and trust in Christ and His redemptive work? That is, what we are asking concerns the content of Abraham's faith: did he believe implicitly in God and the salvation which He would somehow provide, or did Abraham believe explicitly in Christ and the salvation He would accomplish?

I believe at least a partial answer to this question lies in the relationship between the content of Old Testament saving revelation and the content of Old Testament saving faith.

Two diagrams may help to make this clear. The first concerns the unfolding of the content of the old Testament saving revelation; the second concerns development in the content of Old Testament saving faith.

I believe that the development from implicit to explicit content of Old Testament saving faith runs essentially parallel to the unfolding from implicit to explicit content of Old Testament saving revelation. I believe that, as the mix of implicit and explicit elements in the content of Old Testament saving revelation became more explicit and less implicit, Israelites were responsible to believe and trust in as much about Christ and His salvation as had been revealed to that point in time.

- C. The third segment of this section (5:1-11) details some of the blessings that accompany justification by faith.

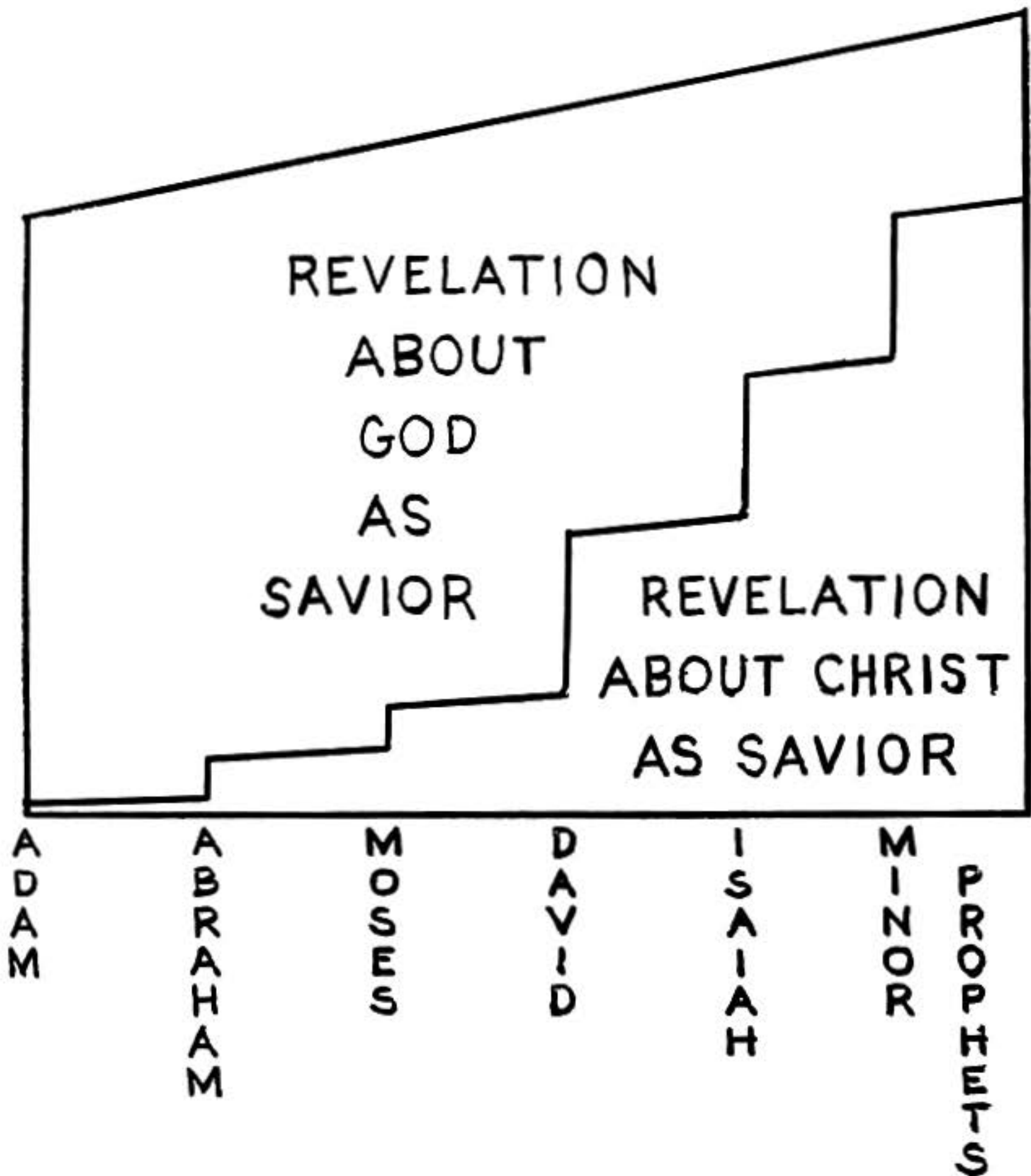
We will simply glance at them in passing, although each one is worthy of extended exposition.

Verse 1 mentions peace with God.

Verse 2 speaks of our rejoicing in the confident expectation ("hope" in the New Testament terminology) of the future manifestation of God's glory in our lives.

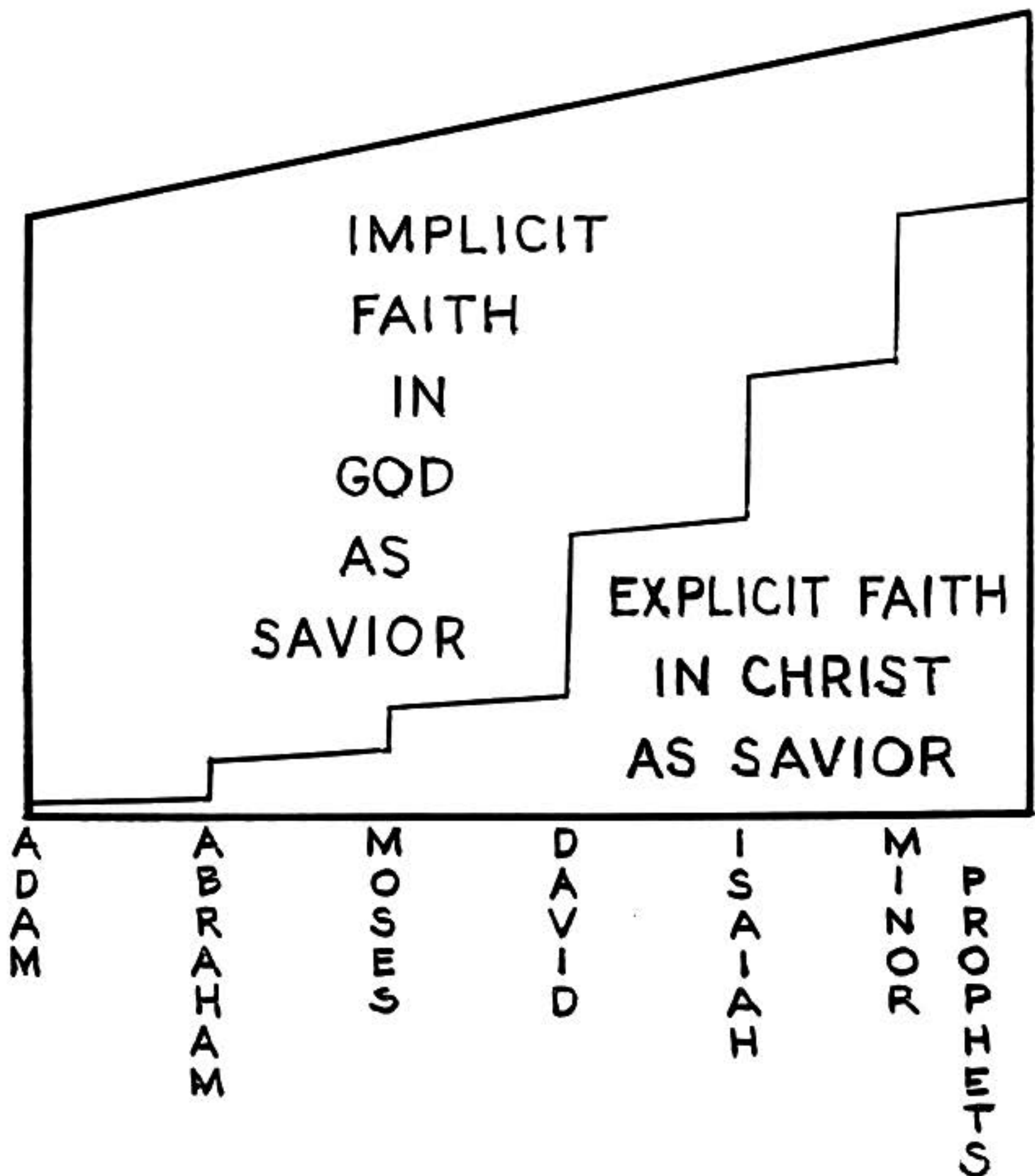
Verses 3-4 mention our rejoicing in sufferings, not as sadomasochists, who derive pleasure from the infliction of physical or

# UNFOLDING OF THE CONTENT OF OLD TESTAMENT SAVING REVELATION





# DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTENT OF OLD TESTAMENT SAVING FAITH



mental pain, either on others or on themselves, but as those who discern how God uses suffering to produce various qualities of Christian character in the life of one who lives by faith.

Verse 5 speaks of the Holy Spirit, who indwells us and who has poured out God's love into our hearts.

Verse 6-8 recall God's great love demonstrated by Christ's death for us while we were ungodly, unrighteous, undeserving sinners.

Verse 9 speaks of salvation from God's wrath through Christ, both in the present and in the day of His wrath.

Verse 10 tells us of present and future salvation through the resurrected, living Christ.

Verses 10 and 11 both speak of reconciliation to God, from whom we were estranged by our sin. In verse 10 we read of reconciliation having been accomplished, and in verse 11 we read of reconciliation having been applied and received.

What wonderful blessings these are that accompany justification by faith!

- D. This brings us to the fourth and final segment of this second major section of the epistle to the Romans (5:12-21)

But what shall we say about this powerful sustained parallel which compares and contrasts the condemnation which falls upon those who are in Adam, and the justification which comes upon those who are in Christ?

Proper treatment would take a whole session in itself, and probably more. Some of the themes stressed here have been referred to (not in the same way, of course) in previous segments of the epistle.

However, perhaps a highlight or two should be noted.

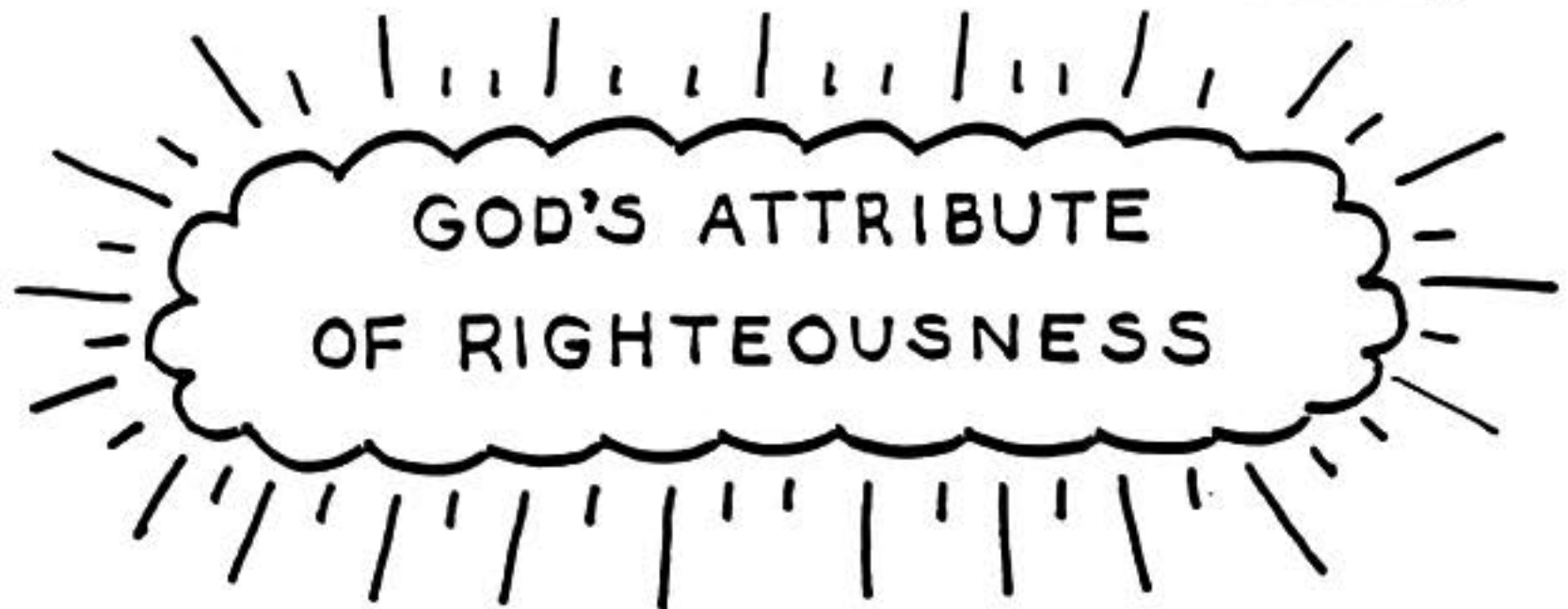
In verse 15 "the gift" is mentioned. Also in verse 15 we find "the gift that came by . . . grace." In verse 16 we read of "the gift of God, and the gift that brought justification." And in verse 17 we read of "the gift of righteousness."

Here we have a third meaning of the righteousness of God. We have previously noted two meanings: God's characteristic (attribute) of righteousness, and God's standard of righteousness (His perfect Law). Now we learn of God's gift of righteousness, which we see is a gift of a right standing before the Law of God (legal righteousness).

However, although this gift comes from God's grace (verse 17 speaks of God's abundant provision of grace"), and b the grace of Jesus Christ (verse 15 speaks of the "gift that came by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ"), nevertheless it needs to be stressed that this gracious gut is possible only because of Christ's act of righteousness in living a life of perfect fulfillment of the requirements of the 1av of God, and in dying a death of perfect expiation of the guilt and penalty of the broken Law of God.

# THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

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Verse 18 states that "the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life"; and verse 19 states that through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

What a wonderful gospel Paul has expounded for us thus far!

Think of it! The Law is a perfect standard of righteousness, and requires perfect obedience if it is to pronounce us "righteous". But this perfect law comes to sinners who transgress it and continually fail short of it; and all that it can do for sinners is to condemn them -- declare them "guilty!" and pronounce their doom!

But God in His pure grace sends His Son to satisfy all of the demands of the Law and all of its claims; He graciously unites sinners to His Son by faith; and He graciously credits them with Christ's righteousness and freely declares them righteous in His sight.

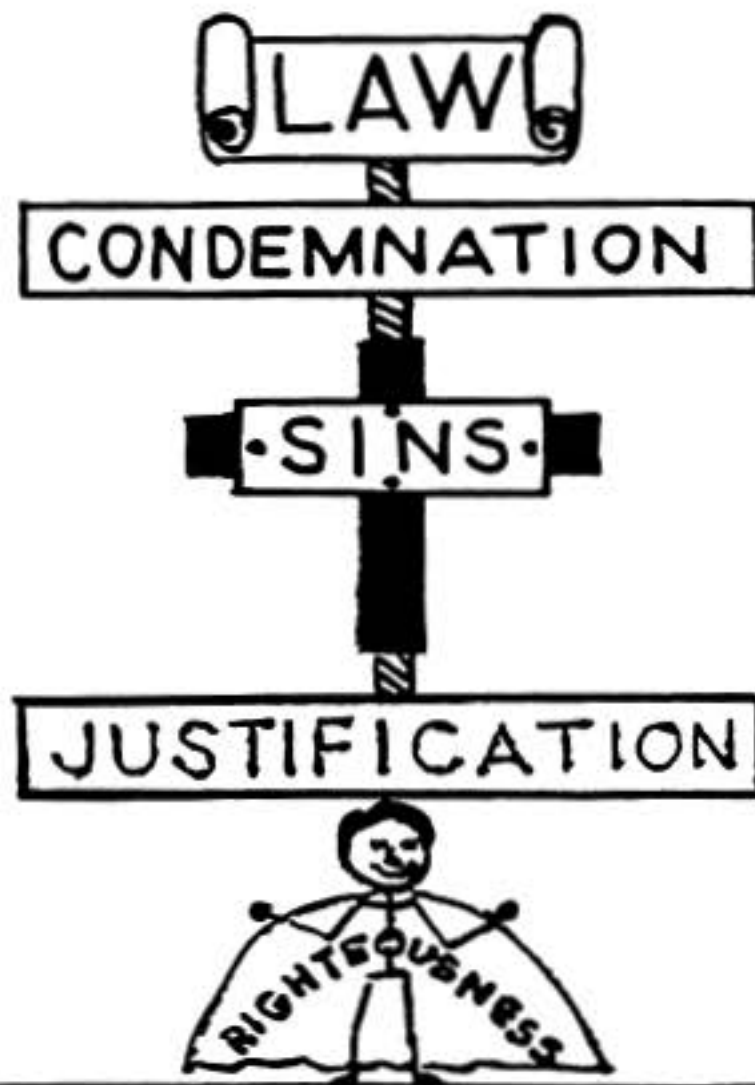
And through it all He remains righteous even while He graciously shows mercy by justifying the unrighteous!

Is this not a great gospel and is not God marvelous in devising this wonderful way of salvation?

# The Economy of Law as respects Justification



# The Economy of Grace as respects Justification



### III. GOD'S SANCTIFICATION OF ALL JUSTIFIED HUMAN BEINGS THROUGH CHRIST

In this section (6:1-8:39) Paul deals with sanctification. But what is meant by "sanctification"?

Sometimes in scripture the idea of sanctification is purely objective or positional, as when persons or things are consecrated, set apart, or declared holy. In a very real sense, all justified persons are "saints" or "holy ones", and when they are said to have been sanctified, it means that in God's sight, positionally, in view of what God is doing in their lives, they are consecrated, set apart to God.

other times in scripture the idea of sanctification bears directly on the idea of deliverance from sin through the gospel. However, instead of dealing with deliverance from the guilt and penalty of transgression as in justification, sanctification in this subjective, experiential sense deals with deliverance from the power and presence of innate corruption or depravity.

It is this subjective, experiential aspect of sanctification that Paul appears to be dealing with in this third major section -- deliverance from innate corruption.

In this section, 6:1-8:39, Paul provides us with the great key to sanctification -- union with Christ -- and develops three steps in the direction of deliverance from innate corruption, all of which depend on union with Christ.

Union with Christ is the key to our death to innate sin; union with Christ is the key to our new relationship to the Law; and union with Christ is the key to life to innate righteousness.

But what is meant by "union with Christ"? What does it mean to be united or joined to Christ?

Does it mean to become part of Him, to be absorbed into Him, to become one with Him to such an extent that we no longer have any thoughts of our own, or any feelings of our own, or any desires of our own, or any will of our own? Does union with Christ mean being swallowed up into His being, His nature, His essence, to such an extent that we can say that we are becoming divine?

Of course, all these are mystical ideas, and Paul presents none of them in connection with his teaching concerning union with Christ.

In Paul's teaching, union with Christ simply means "our saving relationship to Christ by faith". This union with Christ is brought about by the Holy Spirit, who unites us through faith to Jesus Christ and to the benefits of His atoning work. When Paul uses the expression "in Christ", he means that one is in saving relationship to Christ.

This union is stressed in 6:3-5. Paul writes: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of

## Objective Sanctification is an Act of God's Grace in Christ

### It means:

- ① being declared holy (pure from sin) in God's sight
- ② being positionally holy
- ③ having a holy standing before God
- ④ being set apart to God
- ⑤ being consecrated to God
- ⑥ being a saint (a "holy one")

Note: All believers are saints!



## Subjective Sanctification is a Work of God's Grace in Christ

It means:

- ① being regenerated, being born again
- ② being delivered from the power of sin
- ③ being delivered from innate depravity, corruption
- ④ growing in grace and in the experiential knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ
- ⑤ progressing in holiness of character and conduct
- ⑥ being delivered from the presence of sin
- ⑦ being conformed to the image of Christ

## What is "Union with Christ"?

*Union with Christ is that saving relationship with Christ into which believing sinners are brought by Spirit baptism.*

*Spirit baptism is that act of the Holy Spirit by which believing sinners are united to Christ and to the benefits of His atonement.*

life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."

A rather important issue that divides expositors of this portion of the epistle is whether this segment refers to water baptism or Spirit baptism.

Since this passage is dealing with the justified person's continuance in sinning (verse 1), and since this baptism is connected with death to sin (verses 2-4), the question must be asked, "If this is referring to water baptism, does water baptism, either in itself, or by means of the accompanying work of the Holy Spirit, accomplish the death to sin being spoken of? Does water baptism bring about this death to sin?"

Of course, one may say that this is referring to positional death to sin, and that water baptism symbolizes this death to sin. The only problem is that Paul says that this baptism of which he is speaking actually brings about the death to sin of which he is speaking! And very few who view this passage as referring to water baptism would wish to hold that water baptism brings about even our positional death to sin!

If this passage refers to Spirit baptism, what is spirit baptism? Simply put, Spirit baptism is the act of the Holy Spirit in uniting us to Christ by faith. The Holy Spirit joins us to Christ and to the benefits of His atonement.

This baptism is instrumental. It actually brings us into saving relationship to Christ and unites us to the benefits which He has purchased for us. And interestingly, water baptism can signify and symbolize this.

In verse 2 Paul says that we died to sin. How did we die to sin? "All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death." Paul is not saying that we died on the cross and rose out of the tomb (Christ alone did that), but that just as Christ died and rose again physically so we died and rose again spiritually. Of course, this is true only for those who have been baptized into Christ, those who have been united to Christ by the Holy Spirit through faith.

This union with Christ is foundational, basic, crucial to each step in sanctification. If we are not joined to Christ, we cannot share in the benefits of His saving work. If we are united to Christ, we have already begun to share in the blessings of salvation, and need to consider what steps to take to enter in even more fully. This brings us to the first step in sanctification.

BAPTISM AND DEATH TO SIN IN ROMANS 6:1-3			
INSTRUMENTAL		NONINSTRUMENTAL	
POSITIONAL DEATH TO SIN	EXPERIENTIAL DEATH TO SIN	POSITIONAL DEATH TO SIN	EXPERIENTIAL DEATH TO SIN
<p><u>Water Baptism</u></p> <p>(1) This view holds that water baptism, either in itself, or by the accompanying power of the Word and/or Spirit, accomplishes this positional death to sin.</p>	<p><u>Water Baptism</u></p> <p>(2) This view holds that water baptism effects this experiential death to sin. This means that water baptism, either in itself, or by the accompanying power of the Word and/or Spirit, regenerates or makes spiritually alive.</p>	<p><u>Water Baptism</u></p> <p>(3) This view holds that water baptism symbolizes or signifies this positional death to sin. The problem here is to show how realization of this symbolism can decisively affect the justified person's continuance or non-continuance in sin.</p>	<p><u>Water Baptism</u></p> <p>(4) This view holds that water baptism symbolizes or signifies this experiential death to sin. The problem here is to show how realization of this symbolism can decisively affect the justified person's continuance or non-continuance in sin.</p>
<p><u>Spirit Baptism</u></p> <p>(5) This view holds that Spirit baptism (union with Christ) accomplishes this positional death to sin. The problem here is to show how positional death can decisively affect the justified person's continuance or non-continuance in sin.</p>	<p><u>Spirit Baptism</u></p> <p>(6) This view holds that Spirit baptism (union with Christ) accomplishes this experiential death to sin. Unless death to sin means immediate perfection, this death must be defined as a decisive dissolution of a person's former relationship to sin, analogous to the dissolution of the bondage of slavery, or of the bond of marriage, or of the union of spirit and body in physical death.</p>	<p><u>Spirit Baptism</u></p> <p>(7) This view holds that Spirit baptism (union with Christ) symbolizes or signifies this positional death to sin. The difficulty here is that Spirit baptism does not <u>symbolize</u> our positional death to sin, it <u>accomplishes</u> it!</p>	<p><u>Spirit Baptism</u></p> <p>(8) This view holds that Spirit baptism (union with Christ) symbolizes or signifies this experiential death to sin. The difficulty here is that Spirit baptism does not <u>symbolize</u> our experiential death to sin, it actually <u>accomplishes</u> it.</p>

- A. Step One in sanctification is recognizing and acting upon our new relationship to innate sin: that of death.

This new relationship may be seen to be expressed in three phases or stages, and the first of these is that:

1. We are completely dead to the mastery of innate sin.

Let us note Paul's teaching on this point in the following verses:

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?

Rom 6:2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

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

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

Rom 6:5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,

Rom 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;

Rom 6:7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

Rom 6:8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Rom 6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

Rom 6:10 For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Rom 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

Rom 6:18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Rom 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

Step One in Sanctification:  
recognizing and acting upon  
our new relationship to innate  
sin—that of death.

Phase 1 – We are completely dead to the mastery of innate sin.

Phase 2 – We are to be progressively dying to the remaining power of innate sin.

Phase 3 – We will one day be made completely dead to the power and very presence of innate sin.



## ROMANS 6:5

εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν  
τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου  
αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀνα-  
στάσεως ἐσόμεθα.

*"For if we have become united  
with the likeness of His death,  
we shall certainly be also (with  
the likeness) of (His) resurrection."*

*The third word in the Greek of  
verse 5 — σύμφυτος — is not*

from *συμφυτεύω*, but from *συμφύομαι*. The word *φυτεύω* means "to plant," whereas *φύω* means "to grow up, spring up."

The word *συμφυτεύω* means "to plant together" (TDNT), whereas *συμφύομαι* means "to grow together" (TDNT).

The word *σύμφυτος* is a verbal adjective that means "grown together" (BAG), "united with" (TDNT).



## Benefits of Union with Christ (Romans 6:3-11)

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Through their union with Christ by the Holy Spirit, believers have been united to the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

As Christ died physically with respect to sin once for all, so believers have died spiritually with respect to sin once for all.

As Christ has been raised from physical death to physical life,

thereby being freed from the mastery of sin, so believers have been raised from spiritual death to spiritual life, thereby being freed from the mastery of sin.

As Christ has been raised physically in order to live continually to the glory of God, so believers have been raised spiritually in order to live continually to the glory of God.

WHAT WE ARE TO COUNT OR RECKON TO BE TRUE WITH REGARD TO SIN	WHAT WE KNOW TO BE TRUE FROM OTHER SCRIPTURAL DATA				
	CHRISTIANS NO LONGER BEAR GUILT	CHRISTIANS STILL HAVE THE SIN-NATURE	CHRISTIANS DO STILL HAVE THE SIN-PRINCIPLE	CHRISTIANS DO NOT PRACTICE SINNING	CHRISTIANS STILL COMMIT ACTS OF SIN
1. Count yourself to be completely dead to the guilt of sin	already covered, in Romans 3-5	irrelevant	irrelevant	irrelevant	irrelevant
2. Count yourself to be completely dead to the sin-nature	irrelevant	either a contradiction or a self-delusion	how is this possible?	irrelevant	do acts of sin arise when we fail to reckon?
3. Count yourself to be completely dead to the sin-principle (positionally)	irrelevant	should not the sin-nature also be counted dead? but it isn't!	does God view something as true which is not true?	how does the positional affect the experiential?	how does the positional affect the experiential?
4. Count yourself to be initially dead to the sin principle (experientially)	irrelevant	what happens after the initial stage?	what happens after the initial stage?	how does this relate to continued nonpractice of sin?	how does anticipation affect experience?
5. Count yourself to be initially and anticipatively dead to the sin-principle (experientially)	irrelevant	what happens in the interim?	what happens in the interim?	how does this relate to continued nonpractice of sin?	given the nonmastery of the sin-principle, how can acts of sin arise?
6. Count yourself to be completely dead to the mastery of the sin-principle (relationally and experientially)	irrelevant	is the sin-nature then merely dormant?	how can the sin-principle be present, yet not be master?	how does nonmastery of the sin-principle relate to the nonpractice of sin?	given the nonmastery of the sin-principle, how can acts of sin arise?
7. Count yourself to be completely dead to the sin-principle (experientially)	irrelevant	should not the sin-nature also be counted dead? but it isn't!	either a contradiction or a self-delusion	irrelevant	then how can acts of sin arise? and they do!
8. Count yourself to be completely dead to the practice of sinning	irrelevant	does this somehow deaden the sin-nature?	does this somehow weaken the sin-principle?	good, but what does "counting" accomplish?	does death to practice imply death to acts?
9. Count yourself to be completely dead to acts of sin	irrelevant	does this render the sin-nature inoperative?	does this render the sin-principle inoperative?	irrelevant	contradiction

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE WHETHER OR NOT I BELIEVE

(REALIZE) THAT I AM EXPERIENTIALLY DEAD TO SIN

1. First of all, it is essential to sanctification that it be a fact that I have died to sin, in the sense that I am no longer enslaved to it. God through Paul has revealed to us that, having been united to Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are dead to our old bondage to the operation of the evil attributes in us. The evil characteristics of our nature still operate in us to produce sinful acts, but the operation of those characteristics no longer has mastery over our conduct.

NOTE: It is the operation of the evil characteristics ("the flesh") in me that is properly called the SIN PRINCIPLE.

It is vital to our progress in holiness to appropriate this first fact by faith, to believe it to be so because God says that it is so. Our believing it to be so does not make it so; it is so because God has revealed it to be so! And since God has told us that it is so (whether or not we know it, are convinced of it, or commit ourselves to it), we may just as well believe it! However, if it is so, regardless of whether or not we believe it, then why is it vital to our progress in holiness to lay hold of this fact by faith? Simply because if we do not believe that we are dead to the mastery of the sin principle, all efforts toward holiness of life will appear hopeless, doomed to failure from the very beginning, and motivation will be greatly weakened. After all, if I believe that I am still enslaved to the evil characteristics in my nature, so that the sin-principle still controls my life, then what is the point of attempting to please God? In my mind, failure is guaranteed! But if I believe that I am dead to the mastery of the sin-principle, then there is at least a possibility of hope for success!

2. Secondly, it is essential to sanctification that I have died to sin, in order that it be a fact that I have been made alive to God and to righteousness. God through Paul has revealed to us that, having been united to Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are now alive to a new bondservice, to the operation of the good attributes in us. The good characteristics of our nature (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, etc.) now operate in us to produce the practice of righteousness, and the operation of those characteristics now has mastery over our conduct.

NOTE: It is the operation of the good characteristics ("the spirit") in me that is properly called the RIGHTEOUSNESS PRINCIPLE.

It is vital to our progress in holiness to appropriate this second fact by faith, to believe it to be so because God says that it is so. Why is it vital to our progress in holiness to

lay hold of this fact by faith? Simply because if we believe that we are alive to the mastery of the righteousness-principle, all efforts toward holiness of life will appear hopeful, guaranteed at least partial success in this life (and complete success in the next), and motivation will be strengthened and given stability. After all, if I believe that I have been bound over to the good characteristics in my nature, so that the righteousness-principle now controls my life, then there is great value in attempting to please God. Success (in the long run) is guaranteed. But if I believe that I am still alive to the mastery of the sin-principle, then there is not even the possibility of hope for such success!

3. It is instructive to note that the same motivational forces at work in the preaching and believing acceptance of justification by grace through faith in the righteousness and atoning sacrifice of Christ are at work in the preaching and believing acceptance of sanctification by grace through faith in the righteousness and atoning sacrifice of Christ. In justification the Father imputes (charges) my guilt to Christ, imputes (credits) Christ's righteousness and expiation to me, and declares me to be forgiven of my sins and perfectly righteous before the Law of God. In sanctification the Father by His Spirit unites me to Christ, imparts spiritual life to me (in the new birth), and undertakes progressively to make me more and more like Christ by mortifying the evil elements of my nature (both my evil attributes and the sin-principle in me) and quickening the good elements of my nature (both my good attributes and the righteousness-principle in me). Just as a believing acceptance of the full reality of justification does not lead to licentiousness, liberty to sin, and a license for unrighteousness, but rather to peace, hope, love, reconciliation to God, forgiveness of sins, and life; so a believing acceptance of the full reality of sanctification does not lead to gross indulgence in evil, unbridled sinning, and the practice of unrighteousness, but rather to holiness of character, righteous conduct, and the blessed fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

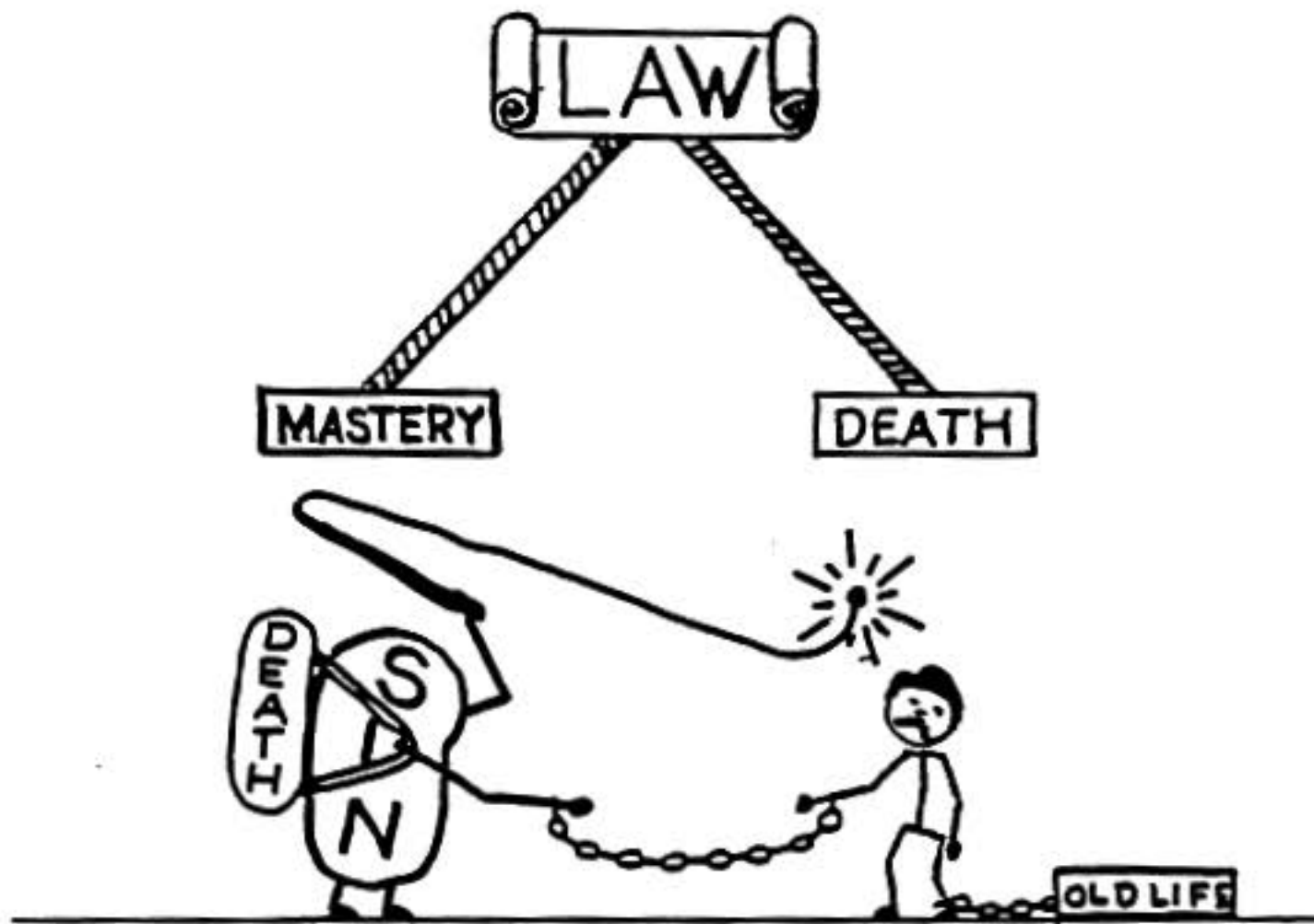
4. The teaching that would attempt to induce a man to live a righteous life by telling him that he must not presume that he has a righteous standing before God by simple faith in a free justification by the finished work of Christ, but rather that he must pass his life in fear and uncertainty and suspense, hoping that God will mercifully forgive and accept him at the Judgment, simply does not understand the operation of grace in a believer's life. And what holds true for justification holds true for sanctification as well. The teaching that would attempt to induce a man to live a holy life by telling him that he must not presume that, by the new birth, God guarantees that he cannot ever again be "engaged in the practice of sin" but will henceforth be "engaged in the practice of righteousness," and that therefore he ought, out of love to Christ, yield a believing

obedience to the revealed will of God, but that he must to the contrary pass this life in fear of committing sin, incurring God's condemnation, and losing salvation; that holiness consists in striving to do the revealed will of God as well as he is humanly able, and that he must not believe himself secure until God Himself assures him that he is so at the Judgment, simply does not understand the operation of grace in a believer's life.

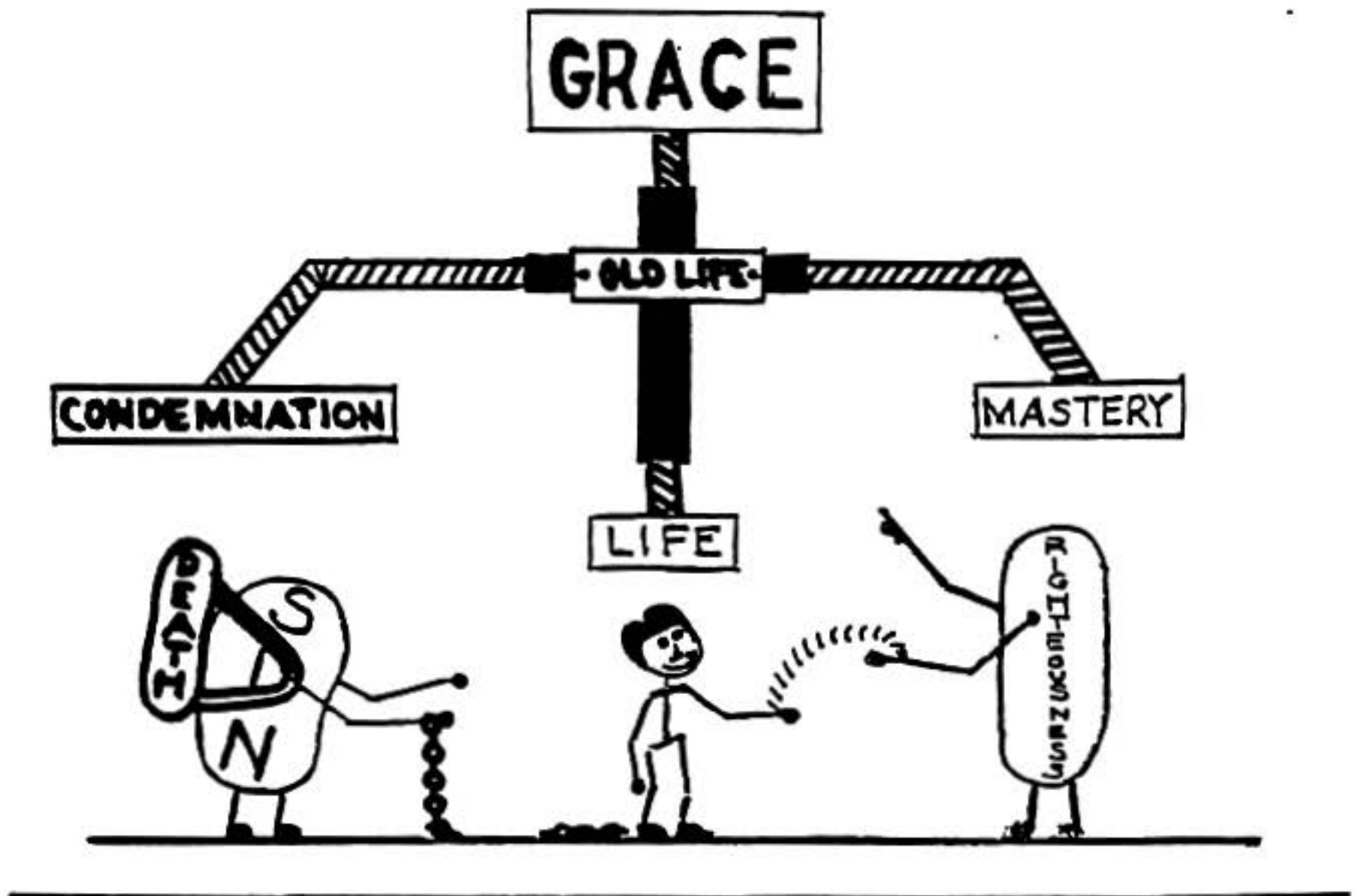
Christ's work for us; the Spirit's work in us -- both received as gifts by faith -- that is grace operating in a believer's life!

As Horatius Bonar put it, consciousness of a perfect standing before God, perfect forgiveness of sins, and perfect peace, arising out of the free love of God in Christ, is "the root and soil of holiness".

# The Economy of Law as respects Sanctification



# The Economy of Grace as respects Sanctification





Sin is no longer our master! We are no longer its slaves!

The second phase of our new relationship to innate sin is that:

2. We are to be progressively dying to the remaining power of innate sin.

Let us note the following verses:

Rom 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts,

Rom 6:13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Rom 6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

Rom 6:16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

Rom 6:21 Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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

Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

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

Rom 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Rom 8:12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh --

Rom 8:13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Although sin is no longer our master, nevertheless it continues to attempt to gain some degree of control in various aspects of our lives. Sin tries to rule us, no matter how spasmodically or temporarily. It is

not to rule us, but by God's enabling grace we are to control it and to put its expressions progressively to death.

The third phase of our new relationship to innate sin is that:

3. We have God's guarantee that we will one day be made completely dead to the power and very presence of innate sin.

Let us note the passage in 8:19-25.

Rom 8:19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

Rom 8:20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

Rom 8:21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Rom 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Rom 8:23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

Rom 8:24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees?

Rom 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Although this passage does not directly mention deliverance from the remaining power and presence of innate sin, but rather of glorification, with particular reference to the transformation of our physical bodies, it necessarily implies this deliverance.

Just as we have been cursed with moral and physical corruption, so the creation has been cursed with the corruption of the physical results of sin; and just as we long to be totally delivered from moral and physical corruption, so the creation groans to be totally delivered from physical corruption. When the benefits of Christ's redemption are finally and fully applied to us and we are delivered from the bondage of the remaining power and presence of sin and from the curse of physical corruption and death to the glorious freedom of the sons of God, then the creation itself will also be delivered from its bondage to physical corruption. In the meanwhile we await with eager expectation this final application of Christ's redemption, the final deliverance from sin and its results.

Step Two in Sanctification:  
recognizing and acting upon  
our new relationship to the  
Law of God—that of both  
death and life.

Motif 1— We are dead to our old relationship to the Law.

Motif 2— We now live lives of internal spiritual conflict.

Motif 3— We are to live in a new relationship to the Law of God.

- B. Step Two in sanctification is recognizing and acting upon our new relationship to the Law of God: that of both death and life.

Paul develops this step under three motifs:

Motif 1 -- We are dead to our old relationship to the Law

Motif 2 -- We now leave lives of internal spiritual conflict

Motif 3 -- We are to live in a new relationship to the Law of God

1. The first motif may be expressed in the assertion we are dead to our old relationship to the Law of God

This motif is expressed in three verses:

Romans 6:14 -- "you are not under the law, but under grace"

Romans 7:4 -- "you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ"

Romans 7:6 -- "But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter."

In our old relationship to the Law, from God's point of view we were under the demands of God's perfect, spiritual standard of righteousness; and because we were sinners we were under the Law's condemnation.

From our point of view we viewed the Law as a formal, external set of rules by which to make ourselves presentable to God, and by which to earn God's approval on our lives.

But now having been united to Christ, we are no longer under the Law's demands and its condemnation. We are delivered from and are dead to the binding authority of the Law to require perfect obedience from us on pain of condemnation and eternal death for failure.

To be "under law" means to operate under a system in which perfect obedience is demanded and rewarded, and disobedience is condemned and punished. For a sinner, it means to stand under the sentence of condemnation, because of guilt; and to be bound over, as a slave, to the sin-principle, because of depravity.

To be "under grace" means to operate within a system in which perfect obedience is required, provided through Christ (Christ for us, the Holy Spirit in us), and rewarded; and disobedience is condemned and punished in Christ. For a Christian, it means to stand under the sentence of justification, because of Christ's imputed righteousness; and to be bound over, as a slave, to the righteousness principle, because of regeneration.

To be under law means to be under the jurisdiction of the Law's requirements and judgments. The Law requires perfect reparation for all

# "UNDER LAW"

JURISDICTION:  
ALL HUMAN BEINGS

REQUIREMENTS:  
*perfect reparation for all  
past offenses; perfect obedience  
in all future actions*

JUDGMENT UPON  
NON-FULFILMENT:  
CONDEMNATION  
(guilty status,  
penalty of death)

JUDGMENT UPON  
FULFILMENT:  
JUSTIFICATION  
(non-guilty, righteous  
status; reward of life)



past offenses and perfect obedience in all future actions, its judgment upon nonfulfillment of its requirements is condemnation, including a guilty status and the penalty of death; its judgment upon fulfillment is justification, including a non-guilty status and the reward of life.

At this point we must distinguish between Law and Grace as principles and as system.

### LAW AND GRACE AS SYSTEMS AND PRINCIPLES

TO BE UNDER LAW means to be under the jurisdiction of a system in which perfect righteousness is required and rewarded, and sin is condemned and punished.

For an unsaved sinner, TO BE UNDER LAW means to stand under the sentence of condemnation and eternal death, and to be enslaved to the sin-principle in a State of spiritual death.

TO BE UNDER GRACE means to be under the jurisdiction of a system in which perfect righteousness is required, provided through Christ, and rewarded, and sin is condemned and punished in Christ.

For a saved sinner, TO BE UNDER GRACE means to be delivered from the sentence of condemnation and eternal death to stand under the sentence of justification and eternal life; and it means to be delivered from spiritual death to spiritual life, and from slavery to the sin-principle to slavery to the righteousness-principle.

A person who operates under law seeks by his own righteous acts to merit a righteous standing before God, seeks by his own good works to earn just rewards from God, and seeks by his own efforts to make his character and conduct worthy of God's approval.

A person who operates under grace seeks by God's grace to recognize and act in accordance with his righteous standing before God through Christ, seeks by God's grace to bring forth good works as an expression of faith in and love to Christ, and seeks by God's grace to use the divinely-provided means of spiritual growth to bring his character and conduct into greater conformity with those of Christ, in order to please and glorify Him.

As a principle, Law pertains to what I do for myself, by my own righteousness, my own merit, my own works; what I earn and fully deserve.

As a principle, Grace pertains to what God does for me and in me, by Christ's righteousness and merit, and by the working of the Holy Spirit; what I cannot earn and can never deserve.

As dispensations (economies under which God operates), Law and Grace pertain respectively to the pre-Fall and post-Fall periods of time. In Eden before the Fall all mankind was tested in respect of the specific revelation of the will of God that He gave to Adam and Eve. That was the dispensation of Law. Since the Fall men have not been tested as though each new period of time brought a new probation of their obedience to God's revelation; rather, all men were justly condemned once for all, and some of these men have been graciously justified. The entire post-Fall period is the dispensation of Grace.

However, it is necessary to add that since the Fall men have operated either according to the Law principle or the Grace principle. They have tried either to establish their own righteousness, or they have accepted and trusted in God's righteousness. Thus both principles have been operative during the dispensation of Grace.

In Eden all mankind failed the test of obedience (Law) which God set before our representative head. Since the Fall, God has worked with guilty, depraved human beings only on the basis of Grace. All men are naturally UNDER LAW; by being joined to Christ and to the benefits of His redemption via the Grace principle they come UNDER GRACE.

We are no longer under the Law or bound to the Law, but rather we are delivered from the Law and dead to the Law.

Since the Law has binding authority over a person only as long as he or she lives (7:1), and since we have been united to Christ and to the death to the Law which He accomplished for us (7:4), therefore in Christ we have died to the binding authority of the Law, as far as our old relationship to it is concerned.

Christ has fulfilled all of the Law's demands in our stead; therefore we are not bound to fulfill its demands ourselves!

Christ has taken upon Himself all of the Law's condemnation in our stead; therefore there is no further condemnation for us!

Paul illustrates and applies this motif in 7:1-6.

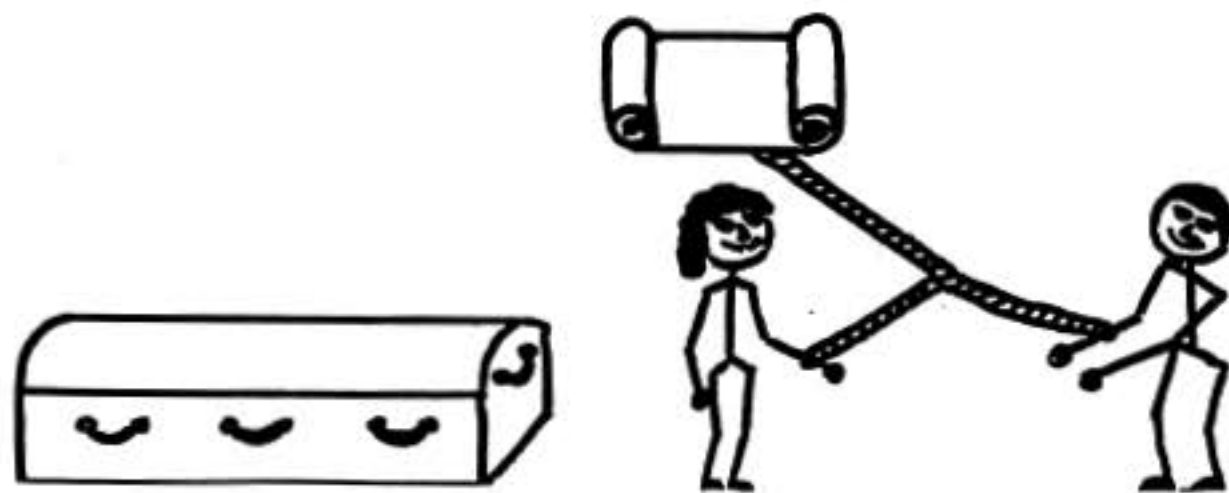
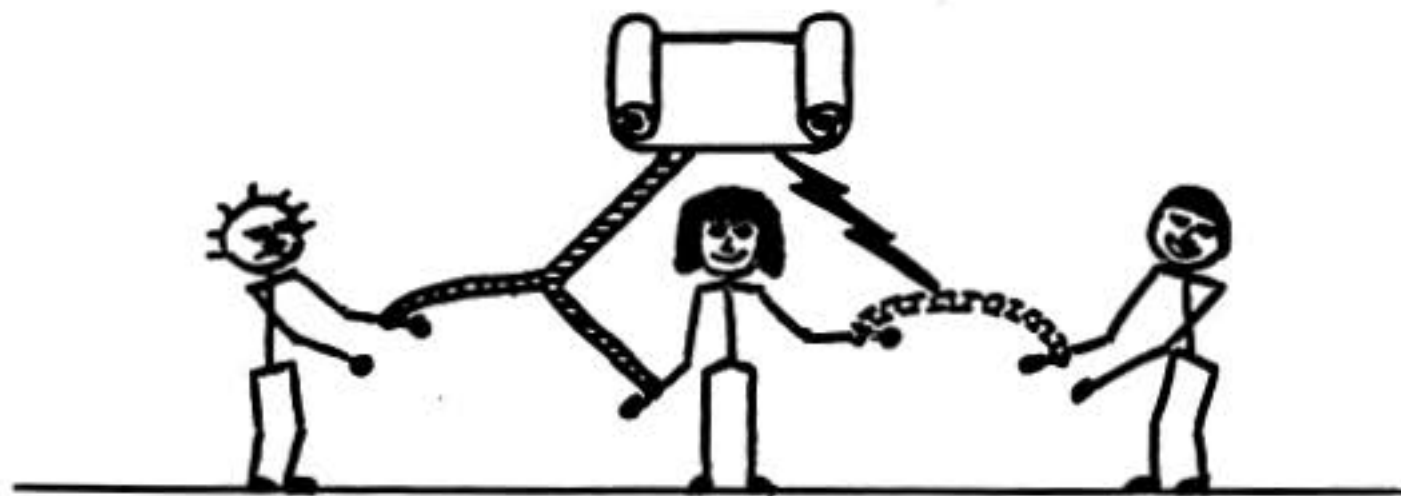
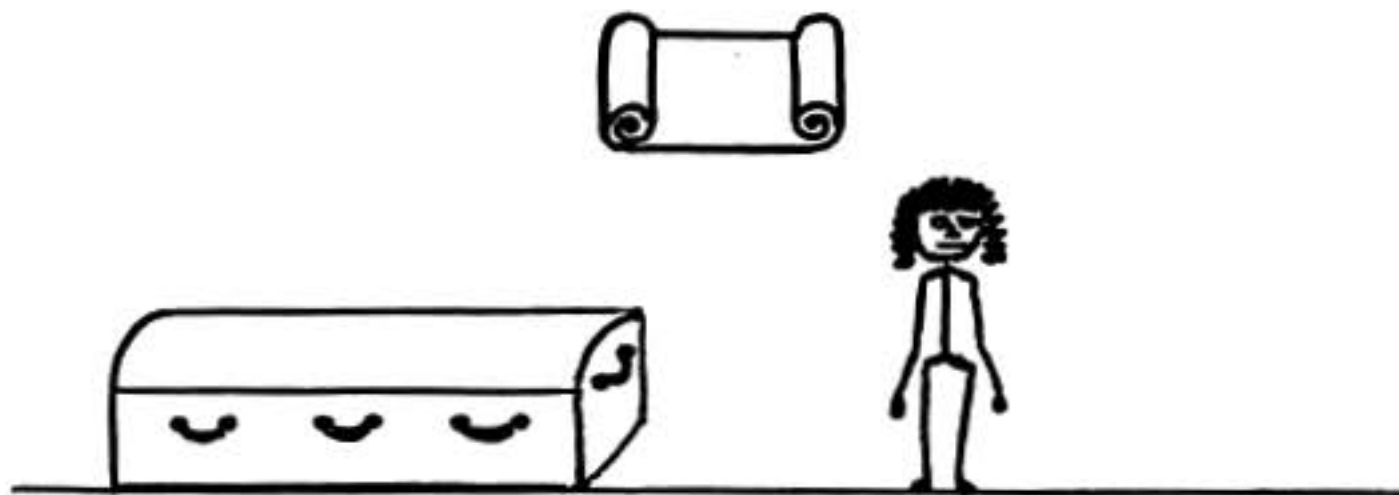
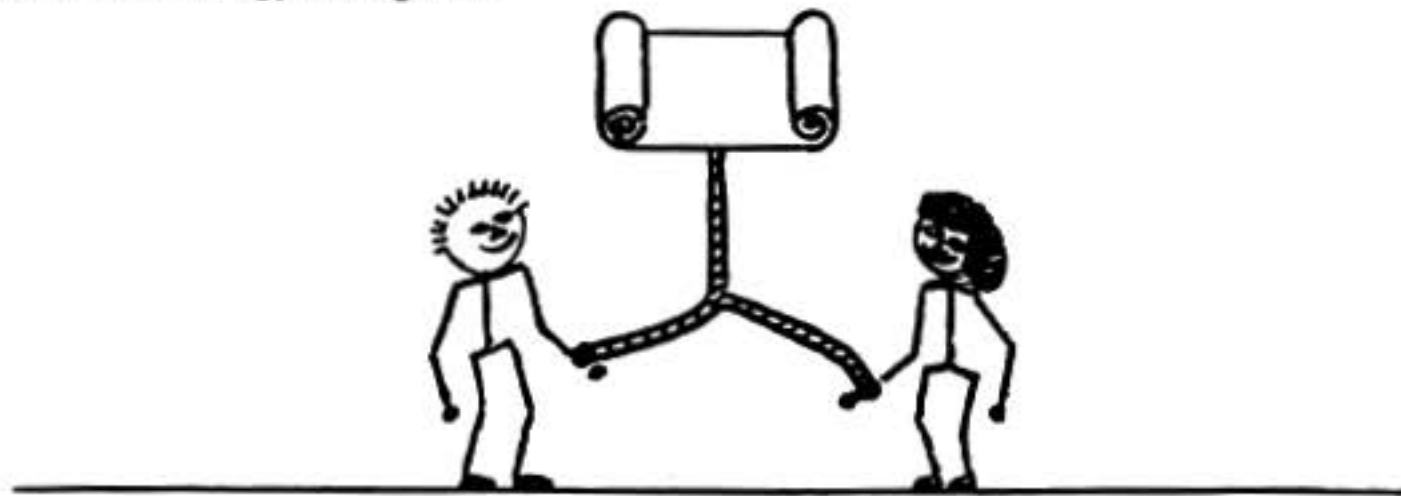
In 7:7-12 Paul gives us an autobiographical account of his coming to an understanding of his old relationship to the Law; and he draws a conclusion concerning the moral status of the Law:

- 7    What shall we say then? is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, You shall not covet.
- 8    But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.
- 9    And I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the Commandment came, sin became alive, and I died;
- 10   and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;
- 11   for sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me.
- 12   So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

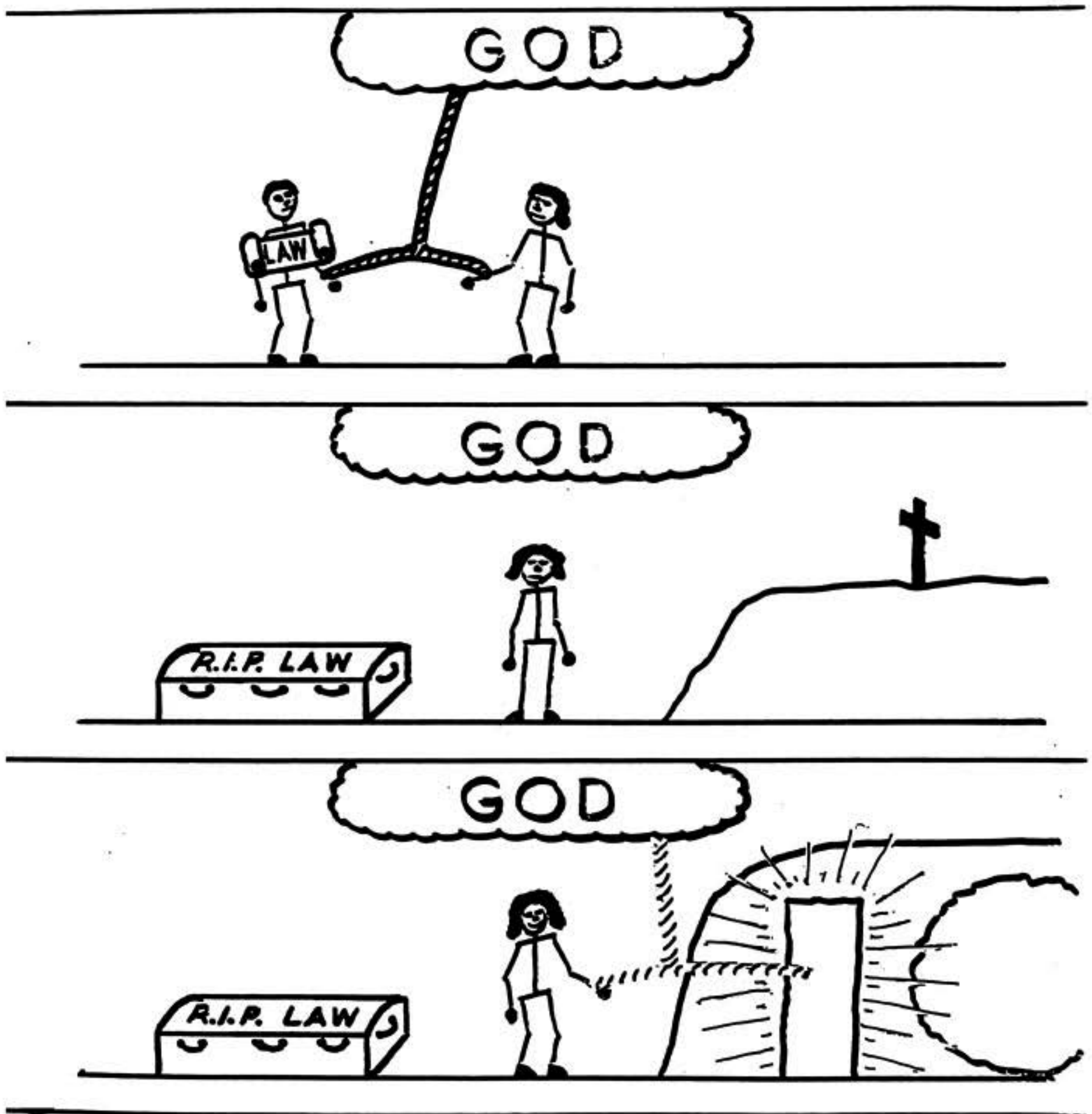
The question, "Is the Law sin?" is suggested by what Paul said in verse 5. He said that the sinful passions were aroused by the Law to bear fruit for death. If the Law aroused the sinful passions, then isn't the Law sin? Paul answers that he would not have come to know sin except through the Law.

Does Paul mean that he would not have come to know cognitively that coveting is sin unless the Law had said, "You shall not covet?" Or does he have a deeper meaning in mind?

Verse 8 helps us with this question. Paul says that sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in him coveting of every kind.







The Law not only made him cognitively aware of coveting as sin; it also made him experientially aware of coveting as sin. The Law aroused Paul's sinful passions, and thus he came to know sin in both the cognitive and the experiential senses, not only objectively but also subjectively, not only outside himself but also within himself!

Now Paul makes a series of affirmations that is difficult to understand.

He says he was once apart from Law, and then the Law came to him.

He says that sin was once dead in him, and then sin sprang to life in him.

He says that the Law was intended to bring life, but the Law brought only death to him.

He says that he was once alive, and then he died.

What can these affirmations mean, especially in view of what we know of Paul's background and life up to the time of his conversion?

When was Paul ever apart from the Law? in Philippians 3:4-6 he says that he was brought up from childhood as a Pharisee, and was found blameless as to the righteousness which is in the Law. In Acts 22:3 he tells us that he was born in Tarsus but brought up in Jerusalem and educated under the great Rabbi Gamaliel (mentioned in the Mishnah) strictly according to the law of his fathers. And in Acts 26:4-5 Paul says that the Jews knew his manner of life from youth onward, that he was the strictest kind of Pharisee. So we must ask: When was Paul ever apart from the Law?

And when did the Law come to him, if he learned about the Law from his early childhood? As far as factual knowledge of the Law, Paul was never apart from the Law!

When was sin dead in Paul? And when did sin spring to life in him? Was he not a sinner from his mother's womb? even if "dead" means "dormant", when and why did sin spring to life in him?

Was the Law intended to bring spiritual life to Paul? Was the Law given to justify human beings and give them eternal life? And if it was given to bring life, why did it bring death to Paul? Was not Paul an observant Jew, a strict Jew who obeyed the commandments, a Pharisee of the Pharisees by his own testimony?

When was Paul once spiritually alive? And when did he die spiritually?

How can these affirmations be explained?

Perhaps the following suggestions will help to explain what Paul is saying in this passage.

(1) Paul says he was once apart from Law, and then the Law came to him.

Suggestion: Paul was once without correct understanding of the Law; then Paul was awakened to a correct understanding of the Law.

## The Law and Sin in Paul's Self-Experience (Rom. 7:8b-11)

① Paul was once apart from Law  
Then the Law came to Paul

② Sin was once dead in Paul  
Then sin sprang to life in Paul

③ The Law was intended to  
bring life  
But the Law brought death

④ Paul was once alive  
Then Paul died

## *Suggested Explanation of the Law and Sin in Paul's Self- Experience (Rom. 7:8b-11)*

- ① *Paul was once without correct understanding of the Law  
Then Paul was awakened to a correct understanding of the Law*
- ② *Sin was once relatively inactive in Paul as far as conviction of transgression was concerned  
Then sin sprang to life in Paul's knowledge, self-experience, and conviction*
- ③ *The Law was never intended to be used by sinners to earn a right standing before God,*

but rather to show justified sinners how to live;  
Paul once used it to justify himself

The Law now showed that  
Paul's attempt's to justify himself led to condemnation

④ Paul once considered himself  
spiritually alive, and worthy  
of eternal life

Paul now realized that he was  
a dead man, dead in trespasses and sins, and worthy  
of eternal death

- (2) Paul says that sin was once dead in him, and then sin sprang to life in him.

Suggestion: Sin was once relatively inactive in Paul as far as conviction of transgression was concerned; then sin sprang to life in Paul's knowledge, self-experience, and conviction.

- (3) Paul says that the Law was intended to bring life, but that the Law brought only death.

Suggestion: The Law was never intended to be used by sinners to earn a right standing before God, but rather to show justified sinners how to live; Paul once used it to justify himself. The Law now showed that Paul's attempts to justify himself led to condemnation.

- (4) Paul says that he was once alive, and then he died.

Suggestion: Paul once considered himself spiritually alive, and worthy of eternal life; now he realized that he was a dead man, dead in trespasses and sins, and worthy of eternal death.

2. The second motif in this aspect of Paul's teaching may be expressed in the statement: We now live lives of internal spiritual conflict.

Paul develops this motif in Romans 7:13-8:2.

In 7:13-20 the apostle describes this internal conflict in the life of the justified believer. Of course, there are interpreters who believe this section is dealing with Paul's self-experience as an unregenerate man rather than as a regenerate person. In this connection it is useful to look at those statements in this passage that could be used to argue in favor of taking this as referring to his unregenerate state, and then at those statements that argue in favor of taking this as referring to his regenerate state. For this purpose we look at verses 14-25. The key questions to be asked are: Could the first set of statements refer to a regenerate person? and Could the second set of statements refer to an unregenerate person?

It would appear that the two sets of statements could refer to a regenerate person who is experiencing internal spiritual conflict.

On the one hand we see God's perfect Law of righteousness being written into our hearts, in the form of a principle of innate righteousness, so that the righteous requirements of the Law of God are being reflected in righteous desires and righteous conduct.

On the other hand, the innate sin principle is striving to entice, overpower, and rule us, in order to produce unrighteous desires and conduct.



## ROMANS 7:14-25

### Unregenerate Saul or Regenerate Paul

#### In favor of unregenerate Saul:

vs. 14 – “I am carnal, sold under sin.”

vs. 15 – “what I would, that do I not.”

vs. 18 – “I know that in me...  
dwelleth no good thing.”

vs. 23 – “bringing me into captivity  
to the law of sin which is in  
my members.”

vs. 24 – “O wretched man that I am!  
who shall deliver me from the  
body of this death?”

vs. 25 – “with the flesh (I serve) the  
law of sin.”

In favor of regenerate Paul:

vs. 15 – “that which I do I allow not”  
“what I would (do), that do I not”  
“what I hate”

vs. 16 – “I do that which I would not”

vs. 18 – “I know that in me (that is,  
in my flesh) dwelleth no good  
thing”  
“to will (the good) is present  
with me”

vs. 19 – “the good which I would”  
“the evil which I would not”

vs. 20 – “I do that I would not”

vs. 21 – “when I would do good”



vs. 22—"I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

vs. 23—"warring against the law of my mind"

vs. 25—"with the mind I myself serve the law of God"

These two principles -- the principle of innate righteousness and the principle of innate sin -- are constantly struggling within us. Which is stronger? Which will gain the victory?

In Romans 7:21-8:2 Paul gives us a remarkable insight into the internal workings of these two principles -- a kind of spiritual psychology. Nowhere else in Scripture do we find such a deep insight into the heart of a believer and the internal spiritual conflict he or she is experiencing.

The six uses of NOMOS and the correlated heart diagram serve to elucidate this insight.

### SIX USES OF NOMOS IN ROMANS 7:21-8:2

In this passage there are two distinct meanings of the Greek word NOMOS (law):

- (1) A rule or norm or standard intended to regulate conduct, established by some authority, and carrying with it certain sanctions
- (2) A principle of uniform, consistent, dependable operation of physical or mental or spiritual relationships or actions

In Romans 7:21-8:2 there are six different distinct uses of NOMOS, employing either one or the other of the two meanings given above. These six uses are as follows:

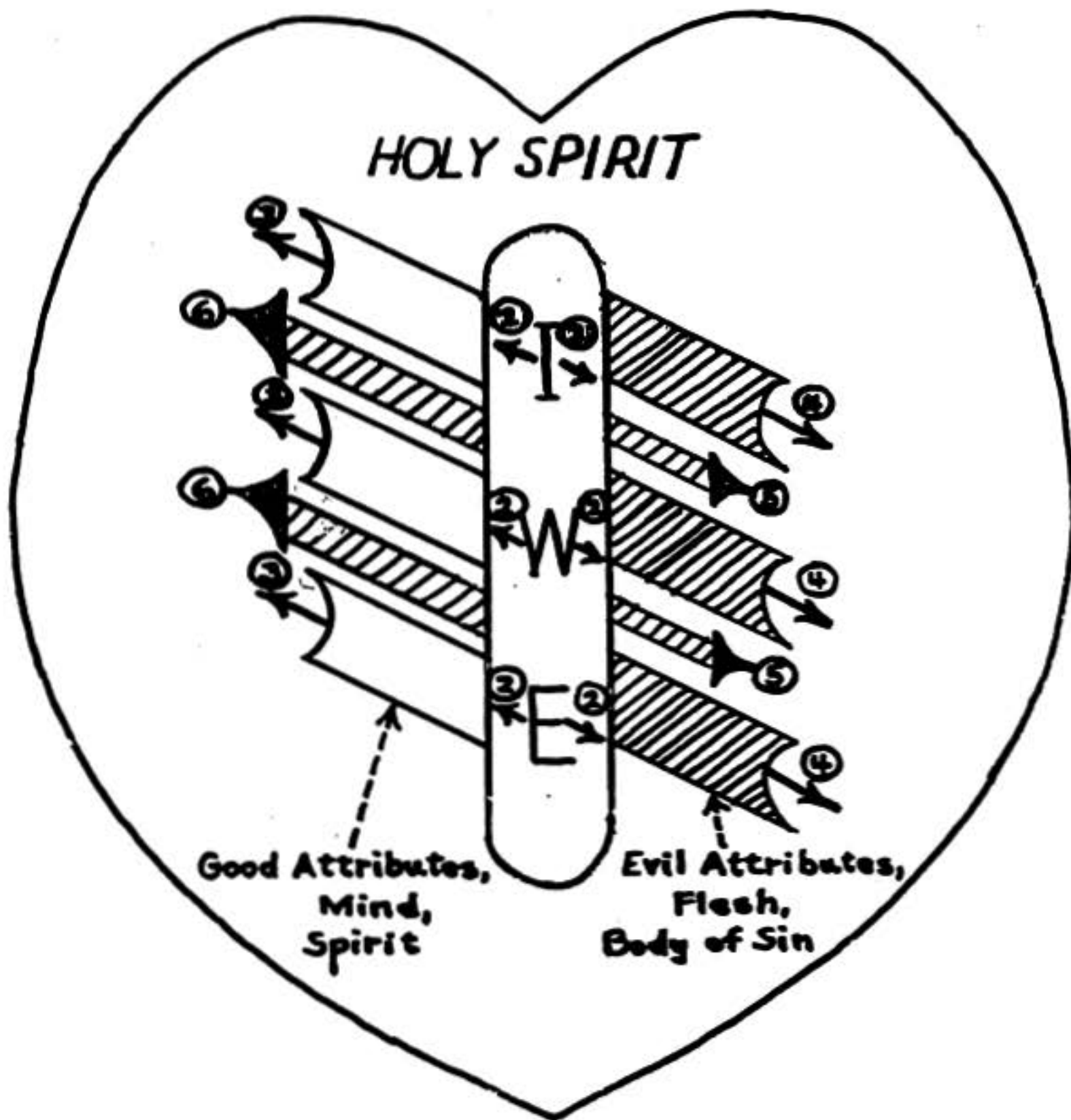
1. The objective Law of God, the moral Law of God, especially as summarized in the Ten Commandments and the two Great Laws of Christ  
  
7:22 -- "For I delight in the Law of God after the inward man"  
7:25b -- "So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God"
2. A subjective principle of complex motivation, in which I find both good and evil present in all my motives  
  
7:21 -- "I find a principle, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me"
3. A subjective principle of righteousness, inwrought in regeneration; the "Righteousness Principle"  
  
7:23b -- "warring against the principle of my mind"
4. A subjective principle to sin, the Sin Principle inherent in my faculties; the principle which once bound me, under Law, to death  
  
7:23c -- "and bringing me into captivity to the principle of sin which is in my members"  
7:25c -- "but with the flesh the principle of sin"  
8:2b -- "hath made me free from the principle of sin and death"

5. A subjective principle of a strong tendency toward evil, operating in my faculties

7:23a -- "But I see another principle in my members, warring against the principle of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the principle of sin which is in my members"

6. A subjective principle of a prevailing tendency, a ruling disposition, toward righteousness, communicated by the Holy Spirit in regeneration

8:2a -- "For the principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the principle of sin and death"



3. The third motif in this aspect of Paul's teaching may be expressed in the statement: We are to live in a new relationship to the Law of God.

Although God's perfect Law of righteousness is being written into our hearts so that it is becoming part of our very nature, this does not mean that we can dispense with or set aside the objective standard of righteousness and simply and passively let the Holy Spirit write God's will on our hearts.

Rather, we are called to active obedience to the revealed will of God for our obedience. How can we obey if there is no command or requirement? We are called upon to offer our faculties as instruments of righteousness; what does God want us to do with those faculties? We are called upon to live, not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit; this involves denying expression to certain specific forms of sin and giving expression to certain specific forms of righteousness. What are these forms? We are called on to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ. How do we do that? Do we decide what love is? Do we decide what forms its expression will take? Are we left without direction or guidance in these important matters?

The pursuit of holiness is not a passive "standing aside" to let the Holy spirit produce holiness in us, but an active seeking to bring our character and conduct into ever greater conformity with God's revealed will, the meanwhile realizing that it is the Holy Spirit who is constantly working in us both the willing and the doing of His good pleasure.

If we are going to God's will, we must know it, and in order to know it, we need God's objective revelation of His will.

The internal principle of righteousness communicated to us by the Holy Spirit does not reveal to us a knowledge of the will of God. It disposes us toward righteousness, but we need to know what righteousness is so that we can do it!

Thus we need both the outer standard of righteousness and the inner dynamic of righteousness; we need the revealed will of God as our objective standard of obedience, and we need the inworked principle of righteousness as a subjective wellspring of obedience.

Thus we have a new relationship to the Law of God.

In the first place we are dead to the binding authority of the Law of God to demand from us perfect obedience upon penalty of condemnation. There is no condemnation to those who are in union with Christ Jesus! Christ has taken all of my condemnation upon Himself, and there is none left over to fall upon me! Thank God:

Payment He will not twice demand;  
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine.

In the second place, although there is an intense spiritual conflict going on inside every believer, we have God's own Word for it that the principle of righteousness communicated by the Holy Spirit is stronger, and that it prevails over the principle of innate sin.

God's grace is greater than our sin, not only in justification but also in sanctification!

And in the third place, we now live in a new relationship to the Law of God. It continues to be a revelation of God's will for our obedience, but now we delight in knowing it and obeying it! It informs us what righteousness is and what sin is, so that we can practice the former and avoid the latter.

Just as the Law was given to chosen and redeemed Israel as a rule by which to live, so the moral Law of God is our *Lebensregel*, our rule of life.

Of course, those aspects of God's Law that prefigured and foreshadowed Christ, and therefore were fulfilled when Christ the substance came; those offerings and ceremonies and ordinances that were given specifically to Israel as proper forms of worship; and those Judicial regulations that were given specifically to Israel to provide good order in the civic sphere, and protection from and punishment for crime -- these aspects of God's Law do not bind our consciences today, except for such principles as carry over into what the Westminster divines called the New Testament dispensation of the covenant of grace.

But those values and forms of God's Law that govern our moral duties to God and our fellow human beings, those that are summarized in the Ten Commandments and epitomized by our Lord in the two great commandments to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves -- these aspects continue to bind our consciences and define right conduct for us, and continue to be our rule of life, together with other revelations of the will of God recorded in the New Testament.

The Law of God in any age is the will of God addressed to our obedience, it is the rule of life for those who are justified!

Thus it is eminently true, as the beloved John says in I John 2:17, that "the man who does the will of God lives forever." He who does the will of God experiences true life now as he walks in righteousness; and he will experience true life forever in that place where righteousness will characterize not only our environment but will permeate and fill us through and through!

Then and only then will we fully experience and appreciate that eternal life which is the gift of God's grace through the atoning work of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ!

This brings us to our third step in sanctification.

- C. Step Three in sanctification is recognizing and acting upon our new relationship to innate righteousness: that of life.

As in step one, this new relationship may be seen in three phases or stages, and the first of these is that:

1. We are completely alive to the mastery of innate righteousness.

Let us note three references in this section of the epistle.

6:17-18 -- "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which

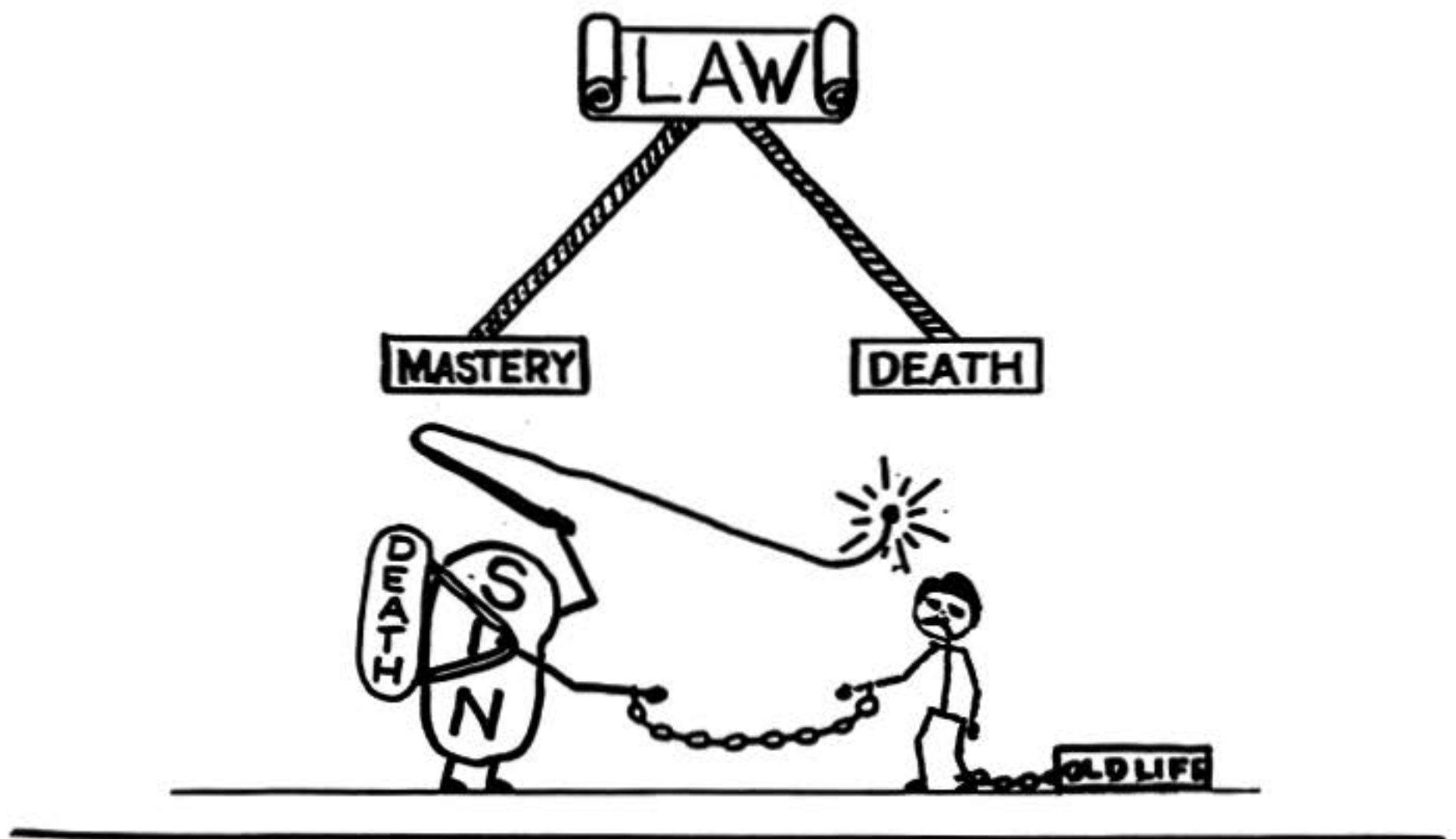
Step Three in Sanctification:  
recognizing and acting upon  
our new relationship to  
innate righteousness—that  
of life.

Phase 1—We are completely alive to the mastery of innate righteousness.

Phase 2—We are to be becoming progressively more alive to the power of innate righteousness.

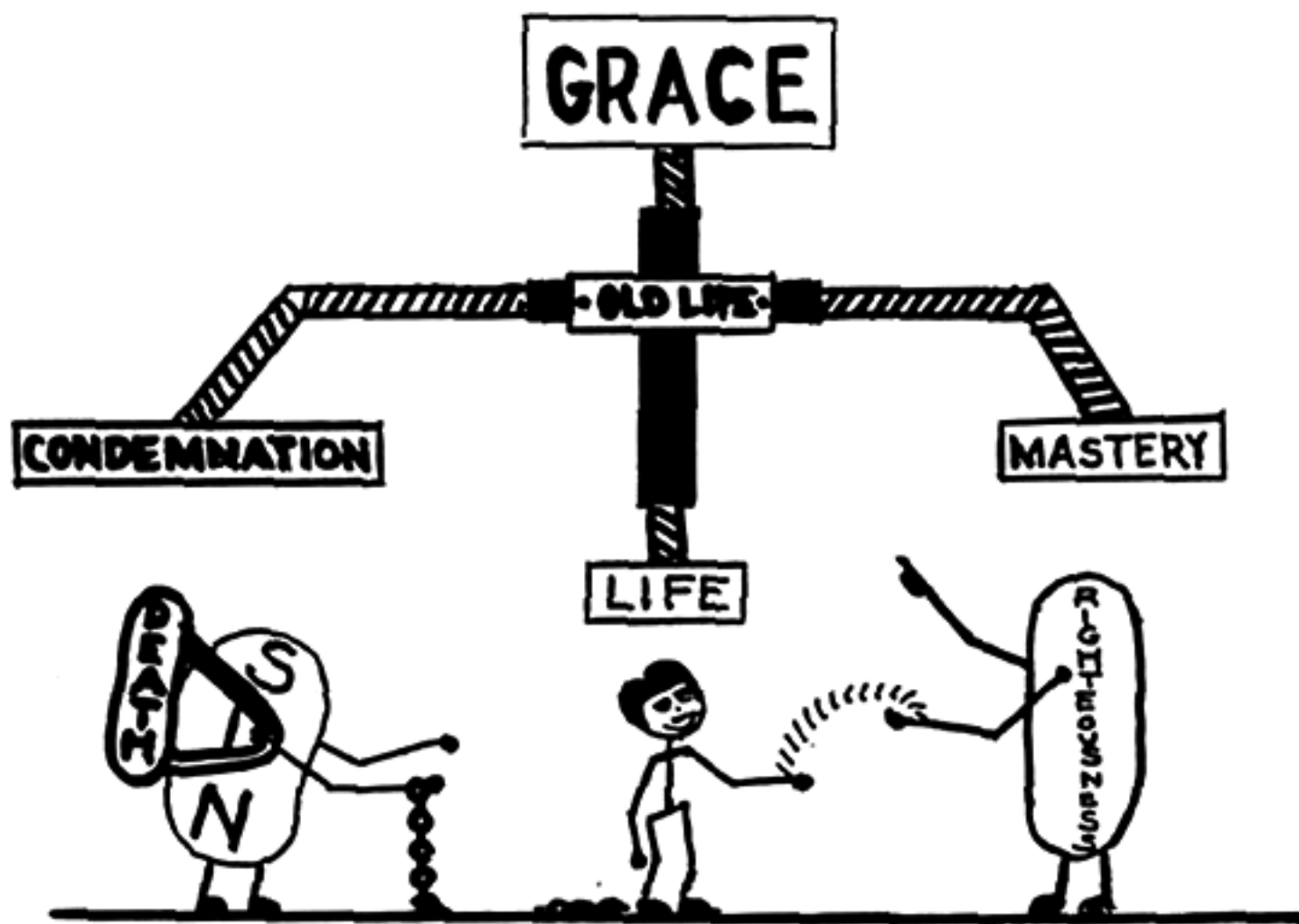
Phase 3—We will one day be made completely alive to the power and presence of innate righteousness.

# The Economy of Law as respects Sanctification





# The Economy of Grace as respects Sanctification



you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."

6:22 -- "But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life."

8:2 -- "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."

We have become slaves of righteousness, enslaved to God, and have been freed from the sin principle by the righteousness principle communicated by the Holy Spirit to us at regeneration.

Because the righteousness principle has been communicated to us in such a way that it has become part of our nature (what we now are), John in his First Epistle can state with confidence that the true believer in Christ is one who is characterized by righteousness -- "everyone who practices righteousness is righteous" -- and that the one who has been born of God cannot practice sin, because God's seed remains in Him.

This great truth can be traced through John's First Epistle with the help of a charting of statements regarding the begotten-one's relationship to sin and righteousness.

#### Literal Translation of the Selected Scriptures

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1:6  | "If we are saying that we are having fellowship with Him and are walking in the darkness, we are lying and not doing the truth."  |
| 1:7  | "But if we are walking in the light as He is in the light, we are having fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus His Son is cleansing us from every sin."                        |
| 1:8  | "If we are saying that we are not having sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us."   |
| 1:9  | "If we are confessing our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us the sins and to cleanse us from every unrighteousness."   |
| 1:10 | "If we are saying that we have not sinned, we are making Him a liar and His word is not in us."   |
| 2:1  | "My little children, these things I am writing to you in order that you may not sin. And if anyone should sin, we are having an intercessor with the Father, Jesus Christ (the) righteous." |
| 2:2  | "And He is the satisfaction for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."  |
| 2:3  | "And by this we are knowing that we have known Him, if we are keeping His commandments."  |
| 2:4  | "The one saying, 'I have known Him,' and is not keeping His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."  |

- 2:9 "The one saying that he is in the light and is hating his brother is in the darkness until now."
- 2:10 "The one loving his brother is remaining in the light, and there is not in him an occasion of stumbling."
- 2:11 "But the one hating his brother is in the darkness and is walking in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness blinded his eyes."
- 2:29 "If you know that He is righteous, you are also knowing that everyone who is doing the righteousness has been begotten of Him."
- 3:6 "Everyone who is remaining in Him is not sinning. Everyone who is sinning has not seen Him neither known Him."
- 3:7 "Little children, let no one deceive you. The one doing the righteousness is righteous, even as that one is righteous."
- 3:9 "Everyone who has been begotten of God is not doing sin, because His seed is remaining in Him, and he is not able to be sinning, because he has been begotten of God."
- 3:14 "We are knowing that we have passed over out of death into life, because we are loving the brothers."
- 3:24 "And the one keeping His commandments is remaining in Him and He in him. And by this we are knowing that He is remaining in us, by the Spirit whom He has given to us."
- 4:7 "Beloved ones, let us be loving one another, because love (AGAPE) is of God, and everyone who is loving has been begotten of God and is knowing God."
- 4:12 "No one has seen God at any time. If we are loving one another, God is remaining in us and His love is perfected in us."
- 4:16 "And we have known and have believed the love which God is having in us. God is love (AGAPE), and the one remaining in love is remaining in God and God is remaining in him."
- 5:1 "Everyone who is believing that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God, and everyone who is loving the one who begot is also loving the one having been begotten of Him."
- 5:16 "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not to death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life, to those who are sinning not to death. There is a sin to death. I am not saying that he should make request for that."
- 5:18 "We are knowing that everyone who has been begotten of God is not sinning, but the one who was begotten of God is keeping him, and the evil one is not taking hold of him."

## THE BEGOTTEN ONE'S RELATIONSHIP TO SIN

## AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE

	S I N			R I G H T E O U S N E S S		
	To Commit an Act of Sin	To Be Commit- ing Acts of Sin	To Be Engaged in the Practice of Sin	To Commit an Act of Right- eousness	To Be Commit- ing Acts of Right- eousness	To Be Engaged in the Practice of Right- eousness
	.	. . . .	-----	.	. . . .	-----
1:6						
1:7						
1:8						
1:9						
1:10						
2:1						
2:2						
2:3						
2:4						
2:9						
2:10						
2:11						
2:29						
3:6						
3:7						
3:9						
3:14						
3:24						
4:7						
4:12						
4:16						
5:1						
5:16						
5:18						

2. The second phase of Step Three is that we are to be becoming progressively more alive to the power of innate righteousness.

Paul deals with this phase in a few places in this section of the book.

6:13b -- "present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

6:19c -- "so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification."

8:4 -- "in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." The walk according to the Spirit appears to mean to live under the increasing control of the Holy Spirit, whose purpose it is to produce righteous character and conduct in us.

8:5-6 -- "For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace."

To set one's mind on the things of the Spirit appears to mean to dwell upon, concentrate on, think about, the things that pertain to the Holy Spirit rather than the things that pertain to innate sin. It means to think about righteous things and to be molded by them rather than by sinful things or things that do not edify. It means to concentrate on:

"whatever is true, what is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things."

8:12 -- "So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh -- "

The implication in this unfinished sentence is that we are obligated to live according to the Spirit.

Now to speak of being debtors, of being obliged, strongly implies the idea of motivation and the part that it plays in sanctification.

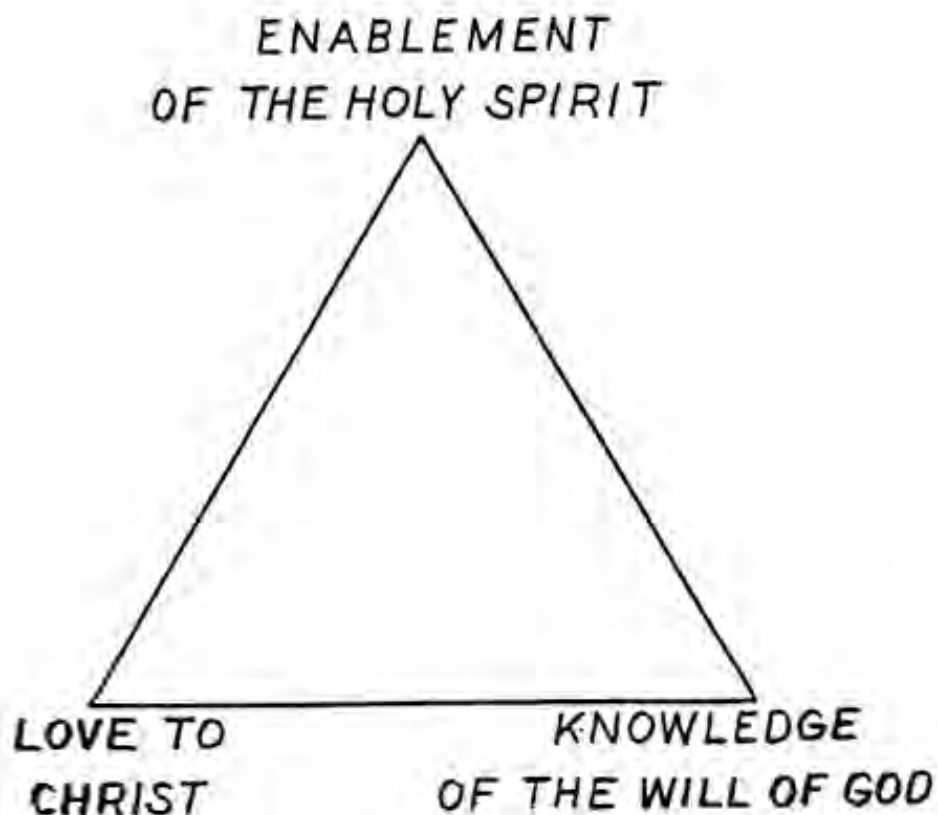
At first glance a new believer could be led to think that, with the external revelation of the will of God as the standard of righteousness, and the internal principle of righteousness communicated in regeneration, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to provide the enablement to righteousness, he or she has everything necessary for progress in sanctification. And in one sense, he or she does have everything.

However, in another sense there is one more ingredient needed if the believer is to discharge his obligation, not to live according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. And that ingredient is love.

We recall that our Lord said in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." and in 14:21, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me;" In I John 2:5 the apostle writes: "But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected." And in Galatians 5:6 Paul writes, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love." In this very epistle to the Romans Paul says, "I urge you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice." These mercies focus upon the redemptive work of Christ, and thus gratitude toward and love to Christ become powerful motivators toward obedience.

I would therefore propose, in addition to the internal principle of righteousness communicated in regeneration, three basic components in subjective sanctification. I believe that the justified sinner who has been united to Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit needs to know the will of God as to what God wants him to be and to do; needs the inner dynamic and enablement of the Holy Spirit in order to please God; and needs proper and sufficient motivation to want to do the will of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. This motivation is love to Christ.

Just as the believer must grow in the understanding of God's revealed will, and learn to depend upon the enabling grace of God's Spirit, so he must develop and strengthen his desires to do God's will in sanctification, for the sake of love to Christ.



To facilitate these objectives, I would propose a set of "regulative principles relevant to the pursuit of holiness."

#### REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES RELEVANT TO THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

1. Realize that, if you have savingly believed on Christ, you have not only been justified; you have been experientially united to Christ and to all of the benefits of His redemption.
2. Realize that, if you have been experientially united to Christ, you have died to the master of the sin-principle, and have been made alive to the mastery of the righteousness-principle. Sin can never again be your master!
3. Recognize the fact that, although the righteousness-principle is your new master, still it is possible for you to be unfaithful to your master, and to allow your old master, the sin-principle (which is still active in you), to regain temporary rule over your faculties, and to produce unrighteous acts.
4. Recognize therefore the fact that, if you are justified and regenerate, then you have the ability to do good (because of the righteousness-principle in you) as well as the ability to do evil (because of the sin-principle remaining in you).
5. Recognize the fact that there is an important distinction between what a person is, and what a person is becoming; and recognize the fact that you are becoming (as a pattern, a life-style, a general long-range tendency) is a fairly accurate indicator of what you are.
6. Realize that, just as at one time the sin-principle actively exerted mastery in and over you, so now the righteousness-principle actively exerts mastery in and over you.
7. Recognize the fact that each new moment of becoming carries with it the potentiality for good as well as the possibility of evil.
8. Recognize the fact that there is an important distinction between what you are becoming and what you ought to be becoming.
9. Recognize the fact that each new moment of becoming carries with it an obligation to decide to become what you ought to become.
10. Recognize the fact that you are a love-debtor to Christ to decide at each moment to deny actuality to the possibility of evil and to actualize your potentiality for good.
11. Recognize the fact that mere realization and recognition of these principles does not automatically guarantee that you will actualize your potentiality for good, but that you must have the enablement of the indwelling Holy Spirit in order both to decide for good, and to do it!
12. Realize that, having yielded yourself to the mastery of Christ, and having prayed for the enablement of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary for you to will to do good, and it is necessary for you to do it!

13. Realize, both after and before you actualize your potentiality for good, that since God's grace is ultimately responsible for every step in progress in holiness, He deserves to receive all of the glory!
3. The third phase of Step Three in sanctification is that we have the guarantee that we will one day be made completely alive to the power and presence of innate righteousness.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that we have come to:

Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect. (Hebrews 12:22-23)

Think of it! Here are righteous persons who have been made perfect or fully mature or complete! These are persons who were declared perfectly righteous on the basis of the credited righteousness of Christ, but who were far from perfect in their character and conduct. But now (at the time of which the writer was speaking) they have been made perfect in character and conduct!

The Apostle John says, "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is." we will be like Him, the risen, ascended, glorified Christ, our Savior and Lord!

This glorification will include, not only deliverance from the remaining power and the very presence of sin, but also the redemption of our bodies, through resurrection or transformation. And it will include the production of such a righteous character and conduct in us as we have never known or experienced before!

Paul speaks of this third phase in Romans 8:14-18 and 28-30.

Now we can get before us all of the steps, phases, and motifs related to sanctification. Now also we can suggest a more comprehensive outline of the components of sanctification, and a diagram of the way of progressive sanctification.

## CONCLUSION

What a wonderful plan of salvation has been provided for us through Christ!

Now we can look back to Romans 1:16-17 and grasp the full significance of what Paul meant when he wrote, "For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed by faith from first to last."



## COMPONENTS OF SUBJECTIVE SANCTIFICATION

(deliverance from the power and presence of innate depravity and sin)

The SOURCE of Sanctification . . . . . The Grace of God

The POSSIBILITY and BASIS of Sanctification . . . . . The Redemptive Work of Christ

The MEANS of Sanctification . . . . . Union with Christ

The INITIAL APPLICATION of Sanctification . . . . . Regeneration

The DIVINE INSTRUMENT of Sanctification . . . . . The Word of God

The HUMAN CONDITION of Sanctification . . . . . Faith

The DIVINE STANDARD of Sanctification . . . . . The Will of God addressed  
to man's obedience

The MOTIVATION of Sanctification . . . . . Love to Christ

The ENABLEMENT of Sanctification . . . . . The Power of the Holy Spirit

The ACTUALIZATION of Sanctification . . . . . The moment-by-moment Decision

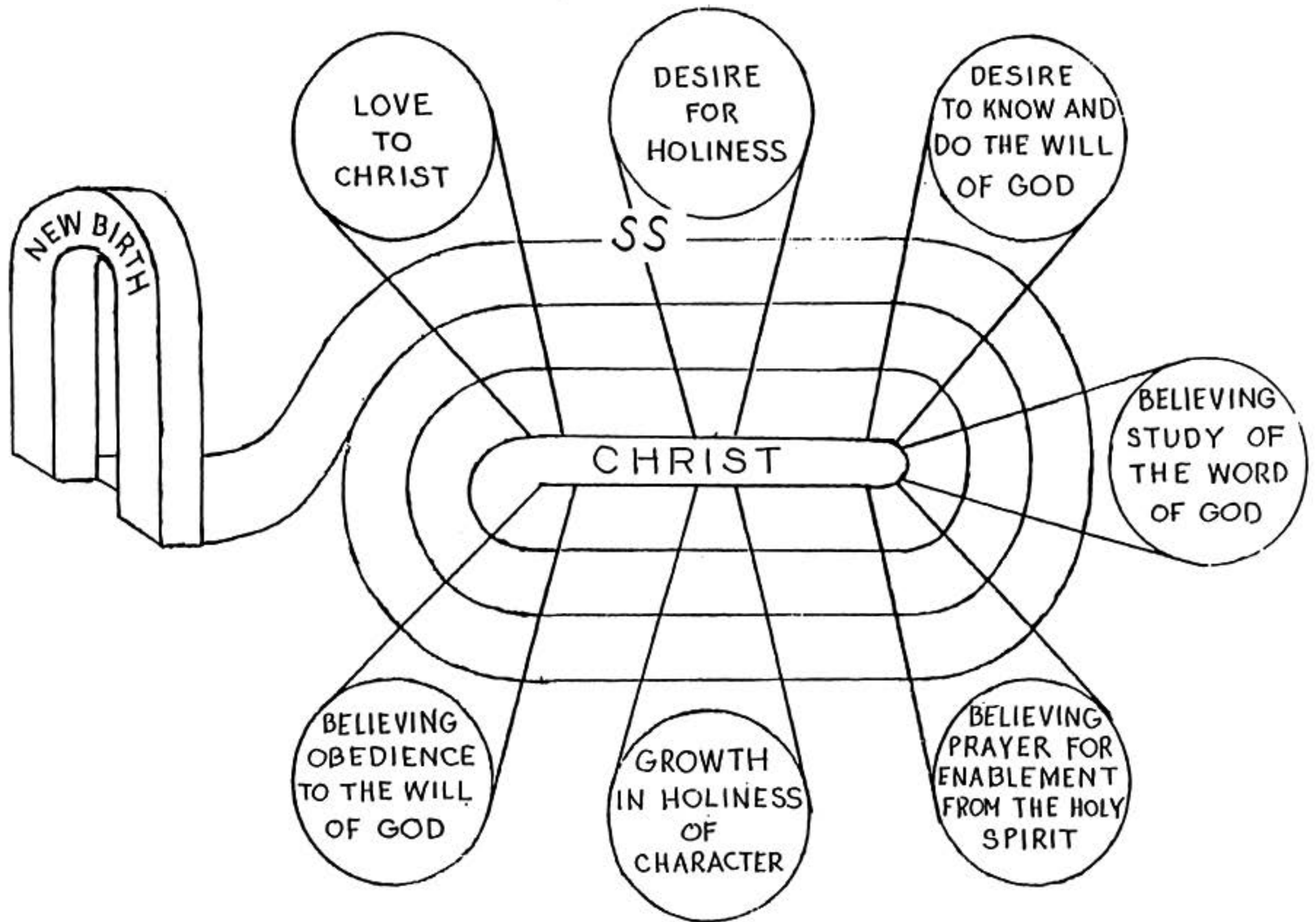
The SUBJECTIVE EFFECT of Sanctification . . . . . Progress In holiness of character

The OBJECTIVE EXPRESSION of Sanctification . . . . . Progress in holiness of conduct,  
marked by joyful obedience to the Will of God

The PROXIMATE GOAL of Sanctification . . . . . Complete likeness to Christ

The ULTIMATE GOAL of Sanctification . . . . . The Glory of God

# *The Way of Progressive Sanctification*



Now we can add a fourth meaning of the righteousness of God to the other three; namely, God's production of righteous character and conduct (moral righteousness or holiness) in the one who trusts in Christ and His atoning work.

What a wonderful revelation of the righteousness of God is found in the gospel! What marvelous good news! And what a wonderful deliverance from sin and to righteousness is applied to every one who trusts in Jesus Christ!

No wonder the Apostle ends this third major section of his epistle by asking, what then shall we say to these things? in 8:31-39 he asks and answers three important questions:

First, who can be against us, if God is for us?

Second, who can condemn us, if God declares us righteous?

Third, who can separate us from God's love, if God loves us in Christ and for His sake?

The answers Paul gives are clear, definite, and ringingly final:

No one can be against us, in the final, ultimate sense!

No one can condemn us before the bar of God's righteous judgment!

No one and nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ!

But these answers are true only for those whom God has savingly united to Jesus Christ and His saving work by the Holy Spirit through faith.

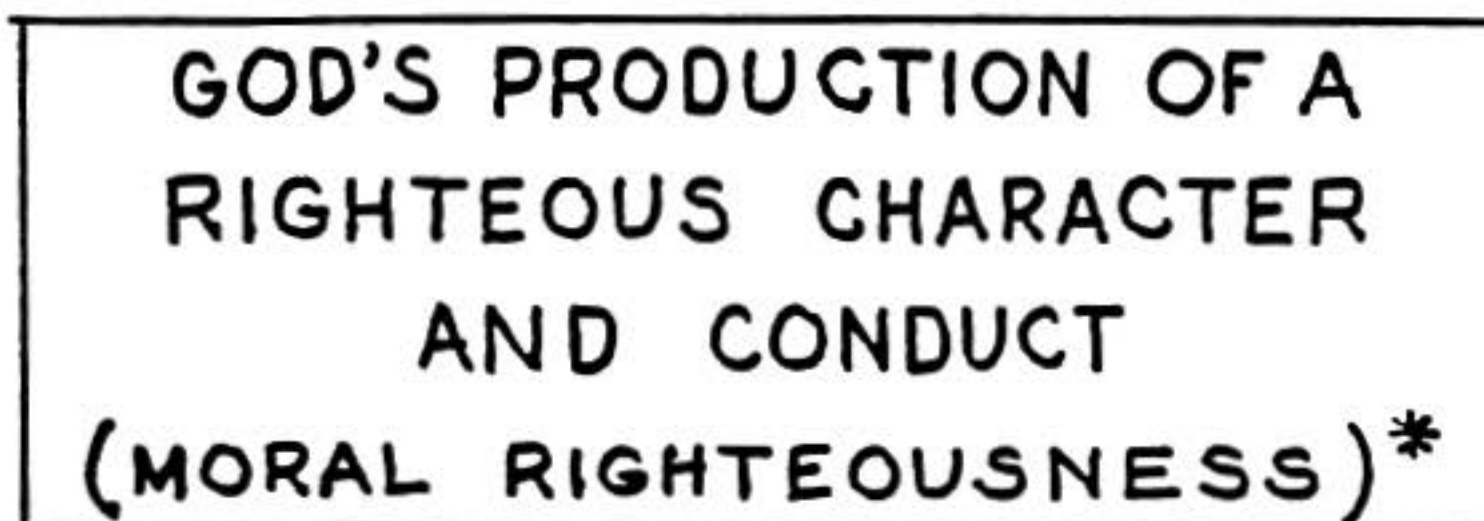
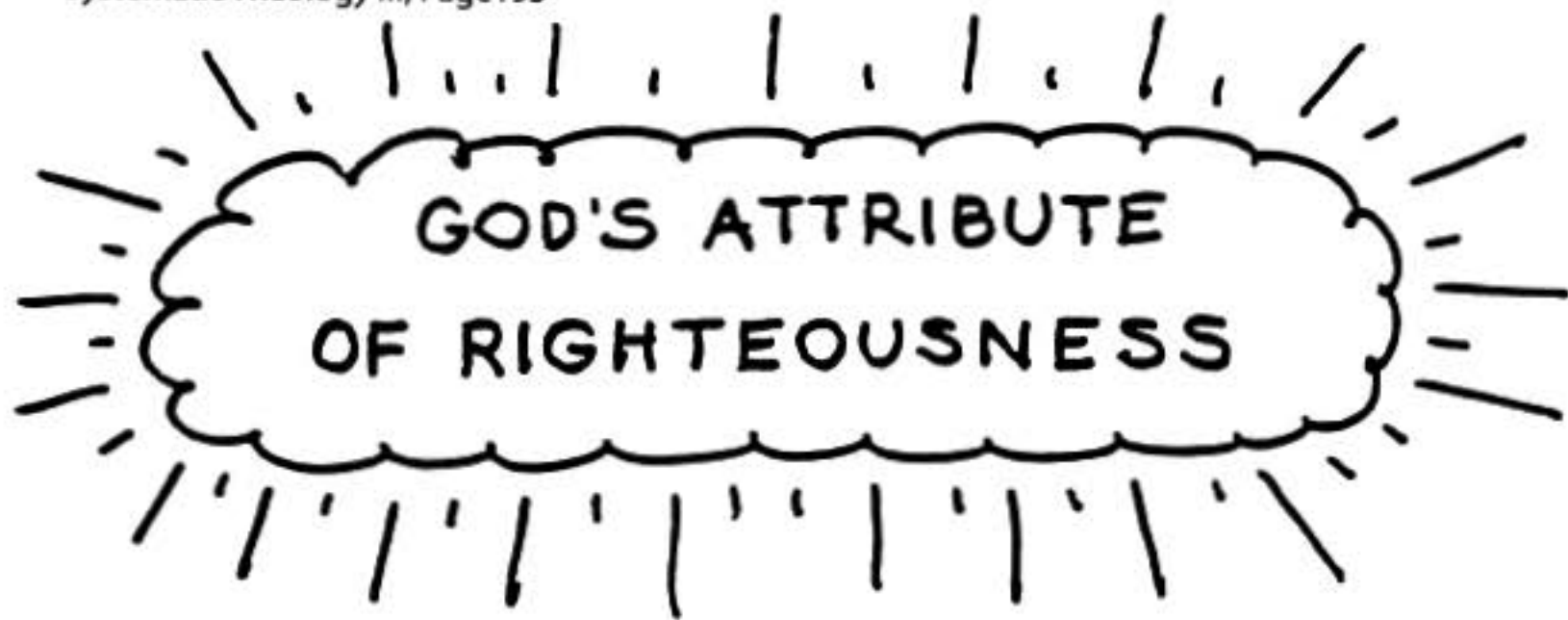
Let us ask ourselves: Am I trusting in Jesus Christ and His atoning work as revealed in the gospel?

If I am, then all of the benefits of Christ's salvation are my portion and inheritance.

And if this is so, then let us together lay hold of all, that God has graciously given us in Christ! Let us not shrink back from claiming and enjoying all that Christ has purchased for us, especially His perfect gift of righteousness, imputed to us for our justification, and imparted to us for our sanctification.

This is indeed the good news of deliverance from sin through the revelation of God's righteousness to everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ, whether Jew or Gentile!

This is indeed the full gospel, the gospel of deliverance from the guilt of sin to a right standing before God, deliverance from the penalty of death to the gift of life, deliverance from the power of sin to the power of righteousness, and deliverance from the presence of sin to the total presence of righteousness; and all to the glory of God's grace!



\*(HOLINESS)

## *Salvation From Sin and To God's Righteousness Through Christ's Atoning Work*

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- ① Deliverance from the guilt of sin (liability to transgressed Law) to the merit of Christ's righteousness imputed, and to the declaration of a right standing before God.
- ② Deliverance from the penalty of sin (death) to the reward of Christ's righteousness, the gift of eternal life.

- ③ Deliverance from the power of sin (the power of innate depravity) to the controlling power of Christ's righteousness, the prevailing principle of innate righteousness, communicated and sustained by the Holy Spirit
- ④ Deliverance from the presence of sin (innate depravity) to the complete presence of Christ's righteousness, the total presence of innate righteousness, established and maintained by the Holy Spirit



## THE APPLICATION OF SALVATION

### I. Common Grace

#### A. The Nature of Common Grace

The term "common grace" is used by various writers in one of two meanings. Sometimes common grace means those general operations of the Holy Spirit whereby He, without renewing the heart, exercises such a moral influence on man that sin is restrained, order is maintained in social life, and civic righteousness is promoted. Other times common grace means those general blessings which God imparts to all men without distinction as He sees fit.

In the first sense of moral influence, common grace does not enable the sinner to exercise repentance or faith, or to please God. At best it affects only the externals of a person's life; and as such it can be, and always is, resisted by the unsaved.

In the second sense of general blessings, common grace benefits all mankind, the wicked and the righteous, and is an indirect result of Christ's atonement.

Charles Hedge, in treating this topic, writes:

The gospel is a system of grace. All its blessings are gratuitously bestowed; all is so ordered that in every step of the progress of redemption and in its consummation, the grace, or undeserved love of God, is conspicuously displayed. Nothing is given or promised on the ground of merit. Everything is an undeserved favour . . . . Hence it is that the greatest of all gifts secured by the work of Christ, that without which salvation had been impossible, the Holy Ghost, in the influence which He exerts on the minds of men, has in all ages and in all parts of the Church been designated as divine grace. A work of grace is the work of the Holy Spirit; the influence of the Spirit is conveyed or exercised. By common grace therefore, it meant that influence of the Spirit, which in a greater or less measure, is granted to all who hear the truth. By sufficient grace is meant such kind and degree of the Spirit's influence, as is sufficient to lead men to repentance, faith, and a holy life. By efficacious grace is meant such an influence of the Spirit as it certainly effectual in producing regeneration and conversion. By preventing grace is intended that operation of the Spirit on the mind which precedes and excites its efforts to return to God. By the *gratia gratum faciens* is meant the influence of the Spirit which renews or renders gracious. Cooperating grace is that influence of the Spirit which aids the people of God in all the exercises of the divine life. By habitual grace is meant the Holy Spirit as dwelling in believers; or, that permanent, imminent state of mind due to his abiding presence and power. Such is the established theological and Christian usage of this word. By grace, therefore, in this connection is meant the influence of the Spirit of God on the minds of men.

-- Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), vol. 2, pp. 654-655.

B. The Means of Common Grace

God employs many means of bestowing His common grace upon human beings, but four in particular may be mentioned.

1. General revelation

External general revelation enlightens men to a knowledge of God's existence, His wisdom and power as seen in His handiwork, and His goodness in giving human beings fruitful seasons.

Psalm 19:1-4 -- "The heavens are telling of the glory of God;  
And the firmament is declaring the work of His hands.  
Day to day pours forth speech,  
And night to night reveals knowledge.  
There is no speech, nor are there words;  
Their voice is not heard.  
Their line has gone out through all the earth,  
And their utterances to the end of the world."

Romans 1:20 -- "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse."

Acts 14:17 -- "And yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness..

Internal general revelation enlightens man to an awareness of their createdness and sinfulness, their obligations to live according to their conscience and their failure to do so, and their consequent deserving of God's wrath and punishment.

Acts 17:24-29 -- "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things; and He made from one every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His offspring.' Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man."



Romans 1:32 -- "And, although they know the ordinances of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them."

Romans 2:14-15 -- "For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending themselves."

## 2. Human Government

Human government has been instituted by God to restrain men from expressing their evil tendencies in ways that are harmful to one another, and to promote cooperation, good order, and civic decency.

Romans 13:1-5 -- "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

I Peter 2:13-14 -- "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution; whether to a king as the one in authority; or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right."

I Timothy 2:1-2 -- "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity."

## 3. The special revelation of God, both in the Law and in the Gospel

The first use of the Law is to restrain human beings from expression of their depravity. The second use of the Law is to provide human beings with a mirror in which they can discern their sins. The third use of the Law is to provide a rule of life, a standard of right and wrong conduct. Transgression of the Law of God brings eternal and temporal threatenings and punishments; obedience to the Law of God thus tends to discourage unrighteousness and to encourage righteousness in the external aspects of social, civic, moral, and religious life.

Of course, the influence of the Gospel restrains evil and encourages external morality. Each person that is saved diminishes, by the amount of sin from which he or she is delivered, the evil in the world. Each person saved adds to the amount of salt and light in the world. Each true Christian church is an influence for good in its community. And wherever the Gospel has gone and spread, its influence in the social, civic, and moral spheres has been enormous!

4. The providences of God, at times punishing moral evil or rewarding moral goodness

At times it appears that God so arranges circumstances that He is seen as openly punishing moral evil by bringing temporal calamities on those who do the evil, including such calamities as illness, accident, bereavement, domestic disruption, or loss of position or possessions.

Amos 1:6-11 -- "But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities  
And lack of bread in all your places,  
Yet you have not returned to Me, declares the Lord  
And furthermore, I withheld the rain from you  
While there were still three months until harvest.  
Then I would send rain on one city  
And on another city I would not send rain;  
One part would be rained on,  
While the part not rained on would dry up.  
So two or three cities would stagger to another city to drink water,  
But you would not be satisfied;  
Yet you have not returned to Me, declares the Lord.  
I smote you with scorching wind and mildew;  
And the caterpillar was devouring  
Your many gardens and vineyards, fig trees and olive trees;  
Yet you have not returned to He, declares the Lord.  
I sent a plague among you after the manner of Egypt;  
I slew your young men by the sword along with your captured  
horses,  
And I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils;  
Yet you have not returned to Me, declares the Lord.  
I overthrew you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,  
And you were like a firebrand snatched from a blaze;  
Yet you have not returned to Me, declares the Lord."

At other times God so arranges circumstances that He is seen as openly rewarding moral uprightness by bringing temporal blessings upon those who do the good, including such blessings are long life, recovery from serious illness, material prosperity, or success in business or profession.

Exodus 1:15-12 -- "Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah, and the other was named Puah; and he said, 'When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.' But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live. So the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said to them, 'Why have you done this thing, and let the boys live?' And the midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous, and they give birth before the midwife can get to them.' so God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty. And it came about because the midwives feared God, that He established households for them."

### C. The Benefits of Common Grace

Many benefits flow from the blessing of common grace. The following may be especially noted.

#### 1. Execution of the sentence of death upon fallen man is deferred

When Adam and Eve sinned, God did not at once fully execute the sentence of death on the human race. Even now He manifests His longsuffering, as He provides time and opportunity for repentance.

Genesis 6:3 -- "Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.' "

Romans 2:4 -- "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"

II Peter 3:7-9, 15 -- "But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance . . . and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you."

#### 2. Sin is restrained in the world

Human depravity is restrained from its full development and expression, and not yet permitted to complete its destructive work.

Genesis 20:1-6 -- "Now Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then he sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, 'She is my sister.' So Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, 'Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married.' Now Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, 'Lord wilt Thou slay a nation, even though blameless? Did he not himself say to me, "She is my sister?" And she herself said, "He is my brother." In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.' Then God said to him in the dream, 'Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also kept you from sinning against He; therefore I did not let you touch her.' "

Genesis 31:4-8 -- "So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to his flock in the field, and said to them, 'I see your father's attitude, that it is not friendly toward me as formerly, but the God of my father has been with me. And you know that I have served your father with all my strength. Yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times; however, God did not allow him to hurt me. If he spoke thus, "The speckled shall be your wages," then all the flock brought forth speckled; and if he spoke thus, "The striped shall be your wages," then all the flock brought forth striped.' "

II Thessalonians 2:3-8 -- "Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming."

3. Some sense of the true, the good, and the beautiful is still found in man

Sinful human beings still appreciate some measure of truth, morality, beauty, and certain forms of religious belief. This must be attributed to the fact that mankind was created in the image of God, and that that image was not entirely obliterated by the Fall, but persists.

Genesis 1:27 -- "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Genesis 9:6 -- "Whoever sheds man's blood,  
By man his blood shall be shed,  
For in the image of God  
He made man."

James 3:8-9 -- "But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of  
deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse  
men, who have been made in the likeness of God."

4. The ability to perform relatively good actions remains in the unregenerate

The unsaved man is able to perform deeds which are outwardly in conformity to the Law of God, even though he cannot thereby please God or earn a right standing before God. He can perform natural good or civic righteousness.

Luke 6:32-34 -- "And if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same thing. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, in order to receive back the same amount."

Luke 11:11-13 -- "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Romans 2:14-15 -- "For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending themselves."

The reason why evil human beings know how to give good gifts to their children is not because they are evil! Rather, it is because some rudiments of the image of God continue in them; and from these remnants of God's image some relatively good actions spring. Thus the credit for such actions goes to God, not to the evil man.

The reason why Gentiles who do not have the Mosaic Law do instinctively some things that are in external conformity to the Mosaic Law is that our first parents had the moral principles of the Mosaic Law engraved on their hearts at their creation, and the Fall has not entirely obliterated those moral principles, nor can sin totally extinguish the expression of those principles.

5. Many undeserved blessings are bestowed on human beings

Not only has God created mankind, and not only does He sustain them in being and life; He also extends many tokens of His benevolence and mercy to them.

Psalm 145:9, 15-16 -- "The Lord is good to all,  
And His mercies are over all His works.

the eyes of all look to Thee,  
And Thou dost give them their food in due time.  
Thou dost open Thy hand,  
And dost satisfy the desire of every living thing."

Matthew 5:44-45 -- "But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

Luke 6:35-36 -- "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

Acts 14:16-17 -- "And in the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

## II. Calling (Vocation)

Chapter 10 of the *Westminster confession of Faith* is entitled "Of Effectual Calling". This brief chapter reads as follows:

I. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and lovingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by his almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.

II. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in It.

III. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth; so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

IV. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ; and therefore cannot be saved; much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the laws of that religion they do profess. And, to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested.

The Westminster Confession distinguishes between being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word, and being effectually called by the Word of the Spirit. Accordingly, we divide our treatment of calling into external and internal calling.

### A. External Calling

External calling is that gracious act of God whereby He invites sinners to accept the salvation that is offered in Jesus Christ.

It contains three elements:

- (1) a presentation of the gospel facts and truths
- (2) an invitation to repent and trust in Jesus Christ
- (3) a promise of forgiveness and eternal life

It has at least four characteristics:

1. It is universal

External calling comes to all human beings to whom the gospel is presented. It is not limited to any age or nation or class of men, and comes to those who reject the gospel as well as to those who accept it. However, it extends only as far as the gospel is disseminated, and thus is not universal in the strictest sense of the word.

Isaiah 45:22 -- "Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other."

Isaiah 55:1 -- "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters;  
And you who have no money come, buy and eat.  
Come, buy wine and milk  
Without money and without cost."

Matthew 11:28 -- "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

2. It is conditional

That is, the promise of forgiveness and eternal life contained in the external call can only be received by means of true faith and repentance.

John 1:11-13 -- "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

John 5:24 -- "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."

3. It is sincere

God calls sinners in good faith to repent and trust in Jesus Christ. He earnestly desires that they accept His invitation, and in all sincerity promises eternal life to those who repent and believe.

Ezekiel 33:11 -- "Say to them, 'As I live! declares the Lord God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?' "

Matthew 23:37 -- "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling."

Revelation 22:17 -- "And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost."



4. It is resistible

Men may despise the gospel, refuse the invitation, and scorn the promise, but in doing so they display their guilt and justify God in His condemnation of them.

Luke 14:16-24 -- "But He said to him, 'A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.' And another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.' And another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.' And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'"

B. Internal Calling

Internal calling is that gracious act of God whereby He savingly applies to sinners the external call of the gospel by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

It contains three elements:

1. a quickening and enlightening of the understanding
2. a convicting of the heart concerning the truth of the gospel
3. a persuading of the will, to repent and trust in Jesus Christ, and to trust God's promise of forgiveness and eternal life through Him.

It has at least three characteristics:

1. It is particular

That is, it is not only the external call of the gospel addressed to its hearers in general; it is the call of the Holy Spirit quickening, convicting, and drawing sinners to saving faith in Christ.

I Corinthians 1:18-24 -- "'For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.' Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God,

God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

John 6:35-37, 43-45, 65 -- "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.' . . . Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God." Every one who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.' . . . And He was saying, 'For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.' "

(Note John 12:32, which may be seen as providing a contrast to internal calling: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.")

Romans 9:14-18, 22-24 -- "What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth.' So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires . . . What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles."

## 2. It is effectual

This calling is not simply a verbal summons or a challenge; it actually secures a positive and saving response from its hearers.

I Thessalonians 5:23-24 -- "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."

11 Peter 1:5-10 -- "Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in

your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control; and in your self-control, perseverance; and in your perseverance, godliness; and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, Christian love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they tender you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble."

Romans 8:28-30 -- "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

3. It is to a specific end

Internal calling is purposive; i.e., it looks beyond itself to God's purposes in calling sinners to Christ.

I Corinthians 1:9 -- "God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Galatians 5:13 -- "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

Ephesians 4:1-4 -- "'I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling."

I Thessalonians 4:7 -- "For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification."

I Timothy 6:12 -- "Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

I Peter 3:9 -- "not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing"

### III. Faith

Chapter 14 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* is entitled "Of Saving Faith." This chapter is worthy of quotation:

I. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.

II. By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.

III. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; may be often and in many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory; growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance, through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.

Some definitions by outstanding theologians are also helpful:

J. Oliver Buswell, Jr. asserts: "The scriptural meaning of faith must be studied from three different points of view: (1) faith as an act of believing, (2) faith as the substance of what we believe, (3) faith as faithfulness . . . . To believe the truth about Christ, or to believe in Him, is to take the position which such belief normally calls for, viz., acceptance of Him and committal of one's self to Him."

William G. T. Shedd states: "Faith is assent to testimony and also trust in the person who gives the testimony. Trusting faith is the special exercise of the soul by which . . . Christ's atonement for sin is laid hold of and made personal. Evangelical faith is that act of both the understanding and the will that unites the soul to Christ."

Lois Berkhof writes: "Saving faith is certain conviction, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as to the truth of the gospel, and a hearty reliance (trust) on the promises of God in Christ."

#### A. Aspects of Genuine Faith

##### 1. The Nature of Faith

In the *American College Dictionary* "faith" is defined as follows:

faith, n. 1. confidence or trust in a person or thing. 2. belief which is not based on proof. 3. belief in the doctrines or teachings of religion. 4. the doctrines which are or should be believed. 5. a system of religious belief: the Christian faith, the Jewish faith. 6. the obligation of loyalty or fidelity (to a person, promise, engagement,

etc.): to keep or break faith with. 7. the observance of this obligation: to act in good or bad faith. 8. Theol. that trust in God and in his promises as made through Christ by which man is justified or saved.

Walter Bauer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, translated and revised by William Arndt and Wilbur Gingrich, gives the following information concerning the most common verb and noun for faith:

#### PISTEUO

1. believe -- a. believe (in something, be convinced of something . . . . b. w. the person to whom one gives credence or whom one believes . . . c. to believe someone with regard to something . . . d. abs. (In which case the context supplies the obj., etc.) . . . e. believe = let oneself be influenced against someone . . . f. I am believed, I enjoy confidence.
2. believe (in), trust of religious belief in a special sense, as faith in the Divinity that lays special emphasis on trust in his power and his nearness to help, in addition to being convinced that he exists and that his revelations or disclosures are true. In our lit. God and Christ are objects of this faith . . .
3. entrust something to someone . . .
4. a unique use of found . . . the one trusts himself to eat anything Ro. 14:2 (a combination of two ideas: 'he is so strong in the faith' and: 'he is convinced that he may.')

#### PISTIS

1. pass. trustworthy, faithful, dependable, inspiring trust or faith . . .
2. act. trusting, cherishing faith or trust . . . also believing, full of faith, faithful . . . Of one who confesses the Christian faith believing or a believer in the Lord, in Christ, in God . . . The abs. also means believing (in Christ), a (Christian) believer and is used both as adj. and as subst.

The Scriptures represent faith in various aspects, as may be seen in the following selected references:

Psalm 34:8 -- "O taste and see that the Lord is good;  
How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"

Psalm 118:8-9 -- "It is better to take refuge in the Lord  
Than to trust in man.  
It is better to take refuge in the Lord  
Than to trust in princes."

Proverbs 3:5 -- "Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And do not lean on your own understanding."

Isaiah 26:3 -- "The steadfast of mind Thou wilt keep in perfect peace,  
Because he trusts in Thee."

Jeremiah 17:7 -- "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord  
And whose trust is the Lord."

Matthew 6:25-33 -- "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And which is you by being anxious can add a single cubit this life's span? And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toll nor do they spin, yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith? Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."

Mark 9:23-24 -- "And Jesus said to him, 'If you can!' 'All things are possible to him who believes.' Immediately the boy's father cried out and began saying, 'I do believe; help my unbelief.' "

Mark 11:23-24 -- "Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you."

Luke 7:2-9 -- "And a certain centurion's slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die. And when he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave. And when they had come to Jesus, they earnestly entreated Him, saying, 'He is worthy for You to grant this to him; for he loves our nation, and it was he who built us our synagogue.' Now Jesus started on His way with them; and when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, 'Lord, do not trouble Yourself further, for I am not worthy for you to come under my roof; for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I, too, am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, "Go!" and he goes; and to another, "Come!" and he comes; and to my slave, "Do this!" and he does it.' Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the multitude that was following Him, 'I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.' "

John 3:14-18 -- "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

John 11:25-26 -- "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?'"

John 20:29 -- "Jesus said to him, 'Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.'

Acts 27:22-25 -- "And yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.' Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God, that it will turn out exactly as I have been told."

Romans 4:4-5, 10-25 -- "Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness . . . ."

How then was it reckoned? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while circumcised, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them, and the father of the circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. For the promise of Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it is by faith that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written, 'A father of many nations have I made you') in the sight of Him whom he believed in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, 'So shall your descendants be.' And without becoming weak in faith, he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with

respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform. Therefore also it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.'

Romans 10:6-10 -- "But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' -- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

II Corinthians 5:6-7 -- "Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord -- for we walk by faith not by sight."

Galatians 5:6 -- "for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love."

Ephesians 2:8 -- "For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;"

II Timothy 1:12 -- "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day."

II Timothy 4:7 -- "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

Hebrews 4:1-2 -- "Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them because it was not united by faith in those who heard."

Hebrews 10:22 -- "let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

Hebrews 10:38-39 -- "But My righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul."



Hebrews 11:1-3 -- "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible."

Hebrews 11:6 -- "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

Hebrews 11:13 -- "All these died in faith without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth."

Hebrews 11:32-39 -- "And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection, and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. And all these, having gained approval through their faith did not receive what was promised."

Hebrews 12:2 -- "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

James 2:14-20 -- "What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? if a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,' and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. But someone may well say, 'You have faith and I have works;' show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe and shudder. But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?"

I Peter 1:6-9 -- "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcomes of your faith the salvation of your souls."

I John 5:4-5 -- "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Summary of the various aspects in which the Scriptures present faith

In the Bible faith is viewed as trust in God's promises and power to protect and provide for human beings; as a linkage to divine righteousness and grace and power to deliver human beings from their sin and its results; as belief in Christ's person and redemptive work; as conviction of the truth of God's revelation of Himself and His works; as a resistent impulse expressing itself in righteous character and conduct (sometimes heroic) that gets the victory over sin, the world, and Satan; and as the body of truth revealed by God and committed to the people of God.

In orthodox theology, faith has traditionally been seen to include three elements: knowledge, assent or conviction, and trust.

The first element of faith is knowledge. Knowledge is apprehension of truth, acquaintance with fact, recognition of information as factual, personal or factual familiarity with a person. This is a difficult concept to communicate to people today, chiefly because the biblical terms have lost their significance in the English language. The words "belief" and "faith" and "hope" have all changed in meaning.

Science distinguishes between scientific belief and (unscientific) faith. Modern science prides itself in believing (accepting as true) only what it knows (perceives via sense experience). Accepting a statement as true by faith amounts to believing what one does not know, but wishes were true, or hopes is true, or wills to be true, but is not true (or at least there is insufficient evidence for its truth).

Philosophy distinguishes between philosophical belief and (irrational) faith. Modern philosophy prides itself in believing (accepting as true) only what is rational (agreeable to reason). Accepting a statement as true by faith amounts to believing what is not rational, but which one nevertheless wishes were true, or hopes is true, or wills to be true, but is not true (or at least there are insufficient rational grounds for its truth).

Liberal "Christian" theology also distinguishes between religious belief and faith. Liberalism prides itself in believing only what is knowable and rational (i.e., what is agreeable to modern science and modern philosophy), but in having faith in what is unknowable and irrational! Religious faith thus refers to what a person wishes were true, or hopes is true, or wills to be true, but does not know is true. Religious faith is thus transformed into hope; and hope has come to mean both a desire and a wish that somehow everything will turn out well in the end. The degree of one's religious faith is thus measured by the strength of one's hope; and the strength of one's hope is tested by the degree of risk one is willing to invest in his hope.

Biblical Christianity does not distinguish between belief and faith. Belief is a response to truth, a human response to divine

revelation. FAITH IS A BELIEVING RESPONSE TO A WORD FROM GOD. Biblical faith believes (accepts as true) only what it knows (apprehends via revelation) on the basis of divine authority. Faith (belief) grasps truth; thus faith (belief) includes knowledge.

The second element of faith is assent, persuasion, conviction, assurance. It is a persuasion of truth. This appears to be the sense in Hebrews 11:1, where we read, "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, conviction of things not seen." It is a conviction that is wrought in me by the Holy Spirit by means of the truth. It is an assurance so great that it becomes the dominant influence in my life.

The third element of faith is trust, or confidence. It is a resting, a reposing in the truth. This appears to be the meaning in a number of Old Testament references to faith, as well as the leading element of PISTIS and PISTEUO in the New Testament.

## 2. The Object of Faith

Although the object of faith usually mentioned in theology texts is twofold -- general faith, by which is meant faith in the written Word (Scripture), and special faith, by which is meant faith in the incarnate Word (Christ) in His character as Redeemer -- it would seem more comprehensive and accurate to discern a threefold object of faith.

- a. The first object of faith is general revelation; and thus this faith should probably be called general faith. External general revelation (Psalm 19:1-4; Acts 14:8-18; Romans 1:18-21) discloses God's attributes of glory, wisdom, goodness, and power, and God's work of creation and general benevolence. Internal general revelation (Romans 1:32; 2:11-15) discloses God's attributes of holiness, justice, and truth, and God's works of providence and judgment. Since general revelation can properly be called God's Word (i.e., general revelation is divine self-disclosure in mediate, natural, significant mode), therefore we can properly speak of general faith, since faith is a believing response to a word from God. In general revelation God tells us something of His nature and works; the human response to this Word is either faith in and worship of the Creator, or rejection and displacement of the Creator in favor of humanly constructed idols. Thus the reality of external general revelation as expressive of truth concerning God as Creator establishes a mandate for the study of the material world as the theater of God's physical and biological activity; and the reality of general revelation as expressive of truth concerning God as righteous Law-giver and just Judge establishes a mandate for the study of man as the theater of God's intellectual, moral, and spiritual activity. A believing study (via the response of general faith) of these two large categories of truth provides a rationale for Christian disciplines in such areas as astronomy, astrophysics, physics, geology, chemistry, biochemistry, biophysics, and biology on the one hand; and in such areas as mathematics, philosophy, ethics, psychology, and anthropology on the other.

One fascinating contribution to this discussion is found in Valentine Hepp's book, *Het Testimonium Spiritus Sancti* (The Witness of the Holy Spirit). Hepp (who followed Herman Bavinck at the Free University of Amsterdam) asserts that as the Spirit testifies to the truth of Scripture, truth presented to us in the field of salvation, so He testifies to truth in general in the world about us. Man's response to this witness to general revelation is called a *fides generalis* (Hepp's views are discussed at some length by Cornelius Van Til in his *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, pp. 49-62.)

Another important contribution to the discussion (from a different approach) is found in David Diehl's article, "Evangelicalism and General Revelation: An Unfinished Agenda," in *JETS*, December 1987. Diehl calls our attention to what we can and should learn from general revelation that is important to faith.

- b. The second object of faith is special revelation; and thus this faith is properly called special faith, by which is meant faith in the written Word of Scripture.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter 1, Section 4, states:

The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or Church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

The *Westminster Confession* (Chapter 1, Section 5) also emphasizes the testimony of the Holy Spirit in connection with special faith:

We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

The authority of Scripture rests in God, not the church. Scripture authenticates itself. John Calvin, in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Book 1, Chapter 7, section 5), states:

Let this point therefore stand: that those whom the Holy spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated; hence, it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning. And the certainty it deserves with us, it attains by the testimony of the Spirit. For even if it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit. Therefore, illumined by his power, we believe neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgment that Scripture is from God; but above human judgment we affirm with utter certainty (just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God himself) that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men.

And in Book 1, Chapter 8, section 13, he states:

There are other reasons, neither few nor weak, for which the dignity and majesty of Scripture are not only affirmed in godly hearts, but brilliantly vindicated against the wiles of its disparagers; yet of themselves these are not strong enough to provide a firm faith, until our Heavenly Father, revealing his majesty there, lifts reverence for Scripture beyond the realm of controversy. Therefore Scripture will ultimately suffice for a saving knowledge of God only when its certainty is founded upon the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, these human testimonies which exist to confirm it will not be vain if, as secondary aids to our feebleness, they follow that chief and highest testimony. But those who wish to prove to unbelievers that Scripture is the Word of God are acting foolishly, for only by faith can this be known.

The experience of the Christian is that he looks at the Bible and says, "This is it." This does not mean that it is necessary to accept everything in the Bible in order to enter into salvation, but either immediately or eventually thereafter this is the position to which the believer comes.

Three safeguards should be mentioned in connection with the witness of the Spirit:

- (1) The witness should be distinguished from the Word, but not viewed as adding to it. The Scriptures are spectacles (eyeglasses) -- they sharpen what is taught in general revelation -- but they cannot of themselves produce sight; the Holy Spirit must open my eyes. We need both new light and new sight. As I read the Bible the Holy Spirit persuades me of its truth. The witness adds no content to the Scriptures.

- (2) The witness is no part of the rule of faith. It should be distinguished from both inspiration and illumination. The witness enables us to see that the Bible is the rule of faith.
  - (3) The witness does not make the Bible authoritative. It enables us to see the authority. I Thessalonians 2:13 says, "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who believe." We receive the power to know, assent to, and trust in the Bible as the Word of God. The Spirit gives us the sight to see.
- c. The third object of faith is Christ as the Redeemer; and thus this faith is properly called saving faith.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter 14, Section 2, states: "The principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace."

But how do I know that this salvation is for me? How do I know that if I call upon the Lord, I will be saved? Does faith mean that I must taken an infinite risk, a blind leap made in existential passion?

This is the question of the warrant of faith. In connection with it, four points should be made:

- (1) The external call of the gospel is a universal call. God has commanded us to proclaim the gospel to every creature, and therefore every creature that hears the call has the right to answer it. Anyone who wants to believe can believe, and ought to believe! "Whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life." (Revelation 22:17)
- (2) The external command to repent is a universal command. Acts 17:30 says that "In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent." As disobedient sinners all human beings are commanded to come to Christ, through whom alone repentance and forgiveness of sins is possible.
- (3) The promises of God are unchangeable. What He revealed 2,000 years ago is valid now, and for me!
- (4) The atonement is eminently suited to my need. I can believe because Christ died for people just like me! Romans 4:5 says that God justifies the wicked. I do not need to know whether I am one of the elect before I can come. I need only know that Christ died for sinners and that I am a sinner!

3. The Source of Faith

a. The ultimate source is God

The knowledge, mediated by the Holy Spirit through revelation, is from God.

The conviction, mediated by the Holy Spirit through the evidences of revelation, is from God.

The enablement to place trust and confidence in the truth is given by the Holy Spirit.

b. The proximate source is the believing individual

John Murray states:

Regeneration is the act of God and of God alone. But faith is not the act of God; it is not God who believes in Christ for salvation, it is the sinner. It is by God's grace that a person is able to believe but faith is an activity on the part of the person and of him alone. In faith we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation.

-- John Murray, *Redemption -- Accomplished and Applied*  
(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), p. 133.

Faith is exercised by the believing individual. Faith issues from the heart (the core or center of man's being), which includes the intellect, the emotions, and the will. "With the heart man believes and is justified." (Romans 10:10)  
Faith is a whole-souled response to God's saving revelation in Christ.

4. The Ground or Basis of Faith

a. The ultimate ground is the truthfulness, faithfulness and immutability of God.

b. The proximate ground is the revelation which God has given of His nature and works.

5. The Agent of Faith

The agent of faith is the Holy Spirit.

6. The Means of Faith

a. The Word of God

Romans 10:17 -- "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."

b. Human instruments

- (1) Communicating truth -- Romans 10:14 -- "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"
- (2) Exemplifying truth -- I Thessalonians 1:5-6 -- "Because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit."

## B. Kinds of Non-Genuine Faith

### 1. Historical Faith

This kind of faith accepts the truths of revelation as one might a history that does not vitally concern him, or in which he is not personally interested or involved. It is an intellectual apprehension of the truth, devoid of any moral or spiritual purpose. It may be external, not rooted in the heart.

Acts 26:26-28 -- "The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him, I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do. Then Agrippa said to Paul, 'Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?' "

James 2:19-20 -- "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that -- and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?"

### 2. Temporary (or temporal) Faith

This kind of faith is a persuasion of the truths of revelation which is accompanied by some promptings of conscience and stirring of the emotions, but is not permanent, and fails to maintain itself in days of trial and persecution. It is often seemingly genuine, but is evanescent in character. It does not necessarily imply conscious hypocrisy, and thus deludes and deceives.

Matthew 13:20-22 -- "What was sown on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. What was sown among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful."

Matthew 25:1-13 -- "At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were



wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all, the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamp!. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' 'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. 'Sir! sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!' But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."

### 3. Miraculous Faith

This kind of faith is a belief in the reality and power of the truth of miracles, accompanied by awe and respect. It does not touch the sin question, and does not recognize the need of conversion. It abstracts and discards from the miracle its truth value and absolutizes its wonder-working aspect, thereby missing the teaching significance of the miracle as an attestation of the Word of God. Thus it avoids personal application of that Word.

Matthew 7:21-23 -- "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evil-doers!' "

John 8:30-47, 53-59 -- "Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him. To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.' They answered him 'We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?' Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father.' 'Abraham is our father,' they answered. 'If you were Abraham's children,' said Jesus, 'then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the things your own father does.' 'We are not illegitimate children,' they protested. 'The only Father we have is God himself.' Jesus said to them, 'If God were your

Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? if I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.' . . . 'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I am!' At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds."

Acts 8:5-24 -- "Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city. Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, 'This man is the divine power known as the Great Power.' They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, 'Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.' Peter answered: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.' Then Simon answered, 'Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me.' "

#### IV. Repentance

##### A. Statement of the Doctrine

In response to Question 76 -- "What is repentance unto life?" -- the Westminster Larger Catechism states:

Repentance unto life in a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby, out of the sight and sense, not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, and upon the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, he so grieves for and hates his sins, as that he turns from them all to God, purposing and endeavoring constantly to walk with him in all the ways of new obedience.

In Chapter 15 of the Westminster Confession of faith this doctrine is further explicated:

I. Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ.

II. By it, a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature, and righteous law of God; and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavoring to walk with him in all the ways of his commandments,

III. Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.

IV. As there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation; so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.

V. Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavor to repent of his particular sins, particularly.

VI. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof; upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy; so, he that scandalizeth his brother, or the church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession, and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended, who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive Him.

##### B. Development of the Doctrine

###### 1. Scriptural background

Deuteronomy 30:1-3 -- "So it shall become when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, and you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your

sons, then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the people where the Lord your God has scattered you."

I Kings 8:33-34, 44-50 -- "When Thy people Israel are defeated before an enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, if they turn to Thee again and confess Thy name and pray and make supplication to Thee in this house, then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them back to the land which Thou didst give to their fathers . . . When Thy people go out to battle against the enemy, by whatever way Thou shalt send them, and they pray to the Lord toward the city which Thou hast chosen and the house which I have built for Thy name, then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. When they sin against Thee (for there is no man who does not sin) and Thou art angry with them and dost deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near, if they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive, and repent and make supplication to Thee in the land of those who have taken them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly,' if they return to Thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to Thee toward their land which Thou hast given to their fathers, the city which Thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for Thy name, then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive Thy people who have sinned against Thee, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, that they may have compassion on them."

II Chronicles 30:6-9 -- "And the couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the hand of the king and his princes, even according to the command of the king, saying 'O sons of Israel, return to the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that He may return to those of you who escaped and are left from the hand of the kings of Assyria. And do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were unfaithful to the Lord God of their fathers, so that He made them a horror, as you see. Now do not stiffen your neck like your fathers, but yield to the Lord and enter His sanctuary which He has consecrated forever, and serve the Lord your God, that His burning anger may turn away from you. For if you return to the Lord, your brothers and your sons will find compassion before those who led them captive, and will return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and compassionate, and will not turn His face away from you if you return to Him."

Ezra 9:4-10, 13-14 -- "Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening offering. But at the evening offering I arose from my

humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the Lord my God; and I said, O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder and to open shame, as it is this day. But now for a brief moment grace has been shown from the Lord our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage. For we are slaves; yet in our bondage, our God has not forsaken us, but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, and to restore its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Thy commandments . . . And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and our great guilt, since Thou our God hast requited us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given as an escaped remnant as this, shall we again break Thy commandments and intermarry with the peoples who commit these abominations? Wouldst Thou not be angry with us to the point of destruction, until there is no remnant nor any who escape?"

Proverbs 28:13 -- "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion."

Isaiah 55:6,7 -- "Seek the Lord while He may be found:  
Call upon Him while He is near.

Let the wicked forsake his way,  
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
And let him return to the Lord,  
And He will have compassion on him;  
And to our God,  
For He will abundantly pardon."

Ezekiel 14:6 -- "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God, "repent and turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations." ' "

Joel 2:12-23 -- "Yet even now, declares the Lord,  
Return to me with all your heart,  
And with fasting, weeping, and mourning;  
And rend your heart and not your garments.  
Now return to the Lord your God,  
For He is gracious and compassionate,  
Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness,  
And relenting of evil."

Matthew 3:1-2, 7-8 -- "Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' . . . But when he saw

many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with your repentance.' "

Luke 3:7-14 -- "He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children of Abraham. And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, 'Then what shall we do?' And he would answer and say to them, 'Let the man who has two tunics share with him who have none; and let him who has food do likewise.' And some tax-gatherers also come to be baptized, and they said to him, 'Teacher, what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Collect no more than what you have been ordered to.' And some soldiers were questioning him, saying, 'And what about us, what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages.' "

Luke 10:13 -- "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes."

Luke 15:17-20 -- "But when he came to his sense, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."' And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him."

Luke 17:3-4 -- "Be on your guard! if your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."

Luke 10:13-14 -- "But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

Luke 24:46-47 -- "And He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the

third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations -- beginning from Jerusalem.' "

Acts 2:38 -- "And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' "

Acts 5:30-31 -- "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

Acts 11:18 -- "And when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God, saying, 'Well, then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.' "

Acts 17:30 -- "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent."

Acts 20:21 -- "solemnly testifying to both Jew and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Acts 26:19-20 -- "Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance."

Romans 2:4 -- "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"

II Corinthians 7:8-11 -- "For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it, -- for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while -- I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regrets, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you, what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter."

II Timothy 2:24-25 -- "And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition; if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth."

Hebrews 6:1-6 -- "Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we shall do, if God permits. For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good work of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame."

Hebrews 12:15-17 -- "See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears."

James 4:8-10 -- "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."

II Peter 3:9 -- "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

Revelation 9:18-21 -- "A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads; and with them they do harm. And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts."

Revelation 16:8-11 -- "And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with fierce heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds."



2. Ideas drawn from these Scriptures

- a. Repentance is a turning back to the Lord
- b. Repentance is an admission that sin is wickedness against God
- c. Repentance is a bending of the head, a turning from stubbornness
- d. Repentance includes a sense of shame over sin
- e. Repentance is a forsaking of transgressions
- f. Repentance is a forsaking of wicked thoughts and actions
- g. Repentance is a turning from idols
- h. Repentance is a returning to the Lord with one's entire inner being (heart)
- i. Genuine inward repentance affects one's outward actions
- j. Repentance includes a deep sense of humiliation and grief, expressed outwardly in forms associated with such emotions (such as putting on sackcloth and ashes, or beating one's breast)
- k. Repentance includes a recognition of the senselessness of sin and its results, and of the depths of degradation to which sin can plunge a human being.
- l. Repentance is a change of direction of one's life
- m. Repentance is a recognition and confession of, together with a change of mind concerning, sin
- n. Repentance is a change of attitude toward Christian truth, especially the gospel
- o. Repentance is something granted by God (to Israel, to the Gentiles, to some men who oppose the truth)
- p. Repentance is a change of attitude from willful ignorance to recognition of the true God
- q. Repentance is a turning to God, accompanied by appropriate outward actions
- r. Repentance is an attitude that is at least partly brought about by God's kindness and forbearance and patience
- s. Repentance includes a making right of things that are wrong, motivated at least in part by godly sorrow
- t. Repentance is an initial turning from sins
- u. Repentance is a change of will from a previous crucial decision
- v. Repentance includes sorrow for sinful attitudes and actions
- w. Repentance is something to which God desires all sinners to come
- x. Repentance is a change of basic direction that cannot be brought about merely by severe threats or terrible punishments

3. Summary of the Doctrine

Repentance is that change wrought in the life of a sinner by which he turns away from sin. Being essentially a change of direction, it involves a change of view, a change of feeling, and a change of purpose. It therefore includes three elements:

- a. An intellectual element

Repentance involves a change of view -- a recognition of sin as involving personal guilt, defilement, and helplessness. If unaccompanied by the emotional and volitional elements, this recognition may manifest itself in fear of punishment, without an accompanying hatred of sin.

This element may be seen in the following Scriptures:

Psalm 51:3-4 -- "For I know my transgressions,  
And my sin is ever before me.  
Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned,  
And done what is evil in Thy sight.  
So that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak,  
And blameless when Thou dost judge.

Romans 3:20, 23 -- "because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin . . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 1:32 -- "and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them."

b. An emotional element

Repentance involves a change of feeling -- sorrow for sin as committed against goodness and justice, and therefore hateful. If accompanied by the volitional element, sorrow for sin is repentance. If not, it is remorse, which is sorrow for the consequences of sin. Remorse may lead to despair.

This element may be seen in the following Scriptures:

Psalm 51:1-2, 8, 12, 14, 17 --  
"Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness;  
According to the greatness of Thy compassion  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
And cleanse me from my sin . . .  
Make me to hear joy and gladness,  
Let the bones which Thou hast broken rejoice . . .  
Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation,  
And sustain me with a willing spirit . . .  
Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation;  
Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Thy righteousness . . .  
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
And a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

Matthew 21:28-32 -- "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in

the vineyard.' And he answered and said, 'I will, sir;' and he did not go. And he came to the second and said the same thing. But he answered and said, 'I will not;' yet he afterward regretted it and went. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, 'The latter.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you that the tax-gatherers and harlots will get into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax-gatherers and harlots did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.' "

Matthew 27:3 -- "Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders."

Luke 18:18-23 -- "And a certain ruler questioned Him, saying, 'Good Teacher, what shall I do to obtain eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments, 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honor your father and mother.' And he said, 'All these things I have kept from my youth.' And when Jesus heard this, He said to him, 'One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess, and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.' But when he heard these things, he became very sad; for he was extremely rich."

II Corinthians 7: 8-10 -- "For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it, -- for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while -- I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death."

c. A volitional element

Repentance involves a change of purpose -- an inward turning from sin, and a disposition to seek pardon and cleansing. This element includes the two preceding elements, and is therefore the most important aspect of repentance.

This element may be seen in the following Scriptures:

Psalm 51:7, 10 -- "Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Luke 19:5-9 -- "And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, 'Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must

stay at your house.' And he hurried and came down, and received Him gladly. And when they say it, they all began to grumble, saying, 'He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.' And Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give back to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham.' "

Acts 2:37-38 -- "Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' "

#### BRIEF SUMMARY DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE

*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Question 87

Q. 87. What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.

Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology*

Repentance is that voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns from sin. Being essentially a change of mind, it involves a change of view, a change of feeling, and a change of purpose.

SOME CONTRASTS BETWEEN FALSE REPENTANCE AND TRUE REPENTANCE

FALSE REPENTANCE

1. Recognition of wrongdoing
2. Experience of shame and remorse for wrongdoing
3. Regret for the consequences of wrongdoing in one's own life, or in the lives of others
4. Resolution and determination not to do the wrong again, but to do better, to the best of one's ability
5. A temporary and outward change of behavior, rather than a definitive change of heart
6. Is unaccompanied by faith in God's mercies in Christ, and does not lead to confession and forgiveness of sin

TRUE REPENTANCE

1. Recognition of wrongdoing as sin against God
2. Experience of sorrow and grief at having offended the Father, displeased the Son, and grieved the Spirit
3. Hatred of sin, and deep sorrow for its effects in one's own life and the lives of others
4. Intention to turn from and forsake sin, and to turn to and do God's righteous will, by His grace
5. A definitive change of heart, brought about by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, which change expresses itself in a change of behavior
6. Is always accompanied by faith in God's mercies in Christ, and leads to confession and forgiveness of sin, together with restitution for sin

## DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE

Repentance is a decisive change wrought by the Holy Spirit in the life of a sinner by which he/she realizes the wickedness and odiousness of his/her sin as an offense against the goodness and justice of God; experiences deep sorrow over having thereby offended and grieved God; and turns away from sin to seek God's forgiveness, cleansing, and deliverance from sin.

Judas Iscariot is not an example of true repentance. He realized that he had done wrong and that the consequences of his wrongdoing were very serious; he felt such deep remorse and regret at his act of wrongdoing that he felt he could not continue to live with his emotional pain; and he confessed his wrongdoing and returned the price of his betrayal to those with whom he had conspired. Yet he did not repent of his sin: did not recognize his act as an offense against God, did not experience godly sorrow for having offended and grieved God, and did not turn from his sin to seek God's forgiveness, cleansing, and deliverance from his sin.

An interesting question arises in the response of the Ninevites to the preaching of Jonah. Was theirs an example of genuine repentance? In Jonah 3 we discover that the people believed in God (verse 5); that the King proclaimed a fast (verse 7), decreed that everyone be clothed in sackcloth and sit in the ashes (verses 6, 8), turn from his wicked way and his violence (verse 8), and call on God earnestly to deliver them from the predicted destruction (verses 4, 9); and that when God saw that they turned from their wicked way, He relented concerning the destruction (verse 10). Did the Ninevites recognize their wrongdoing as sin against God? Did they experience sorrow over having grieved and offended God? Did they turn from their sin to seek God's forgiveness, cleansing, and deliverance from their sin? Or were they concerned only with averting the consequences of their sin? Is there such a thing as an external, non-saving repentance as distinguished from an internal, saving repentance?

V. Union with Christ

A. Statement of the Doctrine

Chapter 26 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* is entitled "of the Communion of Saints". Section I and II deserve quotation in connection with this doctrine.

I. All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head, by His Spirit, and by faith, have fellowship with Him in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory; and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

III. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of His Godhead; or to be equal with Christ in any respect; either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous. Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away, or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.

In volume 3 of his *Systematic Theology*, Augustus Hopkins Strong states:

Union with Christ is not union with a system of doctrine, nor with external religious influences, nor with an organized church, nor with an ideal man, -- but rather, with a personal, risen, living, omnipresent Lord (J. W. A. Stewart). Dr. J. W. Alexander well calls this doctrine of the Union of the Believer with Christ "the central truth of all theology and of all religion". Yet it receives little of formal recognition, either in dogmatic treatises or in common religious experience. Quenstedt, 886-912, has devoted a section to it; A. A. Hodge gives to it a chapter, in his *Outlines of Theology*, 369 sq., to which we are indebted for valuable suggestions; H. B. Smith treats of it, not however as a separate topic, but under the head of Justification (*System*, 531-539).

The majority of printed systems of doctrine, however, contain no chapter or section on Union with Christ, and the majority of Christians much more frequently think of Christ as a Savior outside of them, than as a Savior who dwells within. This comparative neglect of the doctrine is doubtless a reaction from the exaggerations of a false mysticism. But there is great need of rescuing the doctrine from neglect. For this we rely wholly upon Scripture. Doctrines which reason can neither discover nor prove need large support from the Bible. It is a mark of divine wisdom that the doctrine of the Trinity, for example, is so inwoven with the whole fabric of the New Testament, that the rejection of the former is the virtual rejection of the latter. The doctrine of Union with Christ, in like manner, is taught so variously and abundantly, that to deny it is to deny inspiration itself.

-- Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology*  
(Westwood, N.J.; Revell, 1907), p. 795.

Later in this section Strong quotes John Bunyan on the doctrine of union with Christ:

The Lord let me into the knowledge of the mystery of union with Christ, that I was joined to him, that I was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. By this also my faith in him as my righteousness was the more confirmed; for if he and I were one, then his righteousness was mine, his merits mine, his victory also mine. Now could I see myself in heaven and on earth at once -- in heaven by my Christ, my risen head, my righteousness and life, though on earth by my body or person.

A. A. Hodge, in his *Commentary on the Westminster Confession of Faith* pens the following notes on Chapter 26:

1. All saints are united to the Lord Jesus. We need to know what is the foundation and what is the nature of this union, and how it is established.

(1) As to the foundation of the union subsisting between the true believer and the Lord Jesus, the Scriptures teach that it rests in the eternal purpose of the Triune God, expressed in the decree of election (we were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world," Eph. 1:4), and the eternal covenant of grace formed between the Father and his Word as the mediatorial Head of his people, treating with the Head for the members, and with the members in the Head, and providing for their salvation in him. John 17:2, 6.

(2) As to the nature of this union of the believer with Christ, the Scriptures teach -- (a) That it is federal and representative, whereby Christ acts in all things as our federal Head, in our stead, and for our benefit. Hence our legal status is determined by his, and his rights, honours, relations, all are made ours in co-partnership with him. (b) That it is a vital and spiritual union. Its actuating source and bond is the Spirit of the Head, who dwells and works in the members. I Cor. 6:17; 12:13; I John 3:24; 4:13. Hence our spiritual life is derived from him and sustained and determined by his life, which we share. Gal. 2:20. (c) That it is a union between our entire persons and Christ, and therefore one involving our bodies through our souls. 1 Cor. 6:15, 19.

(3) As to the manner in which this union is established, the Scriptures teach that the elect, having been in the divine idea comprehended under the headship of Christ from eternity, are in time actually united to him -- (a) By the powerful operation of his Spirit, whereby they are "quickened together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5); which Spirit evermore dwells in them as the organ of Christ's presence with them, the infinite medium through which the fulness of his love and life, and all the benefits purchased by his blood, pass over freely from the Head to the members. (b) By the actings of faith upon their part, whereby they grasp Christ and appropriate him and his grace to themselves, and whereby they ever continue to live in him and to draw their resources from him. Eph. 3:17.

--A. A. Hodge, *The Confession of faith* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1958), pp. 322-323.



Louis Berkhof uses the term "mystical union" to include both the federal union of Christ and those who are His, and the subjective union of Christ and believers:

Lutherans generally treat the doctrine of the mystical union anthropologically and therefore conceive of it as established by faith. Hence they naturally take it up at a later point in their soteriology. But this method fails to do full justice to the idea of our union with Christ, since it loses sight of the eternal basis of the union and of its objective realization in Christ, and deals exclusively with the subjective realization of it in our lives, and even so only with our personal conscious entrance into this union. Reformed theology, on the other hand, deals with the union of believers with Christ theologically, and as such does far greater justice to this important subject. In doing so it employs the term "mystical union" in a broad sense as a designation not only of the subjective union of Christ and believers, but also of the union that lies back of it, that is basic to it, and of which it is only the culminating expression, namely, the federal union of Christ and those who are His in the counsel of redemption, the mystical union ideally established in that eternal counsel, and the union as it is objectively effected in the incarnation and the redemptive work of Christ.

-- Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*  
(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), p. 447.

## B. Development of the Doctrine

### 1. Scriptural background

John 14:20 -- "In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

John 15:1-10 -- "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

John 11:20-23 -- "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they

may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me."

Romans 6:3-5 -- "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."

Romans 7:4 -- "Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God."

Romans 8:1 -- "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Romans 8:10 -- "And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness."

I Corinthians 1:30 -- "By His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption."

I Corinthians 6:15, 19 -- "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be! Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

I Corinthians 6:17 -- "But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him."

I Corinthians 12:12-13 -- "For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."

II Corinthians 5:17 -- "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

II Corinthians 5:21 -- "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Galatians 2:20 -- "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."

Galatians 3:27-29 -- "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free men, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

Ephesians 1:4-6 -- "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

Ephesians 1:22-23 -- "And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all."

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

Ephesians 4:15-6 -- "but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

Ephesians 5:29-32 -- "for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. For this cause a man shall leave His father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church."

Philippians 3:8-9 -- "More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my

own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith."

Colossians 1:27 -- "to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Colossians 2:9-13 -- "For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,"

I Thessalonians 4:14-16 -- "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

II Timothy 2:11 -- "It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him;"

I John 2:6 -- "the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."

I John 2:24 -- "As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father."

I John 2:27-28 -- "And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him. And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming."

I John 3:24 -- "And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us."

I John 4:13 -- "By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit."

Believers are said to have been baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27) and to have been joined to Christ (Rom. 7:4; I Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:31-32). As a result, they are in Christ (Jn. 14:20; 15:2; 17:20; Rom. 8:1; I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:17; 5:21; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 1:4, 6; 4:15; Phil. 3:9; Col. 2:10, 11; I Thess. 4:16), and are members of Christ (I Cor. 6:1.5; Eph. 1:23). Christ is also said to be in them (Jn. 14:20; 17:23; Rom. 8:10; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27).

Believers are also said to have been baptized into one body (I Cor. 12:13), and to be members of Christ's body (I Cor. 12:12; Eph. 3:6; 4:16; 5:30).

They are said to abide in Christ (I Jn. 2:6; 2:24; 2:27; 3:24; 4:13); and Christ is said to abide in them (Jn. 15:5; 1 Jn. 3:24; 4:13). And yet they are called on to abide in Christ (Jn. 15:4, 5, 7; 1 Jn. 2:28).

As a result of being united to Christ by the Holy Spirit, believers have entered into saving relationship with Christ. They are within the sphere of Christ's redemptive and kingly work. They belong to Christ. Christ indwells them.

Being joined to Christ the Head, they are also joined to each other, as members of his body. They are the body of which Christ is the Head.

Having been united to Christ by the Spirit, they remain united to Him, and He to them. Nothing can separate them from Him or from each other.

And yet in practice they often experience something less than oneness with Him or with each other. Sinful attitudes or actions often obscure their oneness and distance them from each other. Sometimes small veils of obscurity become opaque shields; and sometimes shields become walls or hills or mountain ranges or vast oceans! Without communion, relationships between believers and Christ or between believers and other believers can turn cool or sour or virtually nonexistent, as far as experience is concerned.

This points up the distinction between union, established and maintained by the Holy Spirit, and communion, in which our attention to and watchcare over our relationships to Christ and to each other become extremely important.

Union with Christ is preserved as long as we are savingly related to Christ; communion can be enhanced or diminished by holy or sinful thoughts, desires, words, actions, and habit. Continuance of our saving relationship to Christ is contingent on God's continuous preservation of us in saving grace. Maintenance of communion is contingent on our continuous perseverance in God's sanctifying grace as we strive with sin and get the victory over our evil tendencies, the evil world-system, and the devil.

## 2. Objective union with Christ

Some of the scriptural data speak of an objective union with Christ, one established and maintained by the Spirit of God, on the basis of which believers are viewed by God as being in Christ and as sharing in all of the benefits of His atoning work.

Accordingly we may define this aspect of union as follows:

Objective union with Christ is that relationship in which human beings, through God's sovereign and gracious choice, are joined to Christ positionally and representatively, and are viewed as one with Him in the plan, the accomplishment, and the application of salvation.

Speaking of this aspect, Berkhof writes:

In virtue of the legal or representative union established in the covenant of redemption Christ became incarnate as the substitute for His people, to merit all the blessings of salvation for them. Since His children were sharers in flesh and blood, "He also in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage," Heb. 2:14, 15. He could merit salvation for them just because He already stood in relation to them as their Surety and Mediator, their Head and Substitute. The whole Church was included in Him as her Head. In an objective sense she was crucified with Christ, she died with Him, she arose in Him from the dead, and was made to sit with Him in the heavenly places. All the blessings of saving grace lie ready for the Church in Christ; man can add nothing to them; and they now only await their subjective application by the operation of the Holy Spirit, which is also merited by Christ and is sure of progressive realization in the course of history.

-- Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* pp. 448-449

### 3. Subjective union with Christ

Most of the scriptural data appear to speak of this aspect of union, and we may define it as follows:

Subjective union with Christ is that relationship in which human beings, through Spirit baptism, are joined to Christ actually and experientially, and are made spiritually, vitally, mysteriously, and indissolubly one with Him.

Berkhof defines this aspect of union as follows:

This union may be defined as that intimate, vital, and spiritual union between Christ and His people, in virtue of which He is the source of life and strength, of their blessedness and salvation. That it is a very intimate union appears abundantly from the figures that are used in Scripture to describe it. It is a union as of the vine and the branches, John 15:5, as of a foundation and the building that is reared on it, I Peter. 2:4, 5, as of a husband and wife, Eph. 5:23-32, and as of the head and the members of the body, Eph. 4:15-16. And even these figures fail to give full expression to the reality. It is a union that passes understanding. Says Dr. Hodge [A. A. Hodge]: "The technical designation of this union in theological language

is 'mystical', because it so far transcends all the analogies of earthly relationships, in the intimacy of its connection, in the transforming power of its influence, and in the excellence of its consequences."

-- Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 449.

Since Spirit baptism is employed in the definition of subjective union with Christ, this term should be defined. Spirit baptism is simply that act of the Holy Spirit by which He unites believing sinners to Christ and to the benefits of His redemption.

4. Safeguards against misunderstanding of the doctrine

Those theologians who treat this doctrine take care to point out what the doctrine is not. For example, A. H. Strong, in speaking of the nature of this union, says that it is not:

- (a) A merely natural union, like that of God with all human spirits, . . .
- (b) A merely moral union, or union of love and sympathy, like that between teacher and scholar, friend and friend, . . .
- (c) A union of essence, which destroys the distinct personality and subsistence of either Christ or the human spirit, . . .
- (d) A union mediated and conditioned by participation of the sacraments of the church, . . .

-- Augustus Hopkins strong, *Systematic Theology*  
(Westwood, N.J.: Revell, 1907), pp. 799-800.

Millard J. Erickson warns us against inadequate models, such as the following:

- (a) The view that our union with Christ is metaphysical, in which view the believer becomes part of the divine essence.
- (b) The view that our union with Christ is mystical, in which Jesus takes over and lives the person's life for him.
- (c) The view that our union with Christ is a psychological or sympathetic oneness, in which the believer shares Christ's interests and ideals.
- (d) The view that our union with Christ is a sacramental union, in which the believer takes Christ into himself in the Lord's Supper.

-- Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*  
(Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), vol. 3, pp. 949-951.

5. Union with Christ and other aspects of the application of salvation

A. H. Strong's discussion of this question deserves quotation, at least in excerpt form. Strong writes:

The consequences of union with Christ may be summarily stated as follows:

(a) Union with Christ involves a change in the dominant affection of the soul. Christ's entrance into the soul makes it a new creature, in the sense that the ruling disposition, which before was sinful, now becomes holy. This change we call Regeneration. . . .

(b) Union with Christ involves a new exercise of the soul's powers in repentance and faith; faith, indeed, is the act of the soul by which, under the operation of God, Christ is received. This new exercise of the soul's powers we call Conversion (Repentance and Faith). It is the obverse or human side of Regeneration. . . .

(c) Union with Christ gives to the believer the legal standing and rights of Christ. As Christ's union with the race involves atonement, so the believer's union with Christ involves Justification. The believer is entitled to take for his own all that Christ is, and all that Christ had done; and this because he has within him that new life of humanity which suffered in Christ's death and rose from the grave in Christ's resurrection, -- in other words, because he is virtually one person with the Redeemer. In Christ the believer is prophet, priest, and king. . . .

(d) Union with Christ secures to the believer the continuously transforming, assimilating power of Christ's life, -- first, for the soul; secondly, for the body, -- consecrating it in the present, and in the future raising it up in the likeness of Christ's glorified body. This continuous influence, so far as it is exerted in the present life, we call Sanctification, the human side or aspect of which is Perseverance.

(e) Union with Christ brings about a fellowship of Christ with the believer, -- Christ takes part in all the labors, temptations, and sufferings of his people; a fellowship of the believer with Christ, -- so that Christ's whole experience on earth is in some measure reproduced in him; a fellowship of all believers with one another, -- furnishing a basis for the spiritual unity of Christ's people on earth, and for the eternal communion of heaven. The doctrine of Union with Christ is therefore the indispensable preparation for Ecclesiology, and for Eschatology.

-- Strong, *Systematic Theology* pp. 803-806.



## VI. Justification

### A. Statement of the Doctrine

John Calvin, in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (3:11.2) states: "we explain justification simply as the acceptance with which God receives us into favor as righteous man. And we say that it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness."

Johannes Wollebius (1586-1629) in his *Compendium Theologiae Christianae* (published 1626) states that "Justification in the free act of God, whereby the elect, for the sake of the full satisfaction of Christ, are absolved from sin and declared righteous and heirs of eternal life."

-- *Reformed Dogmatics*, edited and translated by John V. Beardslee III (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), p. 164.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chapter II ("Of Justification") states:

I. Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness, by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

II. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification: yet in it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

III. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he is given by the Father for them; and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; and both, freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.

IV. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless, they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.

V. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

VI. The justification of believers under the old testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the new testament.

The *Augsburg Confession* (A.D. 1530), Article 4 ("Of Justification") states:

Also they teach that men can not be justified (obtain forgiveness of sins and righteousness) before God by their own powers, merits, or works; but are justified freely (of grace) for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by his death hath satisfied for our sins. This faith doth God impute for righteousness before him. Rom. 3 and 4.

The *Formula of Concord* (A.D. 1576), Article III, Affirmative, section II, states:

We believe, therefore, teach, and confess that this very thing is our righteousness before God, namely, that God remits to us our sins of mere grace, without any respect of our works, going before, present, or following, or of our worthiness or merit. For he bestows and imputes to us the righteousness of Christ; for the sake of that righteousness we are received by God into favor and accounted righteous.

The *Heidelberg Catechism* (A.D. 1563), Questions 59-63, states:

Question 59 -- But what does it help thee now that thou believest all this?

Answer -- That I am righteous in Christ before God, and an heir of eternal life.

Question 60 -- How art thou righteous before God?

Answer -- Only by true faith in Jesus Christ; that is, although my conscience accuse me that I have grievously sinned against all the commandments of God, and have never kept any of them, and that I am still prone always to all evil, yet God, without any merit of mine, of mere grace, grants and imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never committed nor had any sin, and had myself accomplished all the obedience which Christ has fulfilled for me, if only I accept such benefit with a believing heart.

Question 61 -- Why sayest thou that thou art righteous only by faith?

Answer -- Not that I am acceptable to God on account of the worthiness of my faith; but because only the satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is my righteousness before God, and I can receive the same and make it my own in no other way than by faith only.

Question 62 -- But why can not our good works be the whole or part of our righteousness before God?

Answer -- Because the righteousness which can stand before the Judgment-seat of God must be perfect throughout, and wholly conformable to the divine law; whereas even our best works in this life are all imperfect and defiled with sin.

Question 63 -- How is it that our good works merit nothing, while yet it is God's will to reward them in this life and in that which is to come?

Answer -- The reward comes not of merit, but of grace.

The *New Hampshire Baptist Confession* (A.D. 1833), Article 5, states:

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is Justification; that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

#### B. Development of the Doctrine

1. Justification is a judicial (forensic) act of God's free grace, in which He declares the believing sinner to be just (righteous).
- a. Scriptural usage of "justify"

##### (1) In the Old Testament (תָּצַד)

Deuteronomy 25:1-2 -- "If there is a dispute between men and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, then it shall be if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall then make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of stripes according to his guilt."

Exodus 23:7 -- "Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or the righteous, for I will not acquit the guilty."

Isaiah 5:22-23 -- "Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine, And valiant men in mixing strong drink; who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!"

Proverbs 17:15 -- "He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord."

I Kings 8:31-32 -- "If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes and takes an oath before Thine altar in this house, then hear Thou in heaven and act and judge Thy servants, condemning the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness."

Job 32:2 -- "But the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel. the Buzite, of the family of Ram burned; against Job his anger burned, because he justified himself before God."

(2) In the New Testament (δικαιόω)

Luke 7:29 -- "And when all the people and the tax-gatherers heard this, they acknowledged God's justice (lit, justified God), having been baptized with the baptism of John."

Luke 16:15 -- "And He said to them, 'You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among man is detestable in the sight of God.'"

Romans 5:1 -- "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 3:23-26 -- "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

Matthew 12:36-37 -- "And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned."

Romans 5:16-18 -- "And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men; even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men."

Romans 8:33-34 -- "who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."

b. Principles derived from these facts

As a term used frequently in legal or judging contexts in Scripture, "to justify" does not mean to make someone subjectively righteous. Rather it means to declare someone to be righteous or to display someone as being righteous. Of course, it is possible to declare someone righteous or to display someone as being righteous who is not. However, to do this is wrong; and when it is done in a court purporting to represent God's justice, it is an abomination. Sometimes "to justify" seem to shade into the idea of "to treat as righteous" (as when one judges another to be righteous and then treats him accordingly).

2. Justification is more than pardon, although it includes the idea

- a. Pardon releases from a penalty, but not from guilt. The pardoned murderer is still guilty. But the justified person is declared "not guilty." Christ took his guilt and became legally guilty of his sin. God legally transferred the sinner's guilt to Christ and declared His Son to be legally righteous. Then God dealt with Christ as one who was guilty!

I Peter 3:18 -- "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God"

I John 3:5 -- "And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin."

Revelation 1:5 -- "To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by his blood,"

I Peter 2:22, 24 -- "who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; . . . and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

II Corinthians 5:21 -- "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf"

- b. Pardon is purely negative

Justification includes, not only the removal of the guilt and penalty, but the gift of righteousness and a title to eternal life. Pardon absolves from the penalty of death, but offers nothing positive in its place.

- c. Pardon must be based upon pity, leniency, or some ground other than justice; justification is based on complete

## A COMPARISON BETWEEN PARDON AND JUSTIFICATION

PARDON	JUSTIFICATION
<p>the <u>model</u> is that of a governor voluntarily exercising his power to grant a pardon</p>	<p>the <u>model</u> is that of a judge executing his responsibility to administer justice</p>
<p>the <u>pardon</u> is based on pity or leniency or sympathy or some similar standard</p>	<p>the <u>declaration of righteousness</u> is based on the grace of God and the atoning work of Christ</p>
<p>the <u>guilt</u> of the transgressor remains</p>	<p>the <u>guilt</u> of the transgressor is removed via its imputation to and expiation by Christ, and a declaration of "righteous" substituted</p>
<p>the <u>penalty</u> is not executed at all, but simply set aside; thus justice is not satisfied</p>	<p>the <u>penalty</u> is executed vicariously on Christ instead of on the transgressor; thus justice is fully satisfied</p>

satisfaction of all, of the demands of the law. Christ accomplished this satisfaction, and God gave this righteousness to the sinner. Thus a sinner is declared to be righteous by God acting in the capacity of Judge, rather than in the capacity of Governor.

3. Justification includes the imputation of righteousness; particularly the righteousness of Christ.

- a. The language of imputation in Scripture

- (1) In the Old Testament the verb **נָשָׂא** is used 123 times. The following meanings are given: "account, reckon, regard, think, impute, consider." This word is used in the following Scriptures.

Genesis 15:6 -- "Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness."

Leviticus 17:3-4 -- "Any man from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox, or a lamb, or a goat in the camp, or who slaughters it outside the camp, and has not brought it to the doorway of the tent of meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, bloodguiltiness is to be reckoned to that man. He has shed blood and that man shall be cut off from among his people."

II Samuel 19:18-19 -- "And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king as he was about to cross the Jordan. So he said to the king, 'Let not my lord consider me guilty, nor remember what your servant did wrong on the day when my lord the king came out from Jerusalem, so that the king should take it to heart.'"

Psalms 32:2 -- "How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!"

Nehemiah 13:13 -- "And in charge of the storehouses I appointed Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and in addition to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered reliable, and it was their task to distribute to their kinsmen."

Psalms 44:22 -- "But for Thy sake we are killed all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

Proverbs 17:28 -- "Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is counted prudent."

- (2) In the New Testament the verb λογίζομαι is used 41 times. This word is used in the following Scriptures.

Acts 19:27 -- "And not only is there danger that this trade of ours falls into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she who, all of Asia and the world worship should even be dethroned from her magnificence."

Romans 2:26 -- "If therefore the uncircumcised man keep the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?"

Romans 14:14 -- "I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

I Corinthians 4:1 -- "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

II Corinthians 5:18-19 -- "Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

Galatians 3:6 -- "Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."

Philippians 3:13 -- "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead."

II Timothy 4:16 -- "At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them."

Hebrews 11:19 -- "He (Abraham) considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type."

Also in the New Testament the verb ἐλλογέω is used twice.

Romans 5:13 -- "for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law."

Philemon 18 -- "But if he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account;"



b. The meaning of imputation

It does not mean to impart something -- some stuff or quality -- to someone. It does not mean to treat someone in a certain way.

It is declaratory. It is a judgment made in the mind that may or may not be expressed outwardly. It means to charge or credit something to someone.

For example, to impute wicked motives to someone does not mean to impart those motives to that person, but to charge him with having wicked motives.

To impute selfishness to someone does not mean to make that person selfish, but to make a judgment that that person is selfish.

To impute greediness to someone does not mean to make that person greedy in character or conduct, but simply to look at a person's behavior and say, "That person is greedy."

c. The thing that is imputed in justification

Romans 3:21-22 -- "But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction."

Philippians 3:9 -- "and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith."

II Corinthians 5:21 -- "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

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

Romans 5:17-19 -- "For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men; even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous."

Isaiah 61:10 -- "I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, My soul will exalt in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

4. Justification is not based on subjective sanctification

God does not make the sinner subjectively holy and then declare him to be objectively righteous.

- a. Such a scenario would admit of degrees of justification relative to the degree of sanctification experienced up to a given moment.

Justification would then be relative until the sinner is made perfect. No human being could then be declared perfectly righteous until he or she became perfectly holy. Justification would then mean no more than imputing to a person what he or she actually is (in character and conduct).

- b. Justification is spoken of as an act, whereas subjective sanctification includes progress (a process)

Romans 5:1 -- "Therefore having been justified (δικαιωθέντες) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 5:9 -- "Much more then, having now been justified (δικαιωθέντες) by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."

Titus 3:7 -- "that being justified (δικαιωθέντες) by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

II Corinthians 7:1 -- "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves (καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς) from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Hebrews 12:14 -- "Pursue after peace with all men, and after the sanctification (ἁγιασμόν) without which no one will see the Lord."

I John 3:2-3 -- "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, if He should appear, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And every one who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself (ἁγνίζει ἑαυτόν), just as He is pure."

- c. Justification includes the imputation of a righteousness which is not the sinner's own, one that is not based on his goodness or moral excellence or holiness, but on the righteousness of Christ Himself.

In justification Christ's righteousness is not imparted but imputed. Christ's perfect life of obedience to

the Law of God and His perfect sacrificial death to expiate the guilt and penalty of the transgressed Law are not imparted to us (in some fashion!) but imputed or credited to us. Christ's holy character is not infused in us, or poured into us; rather His righteousness is imputed to us.

Romans 4:5 speaks of the "one who trusts in the One who justifies the ungodly." God declares legally righteous the one who is morally unrighteous. He does this by crediting Christ's righteousness to the believing sinner and on that basis declaring him to be righteous before God.

5. Justification is not based on works (i.e., our works)

- a. Because works in this context have to do with fulfillment of the Law, and the Law cannot justify sinners

(1) The Law was not given to justify sinners, and it cannot have this effect

Galatians 3:19, 21-24 -- "Why the Law then? it was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made." . . . Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

I Timothy 1:8-11 -- "But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted."

Romans 7:5, 7-11 -- "For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. . . . What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, 'You shall not covet.' But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is

dead. And I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me. So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good."

(2) The Law demands perfection

James 2:10 -- "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all."

Galatians 3:10 -- "For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, to perform them.' "

(3) The Law is extrinsically weak through the flesh

Romans 8:3, 7-8 -- "For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, . . . because the mind not on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the Law of God, for it is not even able to do so; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

- b. Because if justification were based on works, then justification would always be relative to the quality and quantity of good works performed.
- c. Because the Scriptures represent justification as springing from the grace of God through faith, with no condition of human works attached.

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

Galatians 5:4 -- "You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."

Titus 3:5-7 -- "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Romans 3:23-24 -- "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:11-12 -- "Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, 'The righteous man shall live by faith.' However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary; 'He who practices them shall live by them.' "

6. Justification is not based on faith

- a. Because the Scriptures represent justification as based on the obedience and blood of Christ

Romans 5:18-19, 21 -- "So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men; even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous . . . that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 3:21-25a -- "But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith."

Romans 5:9 -- "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."

- b. Because if justification were based on faith, it would make the finished work of Christ unnecessary, except as an example, an influence, or a demonstration.

(1) If God justified us on the basis of our faith, then Christ's death could be an example for us to emulate, but not a substitutionary atonement on our behalf.

(2) If God justified us on the basis of our faith, then Christ's death could be an expression of God's love to influence us Godward, but not a satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf.

(3) If God justified us on the basis of our faith, then Christ's death could be a demonstration of God's holiness and hatred of sin, but not a judgment of God on actual sin; in which case God has yet to deal with actual sin.

- c. Because if justification were based on faith, it would substitute faith for obedience, make the requirements of the Law of no effect, and impugn the justice of God. Justification would then be the declaration of righteousness

upon those who have no righteousness at all (legally or morally).

- d. Because the Scriptures represent faith as the means, the instrument, but not the basis of justification.

Romans 3:28 -- "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith (πίστει) apart from the works of the Law."

Romans 5:1 -- "Therefore having been Justified by (ἐκ) faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Galatians 2:16 -- "Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith (διὰ πίστεως) in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith (ἐκ πίστεως), and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."

Galatians 3:8 -- "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith (ἐκ πίστεως), preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the nations shall be blessed in you.' "

Galatians 3:24 -- "Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us Christ, that we may be justified by faith (ἐκ πίστεως)."

#### 7. Justification is based on the imputed righteousness of Christ

Christ's righteousness includes His obedience to the Law in all respects, and His penal substitutionary death of expiation of the guilt and penalty of the transgressed Law, and all in our behalf and stead. This righteousness is imputed to every believing sinner, and then that believing sinner is declared righteous by God Himself! Every person thus graciously blessed can sing:

"Clad in this robe, how bright I shine;  
Angels have not a robe like mine!"

#### C. Objections to the Doctrine

1. "This doctrine of a legal righteousness leads to licentiousness."

This objection disregards the concomitants of justification, especially regeneration and progressive sanctification. The Bible knows of no justified persons who are not also new creatures led by the Holy Spirit who are experiencing progress in their conformity to the likeness of Christ.

2. "This doctrine is inconsistent with the grace of the gospel."

This objection forgets that, although salvation is all of grace for the believing sinner, it was nevertheless purchased by

Christ at awful cost, in order that God might be just at the very time that He freely justifies the one believing in Jesus.

3. "This doctrine depicts God as pronouncing a contradiction, in declaring the unjust to be just."

This objection would be valid if it were true! But the Christian Church has never held that in justification God declares a person to be legally just who is legally unjust. That would be a formal contradiction! Rather, the doctrine holds that God declares a person to be legally just who is morally unjust. That is not a contradiction! God declares righteous the one who trusts in Christ as Savior, imputing Christ's righteousness to him by grace, and then He begins to make him morally righteous (holy).

4. "This doctrine holds that Christ's righteousness is imputed to sinners. But Christ's righteousness was due for Himself."

This objection is correct in claiming that, once the Son of God became incarnate, He was obligated as a man to render perfect obedience to the Law of God for himself. But the objection is incorrect in claiming that Christ's righteous life could suffice only to fulfill His own obligation to Law. The infinite dignity of His Person as the God-man gives such value to His obedience that it suffices not only for Himself but for any number of persons to whom God is pleased to impute that righteousness as a gift of His grace. Of course, when we add to Christ's perfect obedience to the requirements of the Law His perfect expiation of the guilt and penalty of the transgressed Law (which, since He was sinless, He was not obligated to render for Himself), we see that this objection falls to the ground. Christ's perfect obedience and His perfect sacrifice suffice for every person who has ever lived and more!

5. "This doctrine ignores the fact that believers continue to be guilty and liable to punishment."

This objection views the sin question purely from the standpoint of sinful, unworthy, undeserving human beings. And it is true that in ourselves we are guilty and deserving of hell (and it is good to remember this). But it is also true that in Christ and on the basis of His perfect obedience and perfect sacrifice, unworthy, undeserving sinners who trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are declared by God Himself to be righteous and free from all guilt and condemnation! Thus it becomes a question of accepting God's estimate of the value of His Son's atoning work to remove our guilt and liability to punishment; and if God is for us, who can be against us?

6. "This doctrine concerns only the objective, the outward, the legal. It does not deal with the subjective, inward, moral aspects of sin."

This objection is not an objection at all, but merely a statement of fact. Justification represents one facet of the objective side of the application of Christ's redemption. Other doctrines represent the subjective side. Of course, if this

objection is an accusation that the doctrine of justification is sometimes presented in such a way as to neglect or disregard the concomitants, then perhaps it can function as a reminder to keep together the things the Bible keeps together. But if it is a veiled assertion that the doctrine of justification includes subjective as well as objective aspects, then the objection must be countered by drawing clear distinctions between the things that scripture distinguishes (such as justification and subjective sanctification, for example).

D. Summary-Outline of the Doctrine

1. The source of justification -- the triune God
2. The moving cause of justification -- the unmerited grace of God in Christ
3. The basis or ground in justification -- the substitutionary earned righteousness of Christ
  - a. Perfect obedience to the perfect Law in behalf of sinners
  - b. Perfect satisfaction to the broken Law in behalf of sinners
4. The instrument of justification -- faith in Christ's atonement
5. The nature of justification
  - a. Imputation of Christ's substitutionary earned righteousness to believing sinners
  - b. Declaration of righteousness (a righteous standing before the Law of God) on believing sinners
6. The results of justification
  - a. Peace with God through forgiveness of sins
  - b. Eternal life (spiritual life maintained by God eternally)
  - c. Subsequent justification (justification of a righteous life; the validation of saving [justifying] faith by righteous actions)
  - d. Final justification (a final declaration of righteousness, made by God on the day of His righteous judgment, upon a life that has been lived by justifying faith, which faith has manifested itself by an overall tendency toward and a pattern of righteousness in character and conduct)



VII. Sanctification

A. Statement of the Doctrine

The French Confession of Faith (A.D. 1559), Article 22, states:

We believe that by this faith we are regenerated in newness of life, being by nature subject to sin. Now we receive by faith grace to live holily and in the fear of God, in accepting the promise which is given to us by the Gospel, namely: that God will give us his Holy Spirit. This faith not only doth not hinder us from holy living, or turn us from the love of righteousness, but of necessity begetteth in us all good works. Moreover, although God worketh in us for our salvation, and reneweth our hearts, determining us to that which is good, yet we confess that the good works which we do proceed from the Spirit, and can not be accounted to us for justification, neither do they entitle us to the adoption of sons, for we should always be doubting and restless in our hearts, if we did not rest upon the atonement by which Jesus Christ hath acquitted us.

The Belgic Confession (A.D. 1561), Article 24, states:

We believe that this true faith, being wrought in man by the hearing of the Word of God and the operation of the Holy Ghost, doth regenerate and make him a new man, causing him to live a new life, and freeing him from the bondage of sin. Therefore it is so far from being true, that this justifying faith makes men remiss in a pious and holy life, that on the contrary without it they would never do any thing out of love to God, but only out of self-love or fear of damnation. Therefore it is impossible that this holy faith can be unfruitful in man: for we do not speak of a vain faith, but of such a faith as is called in Scripture a faith that worketh by love which excites man to the practice of those works which God has commanded in his Word. Which works, as they proceed from the good root of faith, are good and acceptable in the sight of God, forasmuch as they are all sanctified by his grace: howbeit they are of no account towards our justification. For it is by faith in Jesus Christ that we are justified, ever before we do good works, otherwise they could not be good works any more than the fruit of a tree can be good before the tree itself is good.

Therefore we do good works, but not to merit by them (for what can we merit?) -- nay, we are beholden to God for the good works we do, and not he to us, since it is he that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Let us therefore attend to what is written: When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say we are unprofitable servants we have done that which was our duty to do.

In the mean time we do not deny that God rewards good works, but it is through his grace that he crowns his gifts. Moreover, though we do good works, we do not found our salvation upon them; for we can do no work but what is polluted by our flesh, and also punishable; and although we could perform such works, still the remembrance of one sin is sufficient to make God reject them. Thus, then, we should always be in doubt, tossed to and fro without any certainty, and our poor consciences would be

continually vexed if they relied not on the merits of the suffering and death of our Saviour.

The Scotch Confession of Faith (A.D. 1560), Article 13, states:

Sa that the cause of gude warkis, we confesse to be not our free wil, bot the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, who dwelling in our hearts be trewe faith, bringis furth sik warkis, as God hes prepared for us to walke in. For this wee malst boldelie affirme, that blasphemy it is to say, that Christ abydes in the heartes of sik, as in whome there is no spirits of sanctification. And therefore we feir not to affirme, that murtherers, oppressers, cruell persecuters, adulterers, huremongers, filthy personns, idolaters, drunkards, thieves, and al workers of iniquity, have nether trew faith, nether ony portion of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, so long as obstinatlie they continew in their wickedness. For how soone that ever the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, quhilk Gods elect children receive be trew faith, taks possession in the heart of ony man, so soone dois he regenerate and renew the same man. So that he beginnis to halt that quhilk before he loved, and begins to love that quhilk befor he hated; and fra thine cummis that continuall battell, quhilk is betwist the flesh and the Spirit in Gods children, till the flesh and natural man, according to the avin corruption, lustes for things pleisand and delectable unto the self, and grudges in adversity, is lyfted up in prosperity, and at every moment is prone and reddie to offend the majestic of God. Bot the spirite of God, quhilk gives witnessing to our spirite, that we are the sonnes of God, makis us to resist filthie plesures, and to groane in Gods presence, for deliverance fra this bondage of corruption; and finally to triumph over sin, that it reygne not in our mortal bodys. This battell hes not the carnal men, being destitute of Gods Spirits, bot dois followe and obey sinne with greedines, and without repentance, even as the Devill, and their corrupt lustes do prick them. Bot the sonnes of God, as before wes said, dois fecht against Sinne; dots sob and murne, when they perceive themselves tempted in iniquitie; and gif they fal, they rise againe with earnest and unfained repentance. And this thingis they do not be their awin power, bot be the power of the Lord Jesus, without whom they were able to do nothing.

The Westminster Confession of Faith (A.D. 1647), Chapter 13, states:

I. They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

II. This sanctification is throughout, in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.

III. In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail; yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome; and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

The Philadelphia Confession of 1689, Chapter 13, states:

1. They who are united to Christ, effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection; are also (Acts 20:32; Rom. 6:5, 6) further sanctified, really, and personally, through the same virtue (John 17:17; Eph. 3:16-19; 1 Thess. 5:21-23) by his word and Spirit dwelling in them; (Rom. 6:14) the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, (Gal. 5:24) and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified; and they more and more quickened, and (Col. 1:11) strengthened in all saving graces, to the (2 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14) practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

2. This sanctification is (1 Thess. 5:23) throughout the whole man, yet imperfect (Rom. 7:18, 23) in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a (Gal. 5:17; 1 Peter 2:11) continual, and irreconcilable war; the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

3. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much (Rom. 7:23) prevail, yet, through the continual supply of strength, from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the (Rom. 6:14) regenerate part doth overcome; and so the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, pressing after an (Eph. 4:15-16; 2 Cor. 3:18, 2 Cor. 7:1) heavenly life, in evangelical obedience to all the commands which Christ, as head and king, in his word hath prescribed to them.

The New Hampshire Baptist Confession (A.D. 1833), Article 10, states:

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means -- especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 35 (What is sanctification?) is answered as follows:

Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

B. Preliminary Observations concerning the Doctrine

1. The words translated 'sanctify' ( $\psi\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega$  in the Old Testament;  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$  in the New Testament) appear to have four basic areas of meaning in Scripture:
  - a. "To acknowledge as holy"
  - b. "To set apart, consecrate to God"
  - c. "To purify, cleanse, make holy"
  - d. "To be holy"
2. Sanctification is spoken of in two basic aspects in scripture: objective or positional sanctification, and subjective or experiential sanctification.
  - a. Objective sanctification
    - (1) Believers are called 'saints' or 'holy ones' ( $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omicron\iota$  some 61 times in the New Testament.

Romans 1:7 -- "to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints"

I Corinthians 1:2 -- "to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling,"

Ephesians 1:1 -- "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 1:1 -- "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons;"

Colossians 1:2 -- "to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae:"

Jude 3 -- "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."
    - (2) Sanctification is sometimes spoken of in the perfect tense, as an act accomplished in the past

I Corinthians 1:2 -- "to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified ( $\acute{\eta}\gamma\iota\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\varsigma$  -- a perfect passive participle from  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ ) in Christ Jesus, saints by calling,"

Hebrews 10:10 -- "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (ἡγιασμένοι is used)

Acts 26:18 -- "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." (ἡγιασμένοις is used).

b. Subjective sanctification

The Bible distinguishes three phases of subjective sanctification:

- (1) Initial subjective sanctification (regeneration) -- an act
- (2) Progressive subjective sanctification (growing conformity to the image of Christ) -- a process
- (3) Complete or final subjective sanctification (perfection) -- an act

3. Justification and objective sanctification speak of the effect of Christ's saving work for us, whereas subjective sanctification speaks of the effect of Christ's saving work in us.

Justification produces a change in our relation to the law (our legal position). Objective sanctification produces a change in our relation to the character of God (our moral position).

Subjective sanctification produces a change in our character and conduct (our moral condition or state).

4. In justification, God declares us to be righteous. In objective sanctification, God declares us to be holy. In subjective sanctification, God makes us holy.

Justification and objective sanctification are thus declaratory acts. Subjective sanctification is a transforming work.

C. Development of the Doctrine

1. Sanctification is a work of God's grace

a. Sanctification is a work of God

Romans 7:24-25a -- "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

John 17:17 -- "Sanctify them by the truth; Thy word is truth."

I Corinthians 1:30-31 -- "But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, that, just as it is written, 'Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.' "

Ephesians 5:25-26 -- "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word."

I Thessalonians 5:23 -- "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Titus 2:13-14 -- "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."

Hebrews 10:10, 14 -- "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . . . . For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

Philippians 2:12-13 -- "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

b. Sanctification is a work of God's grace

Ephesians 2:8-10 -- "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

Psalms 37:23-24 -- "The steps of a man are established by the Lord; And He delights in his way. When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong; Because the Lord is the One who holds his hand."

Romans 8:29-30 -- "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

Philippians 1:6 -- "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

2. Subjective sanctification begins with regeneration

This connection of regeneration with sanctification is witnessed to by a number of writings:

A. H. Strong -- "Sanctification is that continuous operation of the Holy spirit, by which the holy disposition imparted in regeneration is maintained and strengthened."

-- Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1909), Volume Three, p. 869.

James Pendleton -- "Sanctification, according to the gospel and as the term is used in theology, is a precious reality, involving holiness of heart, which leads to holiness of life. It has its origin in regeneration, for regeneration is the beginning of holiness in the soul. I concede that unregenerate persons may possess amiable instincts and commendable social qualities, may illustrate what are called natural virtues; but I say with strongest emphasis that there is no spark of holiness in any unregenerate heart. Where holiness exists in its most incipient form it is a supernatural production, the effect of regeneration. Now, while regeneration implants the germ of holiness in the heart, sanctification is the unfolding of that germ. This being the case, it follows that regeneration and sanctification are essentially the same in nature, and may be regarded as two parts of the moral process by which depraved man is restored to the image of God."

-- James Madison Pendleton, *Christian Doctrines* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1878), p. 299.

William G. T. Shedd -- "Sanctification results from the continuation of the agency of the Holy Spirit, after the act of regeneration."

-- Williams G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n. d.), Volume Two, p. 554.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism -- "Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God" (Question 35)

Regeneration is presented in Scripture under four major aspects: a new birth, a new life, a new creation, a new nature.

a. A new birth

(1) References to this aspect in Scripture

Titus 3:5 -- "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

I Peter 2:2 -- "like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."

John 1:12-13 -- "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

John 3:1-8 -- "Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Him by night, and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born can he?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, "You must be born again." The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is every one who is born of the Spirit.' "

(2) Summary of this aspect

The new birth is that act of the Holy Spirit by which a human being is spiritually reborn, thereby becoming a spiritual child of God. This implies such a tragic flaw in man's spiritual nature that a radical rebirth of his spirit is necessary before he can live a life pleasing to God.

b. A new life

(1) References to this aspect in Scripture

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

Romans 6:11, 13 -- "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."



John 5:24 -- "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my Word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into Judgment, but has passed out of death into life."

John 6:47-63 -- " 'Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.' The Jews therefore began to argue with one another, saying, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?' Jesus therefore said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate, and died; he who eats this bread shall live forever.' These things He said in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of His disciples, when they heard this said, 'This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?' But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, 'Does this cause you to stumble? What then if you should behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.' "

I John 3:14-15 -- "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

Ephesians 2:4-5 -- "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),"

Colossians 2:11-13 -- "and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,"

(2) Summary of this aspect

This new life is that aspect of regeneration in which the spirit of a human being who is spiritually dead is, through union with Christ, made spiritually alive.

c. A new creation

(1) References to this aspect in Scripture

Background: Genesis 1:26-27 -- "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Background: Genesis 2:16-17 -- "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.' "

Background: Genesis 3:5-7, 22a -- " 'For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. . . . Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil;' "

Luke 11:11-13 -- "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? if you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Galatians 6:15 -- "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation."

Ephesians 2:10 -- "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

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

Colossians 3:10 -- "and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him,"

II Corinthians 3:18 -- "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

(2) Summary of this aspect

The new creation is that aspect of regeneration in which the spiritual and moral image ruined in the Fall is initially and progressively restored to the human spirit.

d. A new nature

(1) References to this aspect in Scripture

I Corinthians 2:14 -- "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."

II Corinthians 5:17 -- "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

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

Colossians 3:10 -- "and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him."

Ephesians 2:3 -- "Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."

Ezekiel 11:19 -- "And I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh."

Ezekiel 36:26-27 -- "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you

and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.'

Titus 3:5 -- "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

II Peter 1:4 -- "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."

I John 3:7-10 -- "Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, Just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

(2) Summary of this aspect

The new nature is that aspect of regeneration in which the moral and spiritual attributes of man's nature are initially and progressively renewed, and the direction of man's conduct is changed from an active disposition toward sin to an active disposition toward righteousness.

A complex definition of the four aspects

Regeneration is that work of the Holy Spirit by which a human being is spiritually reborn in spirit, made spiritually alive, restored to God's image, and renewed in the moral and spiritual attributes of his nature, which renewal is manifested in his conduct by a prevailing tendency toward righteousness.

A brief working definition

Regeneration is the impartation, by the Holy Spirit, of spiritual life to one spiritually dead. It is the spiritual renewal of the human spirit.

3. Subjective sanctification is based on our union with Christ and with the benefits of His redemption

Romans 6:1-11

Colossians 3:1-12

4. Progressive subjection sanctification is effected by the agency of the indwelling Spirit of Christ

- a. The Holy Spirit mortifies the evil elements in us, as we live more and more under His control

Galatians 5:16-21 -- "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousings, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Romans 8:12-13 -- "So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh -- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

- b. The Holy Spirit quickens the good elements in us, as we live more and more under His control

Galatians 5:16, 22-25 -- "But I say, walk by the Spirit . . . But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."

5. Progressive sanctification is effected by means of the Word of God

John 17:17 -- "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth."

Psalms 19:7-11 -- "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by the Thy servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward."

Psalms 119: 9, 11, 104 -- "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word . . . Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee. . . From Thy precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way."

Psalms 1:2-3 -- "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season, And its leaf will not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers."

II Timothy 3:16-17 -- "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Ephesians 5:25-27 -- "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless."

I Peter 2:1-2 -- "Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."

6. Progressive subjection sanctification is conditioned on the response of obedient faith to the revealed will of God addressed to man's obedience (or, to the law of God, since the law of God is the will of God addressed to man's obedience in any dispensation)

I John 2:17 -- "And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever."

Hebrews 13:20-21 -- "Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

Colossians 1:9-10 -- "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;"

I John 3:23 -- "And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us."

Romans 6:12-13 -- "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Romans 13:8-10 -- "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For

this, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is a fulfillment of the law."

James 2:8-12 -- "If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. For He who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not commit murder.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty."

Psalms 119:44-45 -- "So I will keep Thy law continually, Forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Thy precepts."

Matthew 22:35-40 -- "And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. And a second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

Romans 8:4, 7 -- "In order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit . . . because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the Law of God, for it is not even able to do so;"

James 4:11 -- "Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the law, and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge of it."

Psalms 40:7-8; Hebrews 10:5-7; 1 John 2:6 -- "Then I said, 'Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me;' I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is within my heart." "Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, But a body Thou hast prepared for Me; in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast taken no pleasure.' Then I said, 'Behold, I have come (In the roll of the book it is written of Me) To do Thy will, O God.' " "the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."

James 1:22-25 -- "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of

liberty and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does."

Galatians 5:13-14 -- "For you were called to freedom, brethren, only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "

What is the effect of obedient faith or disobedient unbelief on the progress of sanctification?

The effect of obedient faith in the spirit (under the grace principle) is that the good elements of our moral nature are quickened and strengthened; our intellect, will, emotions, and conscience are quickened and purified; and the evil elements of our moral nature are weakened, mortified, further put to death, and yet never entirely in this life.

The effect of disobedient unbelief or obedience in the flesh (under the law principle) is that the evil elements of our moral nature are quickened and strengthened; our intellect, will, emotions, and conscience are further corrupted; and the good elements of our moral nature are weakened and mortified, yet never entirely in this life.

7. Subjective sanctification culminates in perfection

a. The scriptural teaching

(1) Subjective sanctification is never complete or entire in this life

I Corinthians 6:9-11 -- "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God."

Paul says to the Corinthians, "but you were sanctified." Yet in 3:3 he says, "For you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"

II Corinthians 1:1 -- "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia:"

Paul calls the Corinthian believers "saints". Yet in 7:1 he writes: "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."



I John 1:5-10 -- "And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

- (2) Conflict between the innate sin principle and the new principle of righteousness imparted in regeneration is inevitable and normal

Romans 7:14-25 -- "For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For that which I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not wish to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that it is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin."

- (3) At death (or at Christ's coming, for those who are alive) the moral nature of the believer is made perfect

I Thessalonians 3:11-13 -- "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our ways to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."

Hebrews 12:22-23 -- "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect."

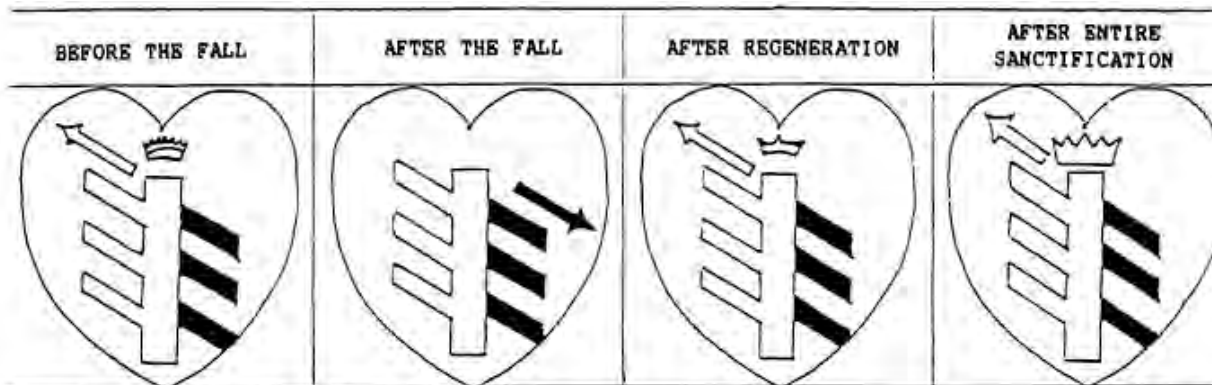
Here are human beings who were previously declared righteous on the basis of God's gift of Christ's righteousness during their earthly life; now they are envisioned as perfect in holiness in their disembodied state in the heavenly city of God!

Colossians 1:28 -- "And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ."

Hebrews 9:27-28 -- "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment; so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, not to bear sin, to those who eagerly await Him, for salvation."

Revelation 21:23, 27 -- "And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. . . . and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life."

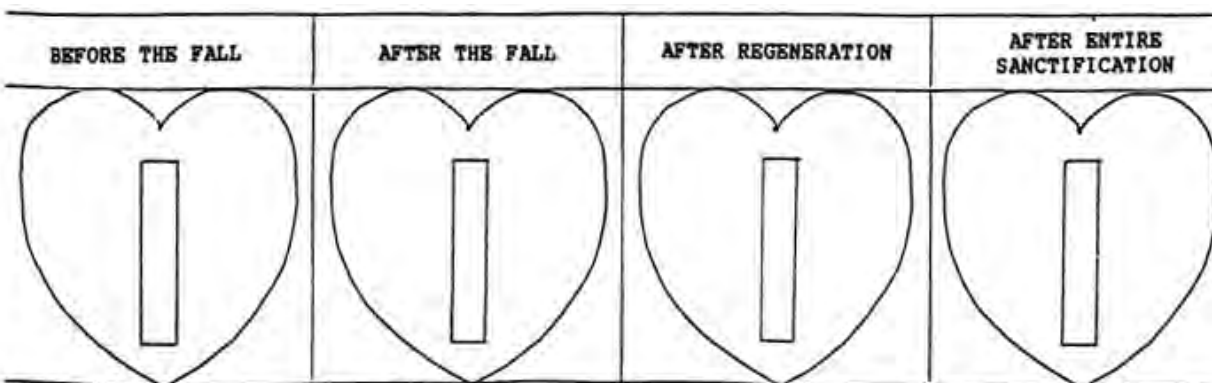
b. Alternate views of sanctification



In the Roman Catholic view, the higher and lower aspects of man's nature are in contrast to each other. The "spiritual" part of man, the mind, is higher; the "carnal" part of man, the body, is lower; and the question of which part gains the ascendancy determines this view's conception of man's status vis-a-vis sinfulness and holiness at any given stage.





In the first state (before the Fall), the balance between man's higher and lower parts is tipped in the direction of goodness by the gift of original righteousness. In the second stage (after the Fall) man has lost the gift of original righteousness and gained a strong tendency downward, toward evil. In the third stage (after regeneration), man, through the Sacrament of Baptism, gains the gift of sanctifying grace, which tips him in the direction of goodness once more. In the fourth stage, man is entirely freed from all tendencies toward evil, even though he still retains his higher and lower powers following resurrection. In the Roman Catholic view, some human beings have gained this stage in life.

VIEW OF CHARLES G. FINNEY



In Charles G. Finney's view of entire sanctification, God has always held man responsible only for what he is fully able to do. Ability conditions responsibility. In addition, sin and holiness are not natures, dispositions, or states, but only inhere in actions. Thus there is no such thing as a sinful or holy nature; there are only sinful or holy actions. In all four stages of man's spiritual history, man's nature looks the same. The difference between the stages is that before the Fall mankind simply obeyed all of God's commands; after the Fall man turned from obedience; after regeneration man again does what he ought to do (but imperfectly); and after entire sanctification man once again simply obeys all of God's commands. No man is responsible for some supposed high standard of legal perfection; rather, each man is held responsible for what he, individually, is able to do. If he reaches this personally adjusted standard, he achieves entire sanctification in his life.

#### VIEW OF JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY

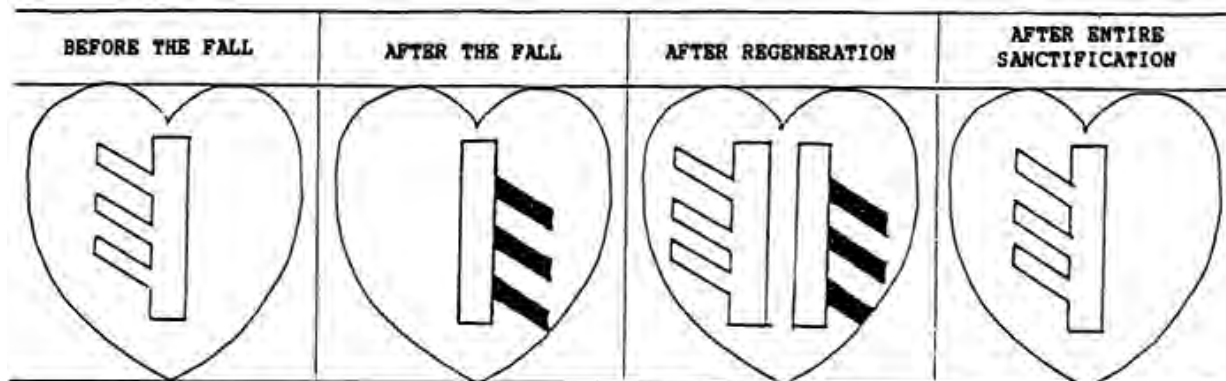
BEFORE THE FALL	AFTER THE FALL	AFTER REGENERATION	AFTER ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION
			

In the view of John and Charles Wesley, perfect love is the hallmark and epitome of evangelical obedience; and such love is both commanded and, by God's grace, attainable in this life.

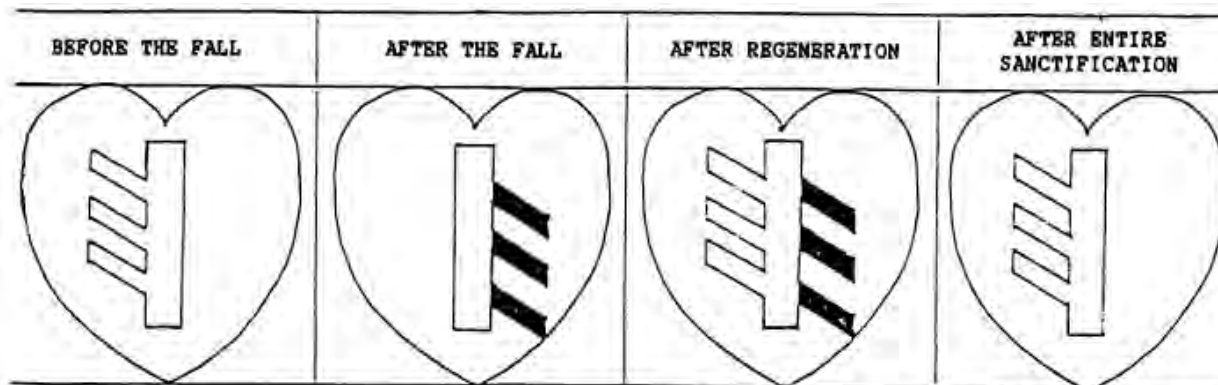
In the first stage of man's spiritual history (before the Fall) mankind was holy and entirely free from all sin. In the second stage (after the Fall) man lost all holiness and gained a sinful, depraved nature. However, he retained some small rudiments of the good qualities he had had before the Fall (albeit greatly attenuated). But these relatively good remnants contribute nothing to his salvation. Fallen man is so helpless and hopeless in his spiritual death and moral depravity that there would not even exist a possibility of salvation, unless God intervened in grace and mercy. This He has done, extending prevenient grace to all men so that they can make a favorable response to the gospel of Christ's redemption and be saved. In the third stage (after regeneration) a twofold process has begun: the evil attributes have begun to attenuate, and the relatively good attributes are given new life and made initially new. In the fourth stage (after entire sanctification or perfection) the evil

qualities of man's character have been obliterated, and the good attributes are entirely new and holy. This is a state in which one is characterized by perfect love and is freed from all sinning -- a state possible to achieve in this life.

### TWO NATURE VIEW



### TWO NATURE VIEW WITH VARIATION

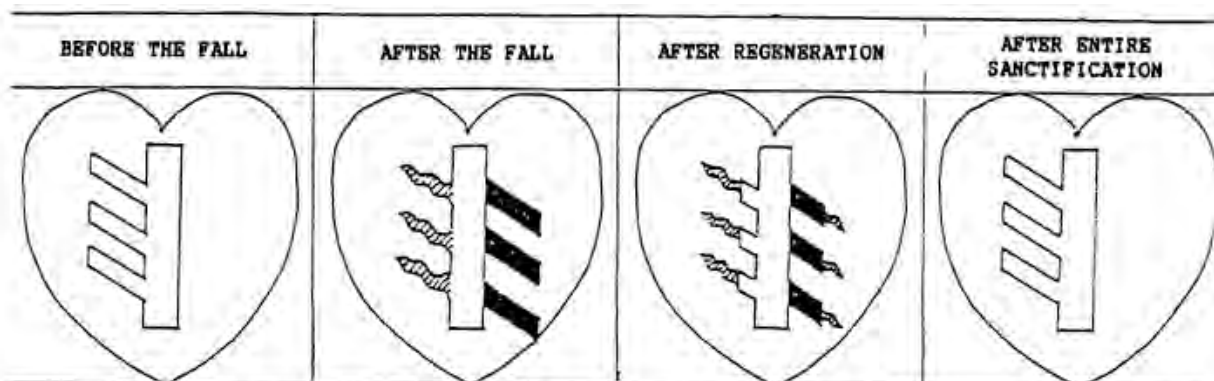


In the two-nature view (held by some Dispensationalists), a virtual freedom from sinning is possible in this life, although entire sanctification is possible only at death or at Christ's Coming.

In the first stage of man's spiritual history (before the Fall), man was either innocent (morally neutral in character) or positively holy (morally good). In the second stage (after the Fall), man lost any holy qualities he may have had, and gained a sinful nature that was (and is) totally depraved and inclined toward all evil. In the third stage (after regeneration), the believer has two natures: one incorrigibly wicked (called the old nature) and one perfectly good (called the new nature, because it is created by God and totally new). These two natures live side by side in the regenerated person; and thus there is a spiritual conflict within the believer. Whether the old and new natures are defined as two separate natures or two distinct principles in one

person, the view holds that believers can operate either totally according to one nature or totally according to the other. Thus entirely sinless or entirely sinful thoughts, desires, and actions are possible for the believer. It is therefore possible to live without conscious or known sin. In the fourth stage (after entire sanctification), the believer's old nature has been obliterated through death, and his new nature (still perfect) is now freed from its wretched and weary coexistence with the old. This occurs at death or at Christ's Coming, but not in this life.

#### PROPOSED VIEW



In the proposed view, the unity and integrity of man's person is maintained, and genuine growth and progress in moral and spiritual character development is possible. In this view, man has one nature (what he is) at a time in each stage of his spiritual history.

In the first stage (before the Fall), mankind was both holy and innocent -- holy in character and innocent in any wrongdoing. He had positively good character qualities. In the second stage (after the Fall) man lost all holiness and became sinful and depraved in the total extent of his being. He retained some small rudiments of the good qualities he had had before the Fall (albeit greatly attenuated), which helps to explain the relatively good actions he performs, as well as the remnants of the image of God that persist in him. In the third stage (after regeneration) a twofold process has begun: the evil qualities in him have begun to attenuate, and the relatively good attributes have begun the process of being made totally new through the new creation. The believer's nature in this view is new, not in the sense that a totally new complex of attributes has been created and infused into or grafted onto his person, but in the sense that his nature (what he is) has been transformed and renovated, so that everything about him is changed. When he acts now, he acts according to this transformed nature, and his overall behavior is modified accordingly. As a result, all of his actions are the actions of his whole person; and thus progress in the sanctification of his whole nature (what he is) is possible.

In the fourth stage (after entire sanctification), the evil qualities of his nature are obliterated, and the good qualities are made perfectly new and holy. This state is possible only at death or at Christ's Coming.

## ERRATA

Note throughout (this and SYS THEO II) a leading un-aspirated alpha misprints (at least on my computer). Therefore I substitute it with an un-accented alpha (α) -- α. I can't figure out a way to avoid this. Example: ανακαινώσεως on page 65.

p18 f. By August H. Strong → f.

By Augustus H. Strong

Note: Microsoft Office (occasionally) does not correctly display Hebrew text -- it gets confused by mixing right-to-left and left-to-right fonts.

p212 Ps 34:8, 118:8-9 refuse -> refuge (3x)

p272 Col 2:11-13 having forgotten -> having forgiven

p277 Ps 1:2-3 lead for -> leaf will

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Here is the corrected unicode Hebrew text cited in this syllabus, from <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/tan/index.htm>

76 Genesis 41:38 -- אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ --

76 Numbers 27:18 -- אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ --

76 Isaiah 63:11 -- אֵינָהּ הַשֵּׁם בִּקְרָבוֹ אֶת־רוּחַ קְדָשׁוֹ --

76 Ezekiel 11:19 -- וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתְּנוּ בְּקֶרֶךְ בְּכֶם --

76 Ezekiel 36:26 -- וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה וְאֶת בְּקֶרֶךְ בְּכֶם --

76 Ezekiel 36:27 -- וְאֶת־רוּחִי אֶתְּנוּ בְּקֶרֶךְ בְּכֶם --

76 Haggai 2:4-5 -- וְרוּחִי עֹמֶדֶת בְּתוֹכְכֶם --

83 Psalm 51:11 -- וְרוּחַ קְדָשְׁךָ אֶל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי --

83 I Samuel 16:14 -- הִנֵּה יְהוָה סָרָה מֵעַם שָׁאוּל --

88 Numbers 11:25 -- וַיֹּאצֵּל מִן־הָרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו וַיִּתֵּן --

-- עַל־שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ הַזִּקְנִים וַיְהִי כֵּן --

-- עֲלֵיהֶם הָרוּחַ וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ וְלֹא יָסֻפוּ --

88 Judges 14:5-6 -- וַתִּצְלַח עָלָיו רוּחַ יְהוָה --

88 I Samuel 10:6 -- וַצִּלְחָה עָלֶיךָ רוּחַ יְהוָה --

88 Isaiah 11:1-2 -- וְנָחָה עָלָיו רוּחַ יְהוָה --

89 Joel 2:28 -- אֶשְׁפּוֹךְ אֶת־רוּחִי עַל־כָּל־בָּשָׂר --

89 Joel 2:29 -- אֶשְׁפּוֹךְ אֶת־רוּחִי --